

Gourmet 931

Chapter 931

Minhyuk saw the God of Shooting Rudolph consume the dish produced by Everyone's Happiness that appeared in front of him. And it was not just him. The God of Lightning also chose to eat the dish that Minhyuk had sent over.

In this Succession Ceremony, everyone could choose whatever side they wanted to stay on. No matter what they decided, they would not belong to the Luvien Empire or the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

The original purpose of this succession ceremony was to focus on how they could use their abilities and show that they could lead their troops well. It was not supposed to be a competition on how active each side could be.

Of course, choosing Minhyuk's side would prevent them from joining the Luvien Empire. However, if they could achieve a credibility rating that exceeded 50%, then they would be able to receive additional rewards.

These two people felt the rewards would be far sweeter if they joined Minhyuk's side. Of course, it was just these two. Among the people Minhyuk chose, the God of Ice was the only one who refused the dish before her.

[Unlike the Battle God's Sword, you have not moved to prove your qualifications as the Battle God's Descendant!]

[The damage your allies are receiving has already accumulated, yet you remain on the sidelines!]

[Your Credibility Rating is -36%!]

Meanwhile, the attacks of the gods grew even fiercer, forcing their credibility rating to fall even lower. However, Minhyuk did not care about it. He stared at the glossy and red spicy braised chicken that was sitting nicely inside the cauldron lid.

'Hiyaaa...'

After seeing how well the sauce had boiled, Minhyuk's saliva was about to drip down. The first thing he did was grab a chicken leg. A small smile appeared when he took a bite of the tender meat, which had been cooked over high heat. He only took one bite to separate the bones from the meat.

"Kghhk..." Minhyuk sighed in admiration as he gobbled up the chicken leg.

Next, he turned his attention to the potatoes. He gently scooped some of them, put them in his bowl filled with rice, and sprinkled some of the red sauce on top. Then, he quickly mashed the potatoes and mixed everything in the bowl. After that, he scooped a considerable mouthful and put it in his mouth. The spicy and slightly sweet sauce, the well-mashed potatoes, and the rice met and created a fantastic harmony of flavors.

While Minhyuk was busy trying to finish his food swiftly, a notification rang in his ears.

[Twenty minutes have passed since the start of the Third Wave!]

Minhyuk quickly looked around. The entire hall had almost turned into ruins with the fierce attacks from the gods. As a thick cloud of dust flew and covered the area, another notification rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[Your Credibility Rating is -54%!]

The worst situation had come. But all hope was not yet lost. Minhyuk saw that everyone had finished eating the dish created by Everyone's Happiness.

"Ali."

"Roger!" Ali shouted as he immediately used his Compression Magic, gathering together everyone who ate the dish that Minhyuk had cooked.

A bright light appeared and enveloped those that had been gathered, hiding them from everyone's sight.

The God of Magic said, "Ali's credibility rating has dropped to -50%."

"Death's the same too."

The Succession Ceremony was also very important to the gods. This was because this ceremony was a way for them to give their chosen successors their position. The God of Magic and the God of Death were very fond of their chosen. But there was nothing that they could do; their descendants' credibility rating was at -50%.

"I understand that they wanted to use the Food God's cooking to receive cooking buffs to help them defend against our attacks. But I believe that was the wrong choice." The God of Magic sighed sadly.

After eating what Minhyuk cooked, they could genuinely increase their credibility rating. However, there were only twenty minutes left. Even if they could defend against their attacks well, there seemed to be nothing else they could do.

And, of course, the Battle God could also see this. He thought, *'It was a foolish choice. This is more so the case for Minhyuk. Even if they can successfully defend against our attacks from now on, it will be tough to restore their credibility rating, especially since they have -50%. Furthermore, Nerva's credibility rating has already reached 35%. There's a clear difference between yours and his.'*

Minhyuk was an unusual case during this succession ceremony. Unlike others, he was set to compete against Nerva. And in this current situation, even if he tried his hardest to increase his credibility rating, Minhyuk would be deprived of his position as the Battle God's Descendant if it fell below Nerva's rating.

'I have no idea what you're thinking.'

The Battle God truly could not understand. But a puzzled expression appeared on his face when he tried to look for Minhyuk's figure through the thick dust cloud covering the hall from the explosion caused by the attacks sent by the God of Magic.

“...Huh?”

Minhyuk could not be seen anywhere in the hall. Confused, the Battle God looked around.

“What’s that?”

Dozens of huge boulders engulfed in flames could be seen flying toward the flight of bone dragons.

Boom, boom, boom—!

Crack!

Crack—!

Bang, bang, bang—!

“Kyaaaaaaaaack!”

“Graaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keuhaaaaaaaaack!”

Some bone dragons plummeted to the ground after their wings broke apart. Several death knights who rode on top of these bone dragons immediately moved to ride on top of the other bone dragons.

Baaaaaaaaaaaang—!

“...!”

“...!”

The gods focused their attention on the death knights. That was when they saw a bullet shooting through the head of the death knights, who were trying to transfer to other bone dragons.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Accompanied by the continuous sound of a gun being fired, bullets pierced through the heads of the death knights and forced them to fall one after another.

“...”

The God of Shooting groaned.

“What?”

The sound of gunshots and this accuracy; his successor did this. But somehow, the damage that the God of Shooting’s Descendant dealt was strong enough to pierce through the defenses of a death knight. And the more shocking part?

“The bullets do not contain any power.”

The players often refer to this kind of attack as a *basic attack*. In other words, the God of Shooting’s descendant was making quick work of the death knights with only regular bullets. But the shocking thing did not end there. The sky was filled with dark clouds. This was the sign of the God of Lightning’s pinnacle skill.

“Rampant Lightning?”

The Rampant Lightning was an AOE Attack skill that would drop around two hundred lightning bolts and cover an entire area with a fifteen-meter radius. And it was not only that. The ones struck by those lightning bolts would fall into a two-second stunned state. Of course, these effects were only based on the God of Lightning's current stats and skill level.

Baaaaaaaang—!

But when a lightning bolt fell, it swept an entire thirty-meter radius. And those who were struck by the lightning bolt? They all fell into a five-second stunned state. Six hundred more lightning bolts immediately followed the first lightning bolt.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

The pegasi carrying the Divine Army troops continuously fell from the sky. But that was not the end; thousands of Tier One Magical Attacks poured out and rained down upon the trembling and shaking Divine Army troops.

“Energy Bolt.”

Energy Bolt was the most basic magic that anyone who changed their class to mage in Athenae could learn. Its power would solely depend on who was the one using it.

The thousands of Energy Bolts that covered the sky fell upon the stunned and defenseless troops of the Divine Army.

Bzzt— Bzzt—!

Bzzt— Bzzt— Bzzt— Bzzt—!

Bzzt— Bzzt—!

“Uwaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keheooooooooook!”

“A- Aaaaaaack!”

Screams were ripped off of the mouths of the fallen Divine Army troops as their bodies slowly disintegrated and disappeared in a flash of light. The gods hurriedly moved to locate the source of the sudden attacks that fell upon them.

Fweeeeet—!

Then, with his sharp eyes, the God of Shooting saw a gigantic hawk flying at breakneck speed.

“Is that a hawk...?”

The hawk, which was covered with fiery red feathers like that of a phoenix's own, was so large that it could engulf the entire hall where the Succession Ceremony was being held. Its speed was breakneck.

On the back of the gigantic hawk were the God candidates that disappeared from the ground. Death stepped forward and brandished his staff. At the same time, almost half a million ordinary skeletons began to fall. Death watched the skeletons fall. He clenched his fists immediately when these skeletons reached the area where the bone dragons and the Divine Army troops were.

“Corpse Explosion.”

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

Explosions began to erupt all over the place. Then, the gods saw their successors’ rapidly increasing credibility ratings.

[The God of Death’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 20%.]

[The God of Magic’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 25%.]

[The God of Siege Weapons’ Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 1%.]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 19%.]

Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud—!

Five gigantic arrows that could pierce through the thickest walls were shot per second from above the flying hawk. This was the handiwork of the God of Siege Weapons’ Descendant. His primary ability was to summon siege weapons.

‘*So freaking cool...!*’

He was only originally able to fire around 1.5 shots per second, but now he was firing his siege weapons like a machine gun.

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

The arrows shot down the flying bone dragons swiftly and cleanly. The Battle God could only bark a laugh after seeing the scene.

“I did not expect he would do something like this to increase his credibility rating.”

The task given to them for this Succession Ceremony was to *prevent the gods’ attacks*. That was their threshold. But what if they chose to attack? Not only would they be able to protect their pride as gods, but they would also be able to increase their credibility rating faster than defending themselves.

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 2%.]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 1%.]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 2%.]

Not only that but the courage and power that these people displayed all stemmed from Minhyuk. As a result, Minhyuk’s credibility rating, which had plummeted to -50%, had already started to recover rapidly.

But Nerva was no fool. He quickly understood the situation’s flow and hurriedly shouted, “Attack the gods!”

He ordered the men who chose to side with him during this succession ceremony to attack. Like that, Nerva began to rack up his credibility rating by attacking the gods, too. But of course, he was slower than Minhyuk, who took the initiative to attack. And since Minhyuk was the one who influenced Nerva to issue an attack order, it had its benefits.

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating has increased by 10%.]

The attacks, which consisted of the siege weapons flying from the hawks above them, the thousands of magical attacks sent by God of Magic Ali, and the bullets shot by the God of Shooting, killed the Divine Army and those sent by the gods swiftly. And they were moving faster than Nerva and his allies. Why? Because they were at the center of the battlefield.

[The Battle God's Descendant's Credibility Rating has increased by 44%.]

[The Battle God's Descendant's Credibility Rating has increased by 13%.]

Minhyuk was doing his hardest to chase. However, unfortunate news struck him.

[Thirty-seven minutes have passed since the start of the Third Wave.]

This meant that there were only three minutes left. However, the difference in credibility rating between Nerva and Minhyuk was still at around 30%.

“Interesting.” The God of Summoners smiled faintly at Minhyuk and his allies, who launched a counterattack as the sky above them cracked open. At the same time, millions of monsters fell from the sky and hit those who were riding atop the hawk.

‘What will you do now?’

The rise in their credibility rating also began to slow down with the appearance of the monsters. At that moment, Minhyuk, who had been using various skills and fiercely attacking the Divine Army troops and the undead, jumped down from the hawk. He fell on top of the bone dragons and used them as stepping stones. However, many monsters and undead blocked Minhyuk's path, but that did not stop him.

“Viel's Puppet Doll.”

The puppet that could deal the most damage appeared before Minhyuk and paved the way for him.

[The Battle God's Descendant's Credibility Rating has increased by 45%.]

[The Battle God's Descendant's Credibility Rating has increased by 18%.]

Minhyuk's credibility rating rose rapidly once again. However, the gods soon became puzzled.

“But, wait...”

“Why does it feel like he's coming this way?”

The gods looked at each other.

Meanwhile, cold sweat broke out of the God of Death's forehead. He murmured, “...You always exceed my expectations.”

The God of Death had encountered and interacted with Minhyuk before. So, he could tell to some extent what the man planned. He quickly said, “That guy's real target is us!!! God of Magic! Focus your bombings on him!”

No matter what happened, they were gods. They had to maintain their pride as a god. This meant that they could not allow their descendants to land an attack upon them.

Realizing what was happening, the Battle God broke out in cold sweat. He thought, *‘If you attack us, then your credibility rating will experience an exponential increase. But do you think that it’s possible?’*

It was an interesting thought, a scary one, but interesting nonetheless.

At that moment, the God of Magic sent all his magical attacks on Minhyuk, and the God of Archery also moved to fire his arrows at him.

Baaaaaaaang—!

Powerful explosions engulfed Minhyuk as sharp arrows dug into him. And it was not only them. Even the Divine Army had used their swordsmanship skills and focused their attacks on them.

The Battle God sighed, *‘Your idea was great. However, there’s no way that you would be able to survive such an attack.’*

A wry smile painted the Battle God’s face, while a triumphant one was on Nerva, who was standing below them.

The viewers watching through Reporter Go Eun-Ah’s broadcast sighed as they watched Minhyuk get devoured by the gods’ intense attacks.

[Wow. Will it end like this?]

[If Minhyuk is deprived of his title as the Battle God’s Descendant, Nerva will swoop in and push him back immediately.]

[This is the end of an emerging empire.]

[It doesn’t matter how strong Minhyuk is. The gods’ attacks were all focused on him. Do you think he will be able to survive that? He’s far too reckless.]

[In the first place, attacking the gods was already way too much for them.]

[But Minhyuk had received a new armor set, right? Wasn’t that armor set really powerful?]

[Lol. Even if its defensive power is high, it cannot endure that much.]

Reporter Go Eun-Ah and the viewers all sighed in tandem. However, Eun-Ah found it a bit strange.

‘Why did he act so recklessly like that?’

Even though he knew he would be the focus of all the attacks, why did Minhyuk continue to run? Why didn’t he stop? Why? Did he make such a reckless choice because he feared being deprived of his title as the Battle God’s Descendant?

At that moment, Go Eun-Ah caught sight of a shadow of a figure within the thick cloud of dust. The figure stood firmly and relatively fine despite the onslaught of attacks.

His appearance was revealed with one wave of the God of Magic’s hands, who used *Wind* magic to clear the dust away. Minhyuk’s appearance was completely different from what he looked like earlier. There were black feathers in the form of a full plate armor covering his entire body. From what it looked like, the black armor, which was crushed and dented all over, seemed to have the

ability to regenerate. It twitched and shook like flesh regenerating as it repaired itself swiftly and quickly.

Go Eun-Ah saw Minhyuk's lips move. From what she saw, he seemed to be saying the word 'Transcendence.'

Chapter 932

Athenae's Supreme, Minhyuk, was the focus of everyone's attention. The slightest change in his being, like the parting of his hair, was enough to make an issue to the world.

Even if there were the tiniest change in his accessory, armor, or sword, the experts would already be busy analyzing and discussing what kind of equipment it was and what it could do. Of course, the players were waiting and expecting such an analysis.

This was also why the Transcendental's Armor, which debuted during Minhyuk's fight against the Peiro Allied Nations, created a huge issue and was said to have caused balance collapse.

Why? The experts had analyzed that Minhyuk would not be able to receive much damage from the attacks sent his way because his Transcendental's Armor had high defensive power and the ability to self-regenerate. Not only that, even though it was full plate armor, a set known for its heaviness, he could move more freely and swiftly than before.

—No armor set that is better and more amazing than this exists!

Everyone agreed with the words of one of the world-famous experts.

But Minhyuk was no fool. He knew the Transcendental Armor would become a huge issue once exposed to the masses. Disclosing an artifact's information would also become one's weakness. That was why he hid the armor's ability as much as possible.

Of course, this problem also applied to the gods. The gods were unaware that Minhyuk had a Transcendental-ranked artifact in his possession and that this Transcendental-ranked artifact was two armors in one.

Minhyuk had quickly equipped his Black Dragon Armor when he saw the God of Magic turn toward him and send a barrage of attacks his way.

[You have equipped the Black Dragon Armor!]

[You can only equip this armor for five minutes!]

- All of your stats will increase by +31%.
- All your attack and defensive power will increase by 4%.
- Your magical defensive power will quadruple.
- Your skill attack power will increase by 1.3x.
- Your armor's recovery rate will quadruple.
- The armor is as light as a cloth that weighs 50 grams.

- Armor can only be equipped for five minutes.*

- Passive Skill: Slaughterer's Absorption*

- Passive Skill: Asura's Shield*

- Passive Skill: The Unapproachable One*

- Active Skill: Transcendence*

When equipped, the Black Dragon Armor would give him an additional 350 in defensive power. All of his stats would also increase by 6%. Even his magical defensive power would quadruple, and a different set of skills would be available to him compared to when he had the Transcendental's Armor equipped.

These skills were none other than *The Unapproachable One* and *Transcendence*.

Artifact Skill

- You can accumulate Transcendence from the attacks you receive from your enemies for one minute.*

- The higher your enemy's level, the more Transcendence you will accumulate.*

- The higher the damage, the more Transcendence you will accumulate.*

- The skill can only be triggered once you exceed 20% of the accumulation rate.*

- The amount of buff you will receive will be determined by the accumulation rate you achieved by the time Transcendence was triggered.*

- The skill will be activated for thirty seconds.*

Artifact Skill

- There is an 8% chance of triggering this skill when the enemy attacks.*

- The skill will last for three seconds upon activation.*

- Upon activation, your evasion rate will increase by five times.*

- The skill won't be activated for one minute of the initial triggering.*

Of course, there was one very important thing that Minhyuk could not forget. The Transcendental's Armor was a *set artifact*, and it could increase his defensive power by 1,100 just by being equipped. He should also highlight the fact that the Black Dragon Armor had this amazing effect: it quadrupled his magical defensive power.

Bang, bang, bang—!

Boooooooooooooooooom—!

The fierce and heavy bombing of magical attacks forced a groan out of Minhyuk's mouth.

'Amazing.'

As expected of the God of Magic, Ali was utterly incomparable to him. Of course, even if Minhyuk's defensive power had increased by leaps and bounds, he still would be hit hard by the attack.

[Your HP has dropped below 85%!]

[Your HP has dropped below 80%!]

[...HP...below 77%...]

Immediately after that, the God of Archery's arrows squeezed through the explosion and aimed for Minhyuk's body.

[The Unapproachable One.]

[Your Evasion Rate will increase by 5x for three seconds.]

[This cannot be triggered again for one minute.]

The evasion rate was the stat that helped the person avoid attacks that could be avoided, escaped, or missed, even if the attack should have hit them.

Several arrows boasting tremendous accuracy surprisingly passed by Minhyuk and left him unscathed. Even the magic that the God of Magic had fallen right beside him, unable to exert any of its power on its intended target.

At the same time, another set of notifications rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[You have accumulated Transcendence!]

[The system recognizes the attacker as a strong man!]

[You have accumulated Transcendence!]

[The system...the attacker...!]

[...Transcendence!]

[...Transcendence!]

Minhyuk's power of Transcendence was quickly being filled up.

'Is it this easy? Is accumulating Transcendence this easy?'

He could not help but wonder. After all, his Transcendence had jumped fiercely and had now exceeded 43%. But as he continued to receive the baptism of attacks, Minhyuk realized something.

‘The hundreds of sword lights sent by the Divine Army troops only helped me increase my Transcendence by around 4%.’

Transcendence was a skill that could only be triggered once its accumulation rate had reached 20%, and this accumulation rate would be reset once every minute. Simply put, no matter what kind of attacks the Divine Army would unleash upon Minhyuk in one minute, it would be tough for these attacks to help him trigger Transcendence.

Considering that the average level of the Divine Army's troops was slightly higher than the average level of the knights of the Luvien Empire, Minhyuk concluded that it was extremely difficult to meet the Transcendence's triggering condition. But with the gods' intense attacks, the skill's triggering condition was easily met. It surpassed his expectations.

[...Transcendence!]

[...Transcendence!]

The damage dealt to him allowed him to constantly accumulate his Transcendence, but it also shaved off 65% of his total HP.

Vwoooooooooong—!

A few moments after the attacks subsided, a strong wind blew and scattered the thick dust cloud covering him.

[You have accumulated a total of 61% of Transcendence!]

“Transcendence,” Minhyuk murmured as a strong power surged through his veins. Black wisps of energy, a feature very much in line with the name Black Dragon Armor, also appeared and swirled all over his body.

[You have activated Transcendence!]

[You have gone beyond your limits and transcended to another realm!]

[You have gone beyond your limits and transcended to another realm!]

[You have gone beyond your limits...!]

“...?”

Minhyuk was quite puzzled when he heard three of the same notifications ringing in his ears. The results had gone beyond what he had expected.

[The buff effect of the “Spicy Braised Chicken” will not be in effect during the thirty seconds of the Transcendence's activation!]

[The Transcendence's buff effects have now been applied!]

[All of your stats have increased by 67%!]

[All of your attack power has increased by 34%!]

[All of your defensive power has increased by 37%!]

[All of your skill levels have increased by +3!]

[Your resistance to abnormal statuses has increased by 50%!]

[Your total HP and MP have increased by 40%!]

[Transcendence will remain in effect for thirty seconds!]

“...!”

Minhyuk was quite shocked. The effects were truly outstanding.

‘It will be hard to achieve an accumulation rate like this again.’

This was only possible because he had received the full brunt of the attack of the gods.

Meanwhile, there was one thing that the gods were wondering about.

“What’s that armor?”

“Did you give that armor to the Food God?”

The God of Magic and the God of Archery were both shocked and appalled when they saw that a normal human being, a human who had not yet become a complete god, was able to deal with and endure their constant attacks. The more shocking part was that the armor on this very same human’s body was repairing itself.

“No. I don’t know what that armor is either.”

Even the Battle God could not understand what had just happened. He stared at the mysterious and unusual wisps of black energy flowing from the black armor covering Minhyuk’s body.

[Thirty-eight minutes and fifty seconds have passed since the start of the Third Wave!]

The notification rang, awakening everyone from their stupor. There were only one minute and twenty seconds left. However, there was still a 30% gap between Nerva and Minhyuk’s credibility ratings.

The Battle God thought, *‘Whatever that power is, it will be hard for you to overcome this situation.’*

Boooooooooooooom—!

Minhyuk dug his feet into the bone dragon he was standing on and catapulted toward them. The gods were left gawking at the sight. The speed at which Minhyuk was flying was also considered explosive, even for the gods.

“Stop him!!!”

Bang, bang— Bang, bang, bang—!

Another rain of attacks fell on Minhyuk. However, Minhyuk did not stop. He either evaded the attacks or received them with his entire body until he broke out of their attacks. In just an instant, Minhyuk appeared in the vicinity of the gods.

The Battle God tried to step forward and restrain Minhyuk, who was now directly approaching them.

‘What...?’

To his shock, his body could not move. That was when he saw the faint smile on Minhyuk's face. The Battle God hurriedly looked at the other gods and saw they could not move as well. As he looked around, he saw a mysterious golden rope wrapped tightly around the waist of the God of Magic.

“...!”

Only then did he recall that everyone who ate Minhyuk's dish had shown tremendous power, except for one man. This man, who had not shown any outstanding performance since earlier, was none other than the *God of Fetters*.

[God's Absolute Bondage has restricted the movement of your entire body!]

[God's Absolute Bondage will restrain your movements for ten seconds!]

The God of Fetters appeared with Golden Mage Ali above the gods. He could not help but shudder when he saw his credibility rating jump to 30% the moment he bound the gods. Then, he tugged the golden rope that bound the gods tightly as hard as he could.

[You have triggered Tug!]

[An irresistible force will force those you have bound to gather together!]

Like fish in the net, the gods were dragged and pulled together. Minhyuk, who had already approached them, shouted, “Ego Chain Sickle!”

There was a power that Minhyuk had never used on purpose earlier. He had been saving it for this moment alone. After all, if he had used that power earlier, the gods would have either stopped or destroyed it.

“Immortal Knight Order!”

Around a dozen soldiers dressed in shabby armor appeared.

“Mass Teleport!” Ali shouted as he teleported the other descendants to surround the gods.

Meanwhile, Death, who had been preparing the summons since earlier, summoned his death knights and sent hundreds of sword lights toward the gods.

[Thirty-nine minutes have passed!]

These people, who had waited for this very moment, surrounded the gods and glared at them. Today, for once in their lives, they were given the chance to attack the gods. It was something that they knew would never happen again, so they were thrilled.

And Minhyuk, who had become twice as powerful thanks to the power of Transcendence, looked at the Battle God.

“No way...”

The Battle God's expression screamed, ‘*There's no way that you're going to kill me.*’

Of course, any death incurred during the Succession Ceremony was not real. However, the Battle God and Minhyuk were supposed to be quite close to each other.

“You were the one who attacked first, you know?”

“...”

‘Ah, seems like I won’t be spared.’

“Sword of Absolute Death.”

With the +4 increase in level, the Sword of Absolute Death’s additional attack power had increased significantly. Even the area it could cover had widened considerably. Just like that, lightning bolts fell and struck the gods fiercely.

Crackle, crackle, crackle—!

The God of Shooting, who had been preparing for this skill and refraining from using it since earlier, immediately unleashed his *Carnival of Rapid Fire*.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

Hundreds of bullets were fired, striking the gods all over their bodies.

“Graaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!”

The God of Animals also moved, transforming into a gigantic bear and lunging toward the gods. He used his large claws and slapped the gods like crazy.

At that moment, the ropes that bound the gods began to loosen. Of course, the gods realized this too.

[You have fallen into a six-second stunned state!]

But Minhyuk’s lightning strikes have plunged them into a stunned state and left them unable to move again.

[Transcendence has ended!]

Minhyuk’s Transcendence ended immediately after that. But the attacks were not over yet. The Ego Chain Sickles continued to attack and abuse the gods.

“Explosion! Explosion! Explosion! Explosion! Explosion!”

Explosions continuously bloomed from among the gods.

[The Battle God’s Sword’s Credibility Rating is 47%!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 26%!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 28%!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 30%!]

The members of the Immortal Knight Order, realizing the situation they were summoned to, immediately ravaged the gods as they unleashed their Pinnacle Skills upon them.

Vwoooooooooong—!

Baaaaaaaaang—!

“Keheuuuuk!”

“Ugh!!!”

“Keuhaaaaaack!!!”

The viewers wondered if they were in a dream when they saw the gods scream and shriek on their screens.

[Thirty-nine minutes and fifty seconds have passed!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 38%!]

[There are only ten seconds left before the Succession Ceremony ends!]

[10... 9... 8...]

“Supreme Overlord’s Technique.”

Crackleeee—!

Blazing black flames erupted from Minhyuk’s sword.

The force that tied the gods was slowly disappearing. They were now gearing up for a counterattack. But before they could do so, the quick-witted Ali immediately gathered the descendants and members of the Immortal Knight Order while Valentino slammed his huge square shield in front of them.

At that moment, the blazing black flames shot out and struck the gods.

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 42%!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 43%!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 45%!]

Minhyuk’s face grew ugly when he saw the flames quickly scattered around. However, the scariest part of Supreme Overlord Technique’s fire was that it could inflict continuous damage upon his enemies.

[2 seconds.]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating is 48%!]

[1 second.]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating...!]

[The Battle God’s Descendant’s Credibility Rating...!]

[The Succession Ceremony has ended!]

[Your final Credibility Rating will now be determined!]

Chapter 933

The Overlord’s Flames, which ravaged the gods, disappeared as if they had never existed. Even the bone dragons swarming the skies and the Divine Army troops covering the ground vanished with a flash of light.

[The Succession Ceremony has ended!]

[Your final Credibility Rating will now be determined!]

The moment the Succession Ceremony ended, all of the damage that the players and the gods suffered immediately disappeared as they recovered back to their original state from before the ceremony started.

Everyone held their breaths. Whether the descendants could meet the required credibility rating was important for the players and the gods. Then, the very first notifications rang.

[The God of Shields' Descendant has achieved a 63% Credibility Rating!]

[He is nothing short of the God of Shields!]

Valentino was very thrilled. Perhaps many of his fans were cheering for him at this very moment. This was a turning point for him. It would give him a stronger power and make his name known more. When the God of Shield first met him, he viewed Valentino as insignificant and commanded him to worship him. But now, everything would be different.

Vwoooooooooong—

The hall where the Succession Ceremony was being held searched for its original position and slowly landed on the ground. In a blink, Valentino, who had a platinum crown floating above his head, and the God of Shields appeared in the Succession Ceremony hall in a flash of light.

[You have inherited the position of the God of Shields!]

[You can now build a temple and a religion that praises and worships the God of Shields!]

[The 1st Level of the God of Shields' power will be released once the inheritance ends. The 2nd Level will open once you reach Level 660, and the final level will open once you reach Level 700!]

[The God of Shields will remain with you for a year to fill in any gaps, flaws, or insufficiencies you might have!]

[The God of Shield's 1st Level of power will now be opened!]

[All of your defensive power will increase by 24%!]

[Your total HP will increase by 18% while your total MP will increase by 5%!]

[All of your shield-related skills' levels will increase by +1!]

[You have acquired the Active Skill: Charging God's Shield.]

[The God of Shields is the God who protects his allies and his troops with the greatest and sturdiest shield!]

Valentino's heart thrummed in excitement when he heard the notifications in his ears. He looked at the outstretched hand of the arrogant God of Shields before him.

“Congratulations. I hope you will never lose your pride from here on out.”

Valentino clasped the God of Shield's hands tightly. This was a noble, glorious, and touching moment for him.

‘I regret nothing.’

Valentino knew he would lose everything he had built when he returned to the Luvien Empire. After all, he had angered Nerva. He still did not and would not regret what happened here today. In a way, it was his retribution.

[The God of Magic's Descendant has achieved a 55% Credibility Rating!]

[He is nothing short of the God of Magic!]

When Valentino turned to look beside him, he saw Golden Mage Ali inheriting the power of the God of Magic. And it was not just him. All of the gods—the God of Animals, the God of Siege Weapons, the God of Fetters, the God of Lightning, etc.—who chose to side with Minhyuk had achieved a satisfactory credibility rating and successfully inherited the position of their respective gods.

Ali and Death, inheriting the power of their respective gods, would be able to tremendously boost Minhyuk's empire. They had only opened the first level of their powers, but they were already 1.2x stronger than before.

'And those that were able to inherit the position of god successfully? They will grow even more prominent the more they approach Level 700.'

Even Minhyuk could not imagine what heights Ali would be able to reach once he reached Level 700.

'Maybe he'll grow stronger than me?'

This was not Minhyuk babbling. Minhyuk was already in a state where he had opened most of his power as the Food God. After all, the Food God was a god that had no power that he could let his successor inherit. Minhyuk's thoughts would not change even if he inherited the position of the Battle God.

The Battle God was considered the greatest god because he was strong. However, he was hailed as the greatest and most outstanding god because he was the *God Who Ruled All Armies*. That was his advantage, which no god could match or compare with.

Also, Minhyuk was completely unaware of his and Nerva's credibility ratings.

"This?! Damn it!"

At the same time, Minhyuk heard curses all over the place.

"No way..."

"H- How..."

"I followed Nerva's orders and even did a great job. So, why?!"

Those were the players who were notified that they were unqualified. The gods knew that some of them had enough powers and abilities. However, these people failed to take the opportunity during the Succession Ceremony. As if to console them, a notification rang in their ears.

[The gods will give those who achieved more than 30% Credibility Rating a final chance. You will be granted the opportunity to take a separate trial.]

[However, those who fall under this category will no longer receive the preferential treatment of having the 3rd Level of power opened even if they became gods.]

It was quite a relief for these people. However, even if they passed the subsequent trial, there would still be a noticeable difference between them and those who successfully passed the Succession Ceremony once they hit Level 700.

Around 20% of the players had appeared here and were disqualified from becoming gods after they were forced to log out during the Succession Ceremony. Among those who weren't forced to log out, around 65% failed to meet the required credibility rating and had to take a second trial.

Joy Co. Ltd. never intended the Succession Ceremony to be a ceremony where the gods would just hand things over to their successors easily. The primary purpose of the Succession Ceremony was to screen out the unqualified ones and give rightful power to those who were qualified.

Only 15%. That was the number of people who have won the honor of inheriting the position of God during this Succession Ceremony.

Finally, it was Minhyuk's turn, and he heard the loud ring of the notification window that appeared in front of him.

[The Battle God's Descendant has achieved a 52% Credibility Rating!]

[He is nothing short of the Battle God!]

Minhyuk trembled. Of course, he also hoped to become the true Battle God and boost the power of the Beyond the Heavens Empire. However, his face grew ugly not long after.

[You...inherited the position of Battle God...]

[Correction in progress!]

[You cannot inherit the power of the Battle God!]

It was not just Minhyuk; even the Battle God was confused by the situation.

'Of all things...'

The Battle God never expected things to turn out this way. Even Nerva's face, sporting a faint smile earlier, grew twisted. Minhyuk and Nerva hurriedly averted their gazes when they accidentally made eye contact.

At that moment, another notification rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[Your Credibility Rating is the same as the Battle God's Sword's Credibility Rating!]

"...!"

Minhyuk immediately understood why he could not inherit the Battle God's position and powers right away.

*'What a f*cking awful situation...'*

Only 1%. If Minhyuk's credibility rating were just 1% higher, he would have already become the Battle God. And if he became the true Battle God, he would probably be able to obtain enough

power once he reached Level 700 to wage an all-out war against the Luvien Empire. But those plans were now completely dashed.

But Minhyuk and Nerva fought hard to increase their credibility rating to 50%. Would they be left without receiving anything?

‘That can’t be.’

The Battle God was about to lose his mind. He had two more things to worry about: what he should give the two as a reward and who would inherit his position.

‘If I allow one of the two to inherit my position now, I will be considered biased.’

That was not an appropriate behavior for the most extraordinary Absolute God.

The other players were also made aware of the situation and had now begun to mumble and whisper among themselves. Even the viewers watching the broadcast through Go Eun-Ah could not hide their confusion and shock when they realized the situation.

The Battle God hurriedly summoned the Absolute Gods for an impromptu meeting.

The Absolute Gods looked serious. The Battle God’s position was the most important one. He was the only god who could lead the gods and even the Absolute Gods in an emergency. Because of that, it was hard for them to choose between the two emperors, who obtained the same credibility rating.

“If that’s the case, then we can only send them back first,” the God of Will said.

“Yes, we will send them back. But if we send them back from the Succession Ceremony without them receiving any kind of compensation and reward, then we will certainly receive a huge backlash. You have to understand that they tried to kill us just a few moments prior,” the God of Death immediately refuted.

“No. We have to send them back for now. Because there’s nothing that we can do right here and now.” However, the Battle God ruled in favor of the God of Will.

Yes, they had to send them back. After all, they could not keep them here forever. But it was also true that they had to give them something and satisfy them before they could do that.

“Then, it’s decided. Let’s first give them a satisfactory reward and send them back. We have no choice but to throw something together and let Minhyuk and Nerva compete with something else.”

The Battle God decided to think about what Nerva and Minhyuk could compete with once he sent them back. Now, the gods were left agonizing over what rewards they could give the two.

“How about the Sword’s Tribute?” The God of Cooking said.

The Sword’s Tribute was a fantastic power that could increase the attack power of the swords held by the soldiers under the command of the skill user.

“That won’t work. If you compare the Luvien Empire and the Beyond the Heavens Empire, then the Luvien Empire has a greater advantage. After all, they have the advantage of numbers. This would benefit the Luvien Empire greatly, and it would be very unbalanced.”

The rewards and compensations that the two would receive should be fair and equal.

“Then, what about the Battle God’s Running Warriors?”

This reward was a song. If one sang this song, they could give a buff to the army they were leading.

“The Beyond the Heavens Empire already has a great national anthem. The Battle God’s Running Warriors will be unnecessary for him.”

They talked for a long time, but they still could not conclude.

Then, the God of Cooking opened her mouth and said, “I think it’s better to get the approval of the two and give them whatever reward they want.”

Give Minhyuk and Nerva the reward that they want and approve of. If they did that, the two would have no other complaints.

“Alright, let’s do that.”

After finishing their talk, the Battle God appeared again and looked at Nerva and Minhyuk standing before him.

A sense of shame washed over Nerva Sephiroth.

‘I have achieved the same credibility rating as the Beyond the Heavens Empire emperor?’

He was the emperor of the strongest empire—that was who he was. Yet he could not believe he had achieved the same ranking as the lowly emperor of the Beyond the Heavens Empire!

Then, the Battle God stepped forward and said, “Come forward.”

Nerva was extremely uncomfortable. He did not like standing side by side with Minhyuk one bit.

“I’m sure the two of you know the current situation. It would be better to determine who becomes the next Battle God later.”

‘Damn it.’ Nerva kept on cursing in his head, although he nodded in agreement. He also knew this was the best solution for their current situation.

Next came the most important thing.

“However, both emperors have shown me outstanding and remarkable performances. So, I’m willing to give you both reasonable rewards. First and foremost, all of the participants of the Succession Ceremony were promised certain rewards. You were given the following choices—ten platinum, ingredients for Chobok Samgyetang, Succession Ceremony’s Celebration Ring, and Fantastic Potion. If you

choose one of these rewards, I will give you a much better reward. For example, we were originally set to give you ten platinum, but I will give you 20,000 platinum as a reward.”

Of course, Nerva chose to receive the 20,000 platinum as his reward. It was enough to fund and run a decent-sized kingdom for a few months. For Nerva, this was just like a penny, but he is not an idiot who would refuse any reward.

“I choose to receive the 20,000 platinum reward,” Nerva answered, taking the initiative to choose. When he turned his head, he could see Minhyuk’s bright smile.

“...I don’t need to hear it. I already know.”

“Hehe. Thank you very much!”

Of course, Minhyuk chose the ingredients for Chobok Samgyetang. Minhyuk smiled in delight at the thought of receiving ingredients guaranteed to be at least at legendary grade. It was sure to be delicious!

‘How can such an idiot...’

Was this really the person ruling a newly emerging empire?

Then the Battle God said, “Nerva is the Battle God’s Sword; he is the sword that will protect me. And Minhyuk? He is my successor and will eventually inherit my position. Since both of you are equal, I’m sure you have obtained some of my power.”

Indeed, this was the case. Both Minhyuk and Nerva had received some of the Battle God’s power. And it was mostly similar in strength or effect. Of course, there was a probability that one of them had received a better power. And that was most likely Nerva. After all, he had been the Battle God’s Sword for quite a long time.

“Then, choose one of the Battle God’s powers you possess, and I will increase it by two levels.”

“...!”

Nerva was highly delighted when he heard that. Even for him, the emperor of the strongest empire, this was an astonishing and great reward. Why did he think that this was a great reward? There was one reason. And that was because, among the powers of the Battle God in his possession, he had this special authority called *The One Who Breaks Through Limits*.

How could the Sword of the Gods have power comparable to the gods when they were not even gods? Even talented people would reach the limits of their talents. So, how were they able to reach such heights? It was because they grew with this power.

If *The One Who Breaks Through Limits*, a power that could no longer grow and had a limit on the number of people he could help, were strengthened, it would be amazing.

‘I will be able to obtain a stronger and more superior knight order.’

Nerva turned to look at Minhyuk.

‘He might be the successor, but unlike me, he has not been one for a long time.’

He was sure Minhyuk had taken significantly fewer missions and things from the Battle God than him. The Battle God had also given a lot of power to him before. Nerva was sure he had taken most of the Battle God’s outstanding powers for himself.

So, no matter what Minhyuk did here, Nerva was sure he would still be the one with greater benefits. The only problem was that he had to receive the approval of the Beyond the Heavens Emperor. After all, there was no way that he would agree and help the Luvien Empire gain such a considerable foothold. Nerva glanced at Minhyuk and made eye contact with the man.

Minhyuk opened his mouth and said, “Battle God, from what I understand, this will only be done after obtaining Emperor Nerva’s and my agreement, no? Then, can we settle on this agreement between ourselves?”

The Battle God immediately understood. He thought, *‘He wants to negotiate given that Nerva will be at an advantage here. He’s truly sly and calculating.’*

Seeing the Battle God nod, Minhyuk said, “Emperor Nerva, I demand two million platinum from you.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“I also want your territory up north, the Aveid Territory. Also, let me recruit three of the Luvien Empire’s talents. Of course, I will not recruit anyone that’s a part of the Swords of the Gods.”

Minhyuk’s words caused a stir among the players. The initial demand of two million platinum was enough to supplement the Beyond the Heavens Empire for quite a while. The Aveid Territory was a barren land that the Luvien Empire had recently pioneered with many of its talents after determining that it was an excellent place to live.

‘Rumor has it that the Aveid Territory has plenty of untapped resources and has many hunting grounds.’

In other words, Minhyuk demanded not two million but more than ten million worth of platinum from Nerva. But Nerva, without hesitation or change in expression, responded, “I agree.”

“...!”

“...!”

Nerva’s face remained expressionless, but he was laughing deep inside.

‘What a stupid emperor.’

If Nerva’s *The One Who Breaks Through Limits* grew by two levels, he could set up a knight order far more extraordinary than the Sword of the Gods of today. Of course, it would be hard to manage

people once they were stronger. But Nerva only planned to increase his knight orders to the Third Order. He could manage it well on his own.

The difference in value between that and what Minhyuk asked for could not be determined with money alone.

*‘You lost, you f*cking bastard.’* Nerva chuckled to himself.

At that moment, the notifications rang in Minhyuk’s ears once again.

[The Battle God’s Sword and the Battle God’s Descendant had agreed and approved the Battle God’s proposal.]

The corners of Nerva’s lips twitch in joy. He just could not hide the delight that he was feeling.

‘My Swords of the Gods’ Third Knight Order will soon destroy your puny empire.’

Nerva looked smugly at Minhyuk. Then, Minhyuk looked back at Nerva and said, “Emperor Nerva.”

“...”

“By any chance, do you know about the Origin Authority?”

Of course, Nerva was aware of the Origin Authority. He could almost obtain one in the past, but the Battle God lost it, so he did not get it. The Origin Authority was also a power that only three of the most powerful Absolute Gods had.

‘How did this guy know about the Origin Authority?’

Only after seeing the grin on Minhyuk’s face did Nerva realize something was wrong.

Chapter 934

Compared to other people, Nerva was more knowledgeable about the Origin Authority. The reason was simple: He longed for it and wanted it more than anybody else. In the past, Nerva had the opportunity to obtain the Battle God’s Origin Authority, a power that belonged only to the three greatest Absolute Gods.

Back then, the Battle God had told him to stand before his statue, and he would bestow it upon him. However, a bizarre and absurd situation unfolded. The Battle God suddenly told him he had lost his Origin Authority. Nerva remembered feeling indescribably lost at the time. From what he heard, the Battle God’s Origin Authority was incredible.

‘It helps the gods recognize and obtain knights.’

It was completely different from the power that could help strengthen someone else. From what he had heard, it had the power to allow whoever used it to recruit new and strong subordinates.

‘This authority can develop and grow to six levels.’

And from what Nerva knew, the effects of the authority were shocking enough, even if it only experienced the first development.

The One Who Breaks Through Limits was the power that the Battle God had given him since he lost the Origin Authority. To break through one's limits, the only thing that they needed to do was to break down their walls. Since the Battle God could not give him the Origin Authority, he opted to provide Nerva with the power to develop and obtain a strong knight.

Just recalling that time was enough to make Nerva feel highly regretful. It had always been running around his head since that time. He often thought, *'World did the Origin Authority disappear to?'*

But now, the Beyond the Heavens' Emperor Minhyuk smirked and asked him, "By any chance, do you know about the Origin Authority?"

"..."

Nerva's anxiety soared when he heard the question. He thought that perhaps Minhyuk knew about it because he was friendly with the Absolute Gods or learned about it from Obren. But then, a thought flashed in Nerva's head that made everything blank.

'Why did he start talking about the Origin Authority here?'

But Minhyuk opted to remain silent at this moment. He did not say anything anymore.

The Battle God also realized that something very unusual was happening. He had been completely unaware of the location of the God and Knight since the day he lost it.

Not long after, the Battle God said, "Tell me your chosen ability."

Nerva, who was unable to hide his anxiety, said, "Please allow The One Who Breaks Through Limits to grow."

The Battle God nodded before turning to look at Minhyuk. Minhyuk smiled faintly and said, "Battle God, based on what you said, the only thing that you can help me grow is the power you own. Am I right?"

"That's right."

Minhyuk's grin widened. When Nerva saw the smile that almost ripped Minhyuk's face, he realized, *'I was tricked!'*

Nerva had promised to give Minhyuk two million platinum in exchange for his agreement to the Battle God's proposal. He also pledged to turn over the authority over a territory that was probably worth millions, perhaps even tens of millions, of platinum. But was that all? Of course not. He also approved the recruitment of talents from his empire, except for the Swords of the Gods. All of these would deal a massive blow to the Luvien Empire.

Even so, Nerva still promised without any hesitation. This was because he knew that he would be able to obtain a much better *reward* than Minhyuk. But all of his assumptions were wrong.

"Then, please allow the Origin Authority: God and Knight to grow."

"...!"

Nerva's eyes almost rolled when the thing he had dreaded turned into reality. He could tell Minhyuk had already finished setting up the board for him when he heard the Battle God's proposal. Between

Nerva and Minhyuk, the one who should not have agreed and accepted the Battle God's offer should have been him, not Minhyuk.

'I shouldn't have agreed and accepted!'

Even the Battle God was quite shocked. Why was the Origin Authority: God and Knight, which he had lost before, suddenly appearing here? But Minhyuk just shrugged his shoulders in answer.

Just like that, the rewards for both Minhyuk and Nerva were given out.

[You have obtained the Chobok Samgyetang's Ingredients Infused with God's Power.]

[God and Knight has leveled up!]

[God and Knight has leveled up!]

Joy Co. Ltd.'s Special Players Management Team.

[Warning!]

[Warning!]

[Warning!!!]

[The player who has leveled up an Origin Authority has appeared!]

Team Leader Park Minggyu's pupils were shaking, while Lee Minhwa was slack-jawed from shock. They stared at the dozens of monitors that flashed red from the warning.

At that moment, the doors to the Special Players Management Team's office slammed open as President Kang Taehoon rushed in.

"What's going on?!"

President Kang Taehoon's phone had an app that connected him to Joy Co. Ltd.'s various teams. This app would immediately notify Taehoon if a warning were issued and which department it came from.

Team Leader Park turned to look at him and said, "God and Knight's level has increased by two."

"What?!" President Kang Taehoon, who was not easily shocked, was left astonished when he heard this.

They had expected the Origin Authority: God and Knight to only increase by two levels in two and a half years, and this was already an adjusted assumption. They had advanced their assumptions since the one who obtained the authority was Player Minhyuk. They judged this power impossible to level up for at least four years, perhaps even forever. Why did they judge it to be that way? The reason was simple: the God and Knight's condition for growth was utterly absurd.

The God and Knight would be at Level 1 and could experience five level-ups. If one went from Level 1 to Level 2, the God and Knight would become slightly better. For example, the current God and Knight in Minhyuk's possession would be triggered randomly. Even if he did not want to, this skill would trigger by itself. But once it grew? Then, he would be given the control over it. But the conditions for this simple level-up were completely and utterly ridiculous.

“He needs to have five God-rank and twenty Legendary-rank NPCs just to increase its level by one...”

President Kang Taehoon had deliberately set the difficulty of the Origin Authority’s condition for growth to be the worst. He made it so it would be unable to be leveled up forever. Most people could not achieve the conditions to increase the Origin Authority above Level 1. Of course, Minhyuk was the only exception to this rule.

But the following condition for leveling up was far more shocking than the first.

‘He would need eight God-rank and 50 Legendary-rank NPCs. He also needs to achieve Level 800.’

It was utterly impossible. Even though these conditions were harsh, Minhyuk had already reached the point where he was about to increase its level by one. But he went above and beyond their expectations. He ignored these conditions and jumped two levels, reaching Level 3 in one go.

Then, they saw Minhyuk checking the Origin Authority: God and Knight on the screen.

“Open the information window...” President Kang Taehoon sighed in defeat while Team Leader Park hurriedly opened the skill’s information window.

Origin Authority

•If you find a talent that you truly covet, the God and Knight will guide you or develop a situation where you can obtain the talent as your own. Players are also included. This can only be used once every two months.

•The system will search and recognize strong men and powerhouses that can shock the world once every six months.

•It will provide a method and guide you or create a situation that will help you attract the talent to become your knight.

•Obtain more than fifteen God-rank NPCs to unseal.

•Obtain more than 400 Legendary-rank NPCs to unseal.

•Reach Level 1,000 to unseal.

“Haa...” President Kang Taehoon could only sigh when he saw the newly reborn God and Knight. When he looked at it again, he realized how crazy of an authority it was.

Team Leader Park Minggyu smiled bitterly. “This is like another version of Player Minhyuk’s Ingredient Tracking skill. This time, it’s a Talent Tracking skill.”

Minggyu also thought, *‘Will he be given guidance on how to obtain the talent that he covets once every two months, and will he even be given assistance in searching and tracking down a strong talent once every six months?’*

Simply put, Minhyuk had obtained the most powerful weapon that would allow him to chase and catch up to Nerva.

Minhyuk was amazed by the changes in the God and Knight.

[The Luvien Empire has to pay two million platinum to the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[The Luvien Empire has to hand over the authority and ownership of the Avid Territory to the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[The Luvien Empire has to give away three of the Beyond the Heavens Empire’s chosen talents!]

[This can only be done if the empire approves of the migration!]

It was pretty sweet. Minhyuk felt that the rewards that he obtained were extremely sweet. After all, he was able to one-up the arrogant Nerva, who had declared that he would be able to get a much greater Battle God’s power.

“Emperor Nerva, thank you for willingly agreeing and accepting this offer!”

“...”

Unlike Nerva, who looked like he had eaten shit, Minhyuk was laughing cheerfully and happily. Seeing this, the Battle God hurriedly ended the Succession Ceremony and sent everyone back. He felt something might happen if he left the two as they were.

Everyone present turned to light and disappeared. After the Succession Ceremony ended, Minhyuk, who had returned to the Beyond the Heavens Empire, logged out for a moment to sleep.

After resting, he quickly returned and began to cook his samgyetang using his cauldron.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaa—

When he lifted the cauldron lid, he was greeted by the boiling samgyetang with oil floating on top of it. After turning off the fire, Minhyuk quickly grabbed the huge chicken leg and tore it off the chicken from the cauldron.

“*Hot...! Hot!*”

He hurriedly removed the chicken leg from the freshly boiled samgyetang and transferred it to a plate. Then, he blew on it briefly before dipping it in sauce and taking a huge bite.

Chew, chew—

The light yet chewy meat made him smile in satisfaction when it entered his mouth. This time, he added some of the sour, well-ripened kimchi after taking another massive bite of the chicken leg.

Crunch, crunch—

The sourness of the kimchi washed away the greasiness of the samgyetang. It was indeed the perfect combination of flavors! Minhyuk finished the meat instantly, but he was not yet done cooking.

He immediately poured sliced carrots, onions, scallions, and glutinous rice into the samgyetang's soup and left it to boil. It did not take too long for him to finish cooking a delicious and savory chicken porridge. Minhyuk quickly blew on the chicken porridge filled with colorful vegetables and took a huge bite.

"Munch, munch- Kghhkh...!"

The thick yet lightly flavored chicken porridge delighted his mouth. Then, he added some chopped kimchi to his porridge before eating again.

Munch, munch-

Minhyuk smiled happily. *'I have been listless since summer started, but I feel like I have regained my energy!'*

The notifications immediately came after that.

[You have eaten the ingredients for Chobok Samgyetang.]

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

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

[Your charisma has increased by 10%.]

[All of your stats have increased by 0.8%.]

[For one week, your energy and vitality will not decrease, and you will not tire.]

Although Minhyuk failed to inherit the Battle God's position as his descendant this time, he felt that the rewards he received were still reasonably satisfactory, mainly because his God and Knight's level had increased by two.

At that moment, Haze said, "Your Majesty, the Luvien Empire has sent over two million platinum and a contract transferring the ownership of the Aveid Territory."

Minhyuk nodded and thought, *'So, all that's left is recruiting those three talents, huh?'*

There was one talent in Minhyuk's mind. This man was none other than the commander of the Swords of the Gods' First Knight Order, Commander Don.

At the same time.

Valentino, who was covered in blood, was dragged by the ropes that tied his wrists and sent floating above the Luvien Empire's plaza.

[You have been deprived of your qualifications as a member of the Swords of the Gods' Knight Order!]

[You have been stripped of your title as a Count of the Luvien Empire!]

[Your execution will commence soon. One execution will be equivalent to three deaths!]

Valentino was now being publicly executed. He had already been prepared for this. After all, he had chosen to become the God of Shields instead of obeying Nerva's orders.

'Three deaths and my removal from the Swords of the Gods? That's funny.'

Valentino chose to obey Minhyuk's order. He used Bentino's Wall to prevent damage from reaching many people, which was far more beneficial than protecting only Nerva. If the emperor he served was a proper and righteous one, they might have said that their judgment was wrong and that what Valentino did was right. But this was Nerva. And Nerva chose to execute him for this reason. In Nerva's eyes, even the Swords of the Gods were expendable.

'I'd rather go to another empire. No, I'll gather all the tanker players and build my kingdom!'

Since becoming a god, Valentino's dreams had grown bigger. But then, Nerva's aide stepped forward and said, "This man, Valentino, is guilty of disobeying His Majesty Nerva's orders!"

Murmur, murmur—

Valentino listened to the crowd's murmurs and waited for his judgment with closed eyes.

"He is guilty of treason!"

"...?"

That was when he realized that something was wrong.

"He is guilty of exchanging secret information with the Beyond the Heavens' Emperor!"

"...!"

Valentino's eyes snapped open.

'What- what- what is this bullshit...?!'

That was right. Nerva was trying to cut Valentino's path of survival and trampling on him so he could not become the true God of Shields.

"You will be executed for your crimes. And since you are a foreigner, you are sentenced to prison and will be left inside the Luvien Empire's Prison of Indolence for one year!"

"...!!!"

The Prison of Indolence was considered hell for both players and NPCs alike. One's HP would slowly be eaten away once they were sent inside that place. Being sentenced to this prison was a punishment given to traitors and felons.

"Proceed with the execution!!!"

God of Shields Valentino, the greatest tanker in existence, seemed to be set to disappear from Athenae forever.

Chapter 935

Godly Editor Carron collaborated with Joy Co. Ltd. and recently produced an advertisement video with Spear God Ben as the focus.

His video helped the gaming company's sales jump more than a few times. Gaming experts and viewers alike selected that video as the best advertisement video. Even though Spear God Ben's video that the players watched while playing was quite long, it garnered a total of 150 million views in just a week when it was uploaded to Ztube.

Because of that, a constant stream of players moved to the Beyond the Heavens Empire. Most of them went there to see Spear God Ben or join the empire of a great emperor who had built such a tremendous and deep bond with an NPC.

At this time, Carron went to find Minhyuk, who was very busy.

Minhyuk was actually in the middle of listening to Haze's report.

"We have found strong monsters believed to be at least Level 600 in the southernmost region of the Aveid Territory. I believe we should send a subjugation force to eliminate them."

"Send the Pinnacle Strong Men and their disciples so they can show their power and strength to the Beyond the Heavens Empire soldiers."

"I understand."

Minhyuk, who had been discussing with Haze, could finally take a breather when he saw Carron enter his office. He sighed and said, "*Phew*. Is something the matter?"

"You're quite busy."

"There's a lot of things that I have to take care of in Aveid Territory."

The Aveid Territory was a considerable piece of land that the Luvien Empire spent much time and effort developing. This vast territory, abundant resources, and diverse hunting grounds were sure to benefit the Beyond the Heavens Empire, so they were swamped sorting it out.

Minhyuk set the matter aside and sat face-to-face with Carron.

"Talks about Your Majesty have been boiling on the internet since the Succession Ceremony ended."

Although Minhyuk did not defeat Nerva, he got an equal score with him and stood on the same footing. The fact that Minhyuk could record the same credibility rating as Nerva when the players had deemed it impossible for anyone to deal with the emperor and be on the same ground as him was already enough to cause an issue.

"Whenever I turn on the TV, all they talk about is you, Your Majesty. I believe all the channels talk about you."

Minhyuk shook his head. He felt both happy and undeserving of such things.

Then, Carron continued, “A lot of people want to see Your Majesty’s advertisement video right after Ben’s advertisement video.”

Of course, that was a given. This was mainly because everyone saw how Minhyuk played a considerable part in Ben’s ads. Even those who did not know of Athenae were curious about Minhyuk.

“Didn’t you decide to leave the advertisement video about me to be released at the end?”

They recently released a video about Minhyuk on Ztube. Of course, it addressed the balance collapse that people were clamoring about. Since they had just recently released this video, Minhyuk thought they would not be able to achieve the best effect if they released the advertisement video centered on him.

“That’s right. Your Majesty’s advertisement video will still be released last. What I want to suggest to you right now, Your Majesty, is a Q&A interview.”

Carron signed a contract with Joy Co. Ltd., but this contract also included Beyond the Heavens Empire. Carron’s job and responsibility was to give his all to promoting Beyond the Heavens Empire.

“I would like to involve some of the hottest figures from the Succession Ceremony this time. That includes you, Your Majesty, Death, and Ali.”

Of course, discussions about other players aside from them who had become gods were also on the rise since they were displaying a better performance than before. But Ali and Death had rapidly risen in the Beyond the Heavens Empire. Although they had not yet wholly inherited the gods' power, many people still wished to join their religion.

“With the Q&A interview of Ali, Death, and you, Minhyuk, we will be able to recruit more people to the Beyond the Heavens Empire.”

“Will an interview have a huge effect?”

“There will be some influx with your interview, Your Majesty. However, there will definitely be more influx from Ali and Death’s side.”

“Ah...”

“You just need to answer one question,” Carron said as he raised one finger. “Why did you choose the Beyond the Heavens Empire?”

Minhyuk was in awe. He was aware that there were quite a lot of necromancers and mages who were hesitating on whether they would join their religion. This was because joining Ali and Death’s religion was like coming under the rule of the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

“There will only be one video. However, it will consist of three interviews. The first would be Ali, then Death, and finally you, Minhyuk.”

Minhyuk nodded. He could tell that the final interview would have the most impact. So, he asked, "Should I exaggerate my answers?"

But Carron shook his head. "It's best for you to be honest. I have already received Ali and Death's approval for the interview. Once I get Your Majesty's approval, I will immediately proceed with the interview."

"Alright. You can go ahead with it."

Carron's words fully convinced Minhyuk. The moment Carron received the go signal, he immediately went to find Ali and Death and conducted an interview. During the interview, a bright light flashed in Carron's eyes.

'Yes, this is it...'

Carron was left in admiration. Ever since the beginning, he had encouraged Ali, Death, and Minhyuk to be very honest, and there was one reason for that.

'They are not actors.'

Their sincerest expression would only be shown if they spoke honestly.

After interviewing Ali and Death, Carron returned to Minhyuk and started another round of interviews.

Questions were constantly asked.

"..."

While Minhyuk answered, Carron looked at him with a faint smile.

'Amazing.' Carron had confirmed everything. *'Ali, Death, and Minhyuk's answers to this interview would have a huge effect.'*

Valentino, who was forced to suffer three forced logout after one execution, stared blankly at his bloody feet chained to the walls of the Prison of Indolence.

[You are detained inside the Prison of Indolence.]

[Your EXP is decreasing little by little!]

[This state will continue until you are forced to logout!]

This was a completely terrible punishment. Usually, players would hunt monsters the moment they connected to the game. Why? So they could level up and grow stronger. But now, Valentino was imprisoned in the Prison of Indolence for a year. Not only would his growth be stopped, but it would also eat away at his EXP and level.

These were all of the assumptions that Valentino had made in a short amount of time:

‘I will lose my position as the top tanker in the rankings in just a month.

‘I will be pushed out of the top ten thousand in the rankings in three months.

‘The people will forget me in six months.

‘I will have no more place to stand and stay in a year.’

Valentino grew even more despondent the longer he stared at the chain on his feet. He probably would not be able to access Athenae for a while, so Valentino, also known as Valentino in reality, logged out.

He grabbed a bottle of whiskey and chugged it before cradling it to his chest for a very long time as he sat in front of his computer. However, his eyes remained unfocused after seeing that his public execution was among the top ten in the real-time search term rankings. There were even several videos circulating on websites like ZTube. Not only that, there was also the “*Ali* vs. *Valentino*” search term sitting snugly on the 16th ranking of the real-time search term rankings.

‘Damn it.’

In just a moment, a ranker collapsed. His expression remained downcast as he checked the top three in the real-time search rankings. He confirmed that the first was *Minhyuk*, the second was *Ali*, and the third was *Death*.

He found it a bit strange, but it only took a moment before he grinned to himself. The shouts of “Frieeeeeeend!!!” during the Succession Ceremony were still fresh in his ears. But now that he reflected on it, he found it fun and exciting.

Valentino had also taken his chances before the Succession Ceremony had ended. He had gone to Minhyuk and asked.

–I really can’t come and join the Beyond the Heavens Empire?

Minhyuk frowned at him before he replied.

–Maybe you’ll have a chance if you become the Beyond the Heavens Empire’s loyal dog. Otherwise, my answer will remain no.

The words were scathing, but Valentino completely understood where Minhyuk was coming from. He had fought and clashed with the Beyond the Heavens Empire time and time again. The worst part? He made a terrible mistake toward Ali, a deed that he should never have done in the first place. He had to throw away at least everything for them to accept him. And even if he threw everything away, they would only look at him if he accepted being treated like their dog.

He chugged his whiskey once again as he wondered why those three had topped the real-time search rankings again. Then, he soon found the words “God’s Interview” rising to fourth place. He was sent to a ZTube video when he clicked on the term. Valentino stared blankly at the screen as he played the video.

Crackle, crackle, crackle, crackle–

The video showed a static screen for a moment before revealing the figure of a beautiful man with golden hair. This was Ali. Then, words appeared in the middle of the screen.

The man hesitated momentarily before saying, "Can I be honest?"

The scene swayed as if the camera was nodding in answer to the man's question.

"I'm a patient with severe social phobia, an otaku, an orphan, and a loner."

"I think it's the same with everyone. Everything was fascinating to me. It was fun..."

There was a twinkle in Ali's eyes as he answered, "I wanted to have more friends.

Frieeeeeeeeeeend!!!"

Ali chuckled when he heard those words. His face was devoid of pretense as he stared at the camera silently with a shy smile. Then, after a few moments, he nodded.

"I believe I have the most precious friends in the world."

Ali's smile deepened. As he had mentioned before, he was suffering from severe social phobia, an otaku, and a loner. But now?

"I have become an otaku who has overcome his severe social phobia, a person with precious friends who treat me like family, and someone who is no longer a loner."

The video showed a series of questions and answers.

Ali confidently answered, "Because that's where my friends and family are. Because that's where the people I want to protect, even if I lose everything, are."

Several questions passed by once again.

"I am happy."

After the last question, the screen turned static once again.

Crackle, crackle, crackle—

Then, the static disappeared to reveal the figure of a slim man with dark and dreary eyes. This man was none other than Death.

Death remained impassive; there was no sadness or joy in his expression as he answered, "I was a monster with half of my face covered in burns."

The first question was the same as the question that Ali answered. However, the following ones were different.

With no expression, Death said, “He... he was the first one.” Then, he turned to look at the camera and continued, “He called a monster, with half a face covered in burns, like me a ‘friend.’ And he was not being pretentious. He called me every single day saying that he was bored. He even came to my house and dragged me to a PC room.”

The nonchalant Death could not form his words for a long time. He sat there with his eyes misting and a lump in his throat. He even needed to cough to speak as he choked up with emotions.

“He’s a wonderful friend that I am very grateful to have. One day, I received a call from this dear friend of mine. He sounded delighted, as if it was his sole purpose, as he said, *‘I got you a doctor! A doctor that will treat your burns!’* He was even more excited than me, so much so that he nagged and chatted on the phone for an entire hour. It was quite ridiculous, no? He was more excited than me, the person in concern.”

Then, the final question came. This question was the same for both Ali and Death.

Valentino, who had been watching the video, had already watched Ali’s answer earlier.

Ali, who appeared in the video earlier, did not hesitate to answer, “I have no regrets.” He stared at the screen and emphasized, “Not even one bit.”

Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz—

The screen turned static once again. Just like before, a new face appeared when it disappeared. The person that appeared was Minhyuk.

Chapter 936

Minhyuk had a faint smile when he appeared on the video. As everyone expected, the first question was the same question that Ali and Death had been asked before.

Minhyuk sighed lightly as he answered, “I lived like there was a time limit on my life. Every day, I would pray and beg that I live one more day, just one more day.”

“It was enjoyable. I can’t eat what I want to eat because of my eating addiction, but I could eat something delicious in Athenae.”

Minhyuk hesitated, pondering the question momentarily before answering, "I am having fun. I feel very happy. It's to the point that I feel like I don't deserve it."

After a few similar questions were asked, questions specifically tailored for Minhyuk finally appeared.

Minhyuk was the emperor. However, even though he was the emperor, he still answered the question sincerely and honestly. There was not a shred of lie in his answer.

"It's the place where I can feel alive," Minhyuk chuckled as he stared straight at the camera. "I don't know when I'm going to die. But whenever I access Athenae, many people will come to welcome me: the nagging Haze, the grumpy yet adorable Beanie, my grandfather figure, Ben..."

The thought of these people alone was enough to put a smile on Minhyuk's face.

"It will grow bigger and stronger. It will become an empire without losing or falling behind the Luvien Empire."

This question was also a question that Ali and Death were asked earlier.

"As long as I gave it my all, I would not have any regrets. It's just..."

Minhyuk did not know the answers Ali and Death gave to this question. The only thing he did right at this moment was to express his thoughts.

"...I will feel sorry to everyone."

But if the members and the people of the Beyond the Heavens Empire heard Minhyuk's words, they would surely shake their heads at him. Ali and Death would not regret it, just like how they answered before.

Minhyuk remained silent for a very long time. He was at a loss for words and did not know what to say. He hesitated, stared at the monitor, and said, "Everyone, thank you very much."

Crackle, crackle, crackle—

Finally, the video ended.

Valentino returned to his senses and murmured, "I'm so jealous..."

He envied Minhyuk as the emperor and Ali and Death, who were with him. After watching the video, he picked up his phone.

"Yes! I'd rather be his dog!"

He would become a dog that barks when asked to bark and bites when asked to bite. After all, Minhyuk told him he had to become a dog to join the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

Valentino quickly recalled the phone number Minhyuk had told him before he disappeared from the Succession Ceremony in a flash of light. Having made a decision, he called the number in a hurry. However, no matter how often he called, there was no answer, so Valentino switched to texting.

[Minhyuk, this is Valentino. I'm willing to become your dog. If you tell me to bark, then I'll bark!]

Valentino immediately tried to call Minhyuk again after sending the text message. This was already his fifth attempt.

[The number you're calling is currently unavailable...]

[The number you're calling is currently unavailable...]

The call ended with a beep just two seconds after he dialed the number. Yes, the other person had already blocked him.

“Haha...”

Valentino understood. Was there someone that was more vulgar and lowly than him right now? He immediately went to beg the Beyond the Heavens Empire when the Luvien Empire threw him away?! The worst part? Minhyuk had played a trick on him by throwing him a rotten rope, not a golden rope, that he could cling to. Even so, Valentino still did not hate him. He knew this was only natural after all the atrocities and wrongdoings he had done so far.

After drowning himself in alcohol and declaring that he would not call or text Minhyuk anymore, Valentino lay in his bed and began to fiddle with his phone. What was he doing? He was carefully typing out the words that he wanted to send over.

[Are you sleeping...?]

His text looked like the text that an ex-boyfriend would send.

[1,413 mages moved to the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[310 necromancers moved to the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

The impact of Minhyuk, Ali, and Death's interview was immediately evident when Minhyuk logged into the game.

Sitting inside the conference hall with him, Carron said, “Ali and Death's sincere words have raised the people's trust and expectations toward Your Majesty. At the very least, these people can tell that they will not regret it if they moved to the Beyond the Heavens Empire right here and now.”

Minhyuk turned to look at Ali and Death in delight. He had asked Carron something before he was interviewed.

–But Carron, don't force them to answer if they're reluctant to answer the question.

Alright?

Ali and Death had lived rough and difficult lives like him. Sometimes, people were either ashamed of their past or afraid to be exposed to the public. Minhyuk did not want his friends to sell

themselves short just for the benefit of the Beyond the Heavens Empire. But the two did not shy away at all. They answered everything that they could.

‘Because they are the ones who overcame their difficulties and got through life.’

Those who overcame their difficulties with their efforts would receive great praise from the masses.

Then, Haze said, “Have you heard from him yet?”

“Not yet.”

“That’s strange. Considering Valentino’s current situation, I was sure he would have already contacted you by now.”

They had heard that God of Shields Valentino’s public execution had been held just a few days before. Although Minhyuk had secretly given the man his number, he hadn’t heard from him. Haze suggested that they sign a contract with Valentino.

Minhyuk went out of his way and even gave a slight excuse for this move. He said, “Some will harbor dislike toward Valentino, but we need to recruit him to develop the Beyond the Heavens Empire.”

Minhyuk was allowed to recruit three talents from the Luvien Empire. He knew that the Beyond the Heavens Empire could not continue recruiting people who suited their taste forever. Now, Valentino, who they did not really like, was on the table. He became a talent that they could take away from the Luvien Empire.

“If he comes here, then we can punish him for his actions,” Minhyuk said as he cautiously glanced at Ali. He specifically said this because the two had recently had some altercations.

But then, Ali said, “Minhyuk, you don’t have to worry too much about me. Honestly, do I have to care about someone I can easily kill in one shot?”

Everyone nodded in agreement to Ali’s words. This was the calmness of the strong.

For Ali, who had completely taken down and neutralized Valentino with Meteor in just one attack, the other’s provocations were nothing but a dog’s barking. It did not bother him at all.

Even so, Minhyuk insisted, “If Valentino chooses to join us, I intend to take all the artifacts and gold he will obtain in Athenae for half a year. Of course, the Beyond the Heavens Empire will also not pay him anything during this time.”

Ultimately, the Beyond the Heavens Empire would still not treat Valentino kindly.

“I will also ask him for three billion to migrate to our empire. I intend to send him to Avid Territory and make him the territory's lord.”

“Ho...”

“That sounds good.”

The Beyond the Heavens executives all burst out in admiration when they heard that. Avid Territory was the territory that they had received from the Luvien Empire. The Luvien Empire had

only started pioneering it and had not yet completed the process. Because of that, they had to continue sending troops to subjugate the monsters and finish pioneering the entire territory.

In the meantime, they sent the Pinnacle Strong Men to lead their troops. However, they were excellent talents who needed to train their soldiers, so sending Valentino instead of them was a great move.

“So, that means you will make him work until we have completely squeezed out everything from him?”

“That’s right.”

Becoming the lord of such a desolate and dangerous land would be very difficult. But Valentino’s hard work would benefit the Beyond the Heavens Empire once he fully pioneered and developed the Avid Territory.

“Alright. Let’s move on to more important things,” Haze said as he looked at the guild members.

“Our Beyond the Heavens Empire lacks soldiers specializing in shields.”

The number of the Beyond the Heavens shield-class soldiers was only around 30% of an ordinary empire’s soldiers.

“Valentino, who has become the God of Shields, will stand out more as he levels up. On top of that, he had become not only the source of envy but also the idol of many of the shield-class soldiers when he became the God of Shields. Now that he is imprisoned, if our Beyond the Heavens Empire takes him in, many shield-class soldiers would migrate to our empire.” Haze continued, making sure to emphasize the most important thing. “By recruiting Valentino, our Beyond the Heavens Empire’s worth would jump. We would be worth millions of platinum.”

Those words weren’t an exaggeration. Perhaps their empire would be worth more than millions of platinum if they did that.

But then, Minhyuk said, “There’s that. But the most important thing is that he hasn’t contacted me.”

“...”

“...”

The entire conference room turned silent when they heard Minhyuk’s words. Minhyuk was about to open his mouth to break the silence when he suddenly received a notification.

[God and Knight...!]

[Knight Commander Don is currently...!]

Minhyuk was left in shock when he checked the notifications.

He hurriedly jumped up and said, "If Valentino does not reach out to us and give us his offer first, then there's no need for us to reach out to him and propose a contract. Let's talk about this later. I have to hurry and go to the Prison of Indolence first."

Minhyuk finished the meeting in a hurry. He was so hurried that he ended such an important meeting so suddenly.

Not long after, he appeared in the Luvien Empire with Brod beside him.

Valentino finally woke up after passing out drunk last night. The first thing he did when he woke up was check his phone.

[Are you sleeping...?]

[You told me to contact you...]

[Were you just playing with me?!]

He sent messages that would look pathetic to anyone who read them, and he was very disappointed when he realized he had not received a reply. But now that this had happened, Valentino thought of another way. Perhaps whispering to Minhyuk might work.

'A dog? No. I don't care anymore. I'd rather go to the Beyond the Heavens Empire even if I get stoned there.'

It was much better than being dragged down from his position and abandoned in this place for a year. Going to the Beyond the Heavens Empire was better, even if he was sure he would get stoned in the streets.

When Valentino logged back into the game, he appeared inside the Prison of Indolence, his ankles still tied to a chain. The first thing he saw was his current EXP. One look, and he could tell that almost 20% of his current EXP had already disappeared.

Valentino bit his lips. Once again, he was made to realize that he was in a very desperate and shitty situation. He quickly opened his whispers so he could contact Minhyuk. However, he was forced to stop in his tracks. He did not know Minhyuk's whisper code.

"Damn it! Damn it! Damn it!"

Even though he was willing to give everything away, his attempts to join the Beyond the Heavens Empire always failed.

Creaaaaaaaaaak—

Then, at that moment, the prison gates opened. Someone came in and stood in front of Valentino. This person was none other than Minhyuk. Minhyuk stood in front of him just to show him his face. Valentino had come to the Prison of Indolence because he had something to do.

In the first place, Minhyuk did not intend to give Valentino an offer. He was aware that someone who did not want to offer something and reach out to them would never accept any proposal or suggestion the Beyond the Heavens Empire provided.

Valentino's eyes grew wide when he confirmed that Minhyuk had come inside. He stuttered, "You—you!!! Did you come here to make fun of me, huh?! I called you many times, but you did not answer me! You even blocked me!!!"

"???"

But Minhyuk did not receive any calls.

"Right. You must find me disgusting, huh?! I have done all those things to the Beyond the Heavens Empire, yet here I am begging you to take me in after falling into the abyss!"

"Well, that's right."

That was right. However, the Beyond the Heavens Empire was willing to take him in for a price. But Minhyuk could not even interject and tell this to Valentino, who kept yapping himself.

"Wa- wahahahahahahaha! I can't believe I, Valentino, the greatest tanker in the world and the God of Shields, am being humiliated like this. Right. I'd instead become Valentino, the Beyond the Heavens Empire's dog. No. I'm even willing to become the person who gets stoned, punched, and kicked.

"???"

"Take it all! I'm even willing to sign a Contract of Submission. Here, I'll even give you five billion—no! Ten billion!"

Minhyuk initially intended to ask for only three billion from him.

"I'll even give everything I obtain to the Beyond the Heavens Empire for a year. I will not receive anything in return for that time frame!"

Minhyuk had only wanted him to sign a half-year slave contract.

"And if you ask me to bark, I will bark. If you ask me to bite, then I will bite. I will obey your orders. Fufufufufufufufufufu! I will also build my God of Shields' Temple inside the Beyond the Heavens Empire. Of course, I will shoulder everything!"

If that happened, the players and NPCs, who worshiped the God of Shields, would gather in the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

"Fufufufufufu...! Yes! I'm offering you a contract of submission and obedience!"

The sound that escaped Valentino's mouth was strange. Even if one listened to it closely, one would have difficulty determining whether he was laughing or crying.

"???"

Minhyuk just stared at Valentino as the notifications rang in his ears.

[God of Shields Valentino is offering you a Contract of Submission and Obedience!]

[He will surrender everything he obtained to the Beyond the Heavens Empire and will not be given any income for one year!]

[He will shoulder all the expenses and use his money to build the God of Shields' Temple inside the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[He will obey all of your orders!]

‘Such a piece of cake?’ Minhyuk thought as he agreed right away.

Only after receiving Minhyuk’s agreement did Valentino, who was grabbing onto the iron bars, collapse in relief. Yeah, he believed that this was indeed the better choice. He’d rather live like this than rot in here.

At that time, Minhyuk, who had not said much since earlier, opened his mouth and said, “I never received any of your calls, Valentino.”

“Bullshit! 010 1234 5678, wasn’t that your number?! I have been calling that number! What?! Are you making fun of me again?!”

“It’s 1234 5679. The other party must have blocked you because a number from overseas kept on calling them.”

“...”

Valentino was rendered speechless for a very long time.

Chapter 937

Minhyuk hurriedly ended the critical meeting that they were holding, heading straight to the Luvien Empire’s Prison of Indolence after a series of notifications popped up in front of him.

When he arrived at the Prison of Indolence, he immediately saw Valentino, who yapped and chattered nonstop by himself. This made it extremely easy for Minhyuk to recruit the man worth millions of platinum to their side.

“Right. The fact that you came here to find me personally means that you also covet my talents,” Valentino spoke desperately. He sounded like he was grasping at straws.

But unfortunately, that was not the case at all. Minhyuk came to the Prison of Indolence because he had something to do with someone else. And there was a decisive reason why Minhyuk ended the meeting hastily and ran here.

He had recently leveled up his God and Knight skill by two levels. Thanks to that, the God and Knight could now give him the ways or create a situation where he could recruit the talented person he had chosen as his knight. Although it could only be triggered once every two months, it was still very useful.

But was that all? No. The God and Knight had developed to the point that the system could help him find the strong and inform him about them once every six months. Of course, as an overpowered and cheat-like skill, the God and Knight also provided the way or the situation that would help him obtain the strong talent as his knight.

Minhyuk chose Knight Commander Don, the commander of the Luvien Empire's Swords of the Gods' First Order, as the target for the God and Knight skill, which could be triggered once every two months.

These notifications rang in Minhyuk's ears the moment he chose Don.

[Knight Commander Don is a member of the Luvien Empire!]

[There is currently no method to win over and recruit Knight Commander Don to your side!]

[You will be able to choose another talent that you want in two months!]

Minhyuk sighed. Was the God and Knight truly doomed to fail this way? Was there no way to recruit Knight Commander Don to their side? When these disappointing thoughts flashed in his head, a new set of notifications appeared.

[The God and Knight has found a method to win over Knight Commander Don!]

Minhyuk realized at this moment that even though the skill failed to find a method right away, as long as the selection had not yet been refreshed, the effects would still be valid, and the skill would continue to find a way.

And Minhyuk was left in shock when he received the explanation about the current situation with Don.

[Nerva tried to appoint Knight Commander Don as the new Star of the Empire to replace the late Duke Ruffiso. However, it fell through when Don tried to assassinate Nerva during his appointment ceremony to become a duke. The problem was that Don tried to assassinate Nerva before the Swords of the Gods. This meant that his plans to assassinate the emperor failed.]

[Before Don was caught and thrown to prison, he shouted and announced to the world that Nerva rose to the throne and became an emperor using evil means.]

[However, no one believed Don's words.]

[The Swords of the Gods claimed that this was all because the Beyond the Heavens Empire's emperor had saved Don's life in the past.]

[Don was falsely accused of attempting treason and assassination under the orders of the Beyond the Heavens' Emperor.]

And the notifications did not end there.

Minhyuk wondered who in the world R?lszd was and why he needed the man. However, no notifications came to answer his question.

'You're already a nasty skill. Why not tell me until the end?' Minhyuk thought. But when he came out and asked Brod if he knew someone named R?lszd, he immediately answered.

–I knew him back when I was still competing with Nerva for the position of emperor. He was the commander of the knight order under Nerva's command.

Why was such a man left rotting inside the Prison of Indolence? The answer to that question and why Minhyuk needed R?lszd to bring Knight Commander Don to the Beyond the Heavens Empire was right around the corner.

Minhyuk slowly moved toward the figure hidden in the darkness. As he moved closer, the figure of the man sitting right behind the iron bars grew clearer and clearer. The man's hair was long and unkempt, his body bare and thin to the point that one would think he only had skin and bones left. But what impressed Minhyuk deeply was his eyes. His eyes were glowing dangerously like the eyes of a wild beast.

The man, R?lszd, looked at Minhyuk in confusion. His eyes grew wide when he saw Brod standing right behind Minhyuk. Then, he said, "The Other Sun. So, you're still alive."

Brod smiled wryly at R?lszd's words. The title *Sun* was given to him in the past. He only knew R?lszd because they were fighting against each other. Why? Because he and Nerva were competing.

"I don't understand why you have come to this place?"

Brod also could not understand why Don, the knight who followed him, became the knight commander of the Swords of the Gods and R?lszd, the knight who followed Nerva, was left rotting in prison.

R?lszd chuckled bitterly.

"It's not because of you." An unpleasant sound, similar to metal grating against each other, left R?lszd's mouth as he continued, "This was so I could help lead the emperor, who had always wished to rule for the sake of his people and land, back to the right path."

Minhyuk immediately understood the man's words. He asked, "You found out that Nerva had used poison to kill the Red Sword Knights and tried to bring him down, didn't you?"

Nerva used unscrupulous means to become the emperor and receive recognition from the Battle God. Yes, this was true. And just like Minhyuk had said, R?lszd was made aware of Nerva's atrocities and tried to take his emperor down.

"Nerva had locked me up in this place when I refuted him and told him to come down from his throne alone. To prevent my strength and power from disappearing, I let this place gnaw on my strength. Now, I only have two or three days left to live," R?lszd said with a bitter smile.

At this moment, Minhyuk understood why the God and Knight had guided him to this man named R?lszd. He recalled his conversation with Brod before they arrived at this place.

–Your Majesty, R?lszd was the very person who created the Swords of the Gods that we know now. The loyalty of the members of the Swords of the Gods to him is no less than their loyalty to Nerva.

Minhyuk pondered deeply about the matter. Don was now considered a traitor of the Luvien Empire. In a situation like this, it would be very difficult for them to take him as a talent of their own. In other words, they needed someone to prove the atrocities Nerva had committed and the words Don had declared before.

‘I also have the Sword of the Gods who delivered the poison under my wing.’

That was right. This man was once a member of the Swords of the Gods but now, he was Minhyuk’s shadow. The puzzle pieces slowly started to click together in Minhyuk’s head.

Even Brod also understood the situation. He stepped forward and said, “Please help us. Don will probably be executed soon.”

“If you’re talking about Don, then you’re talking about the knight who served under you?”

Brod nodded as he explained the situation. Of course, Minhyuk did not forget to add that Don was now the current knight commander of the Swords of the Gods and was serving the Luvien Empire and Nerva.

“It’s because of black magic.”

Don was brainwashed using black magic. Brod, who looked straight at R?lszd, said, “Please give one final teaching to your emperor, who chose the wrong path.”

“Ho—Hohoho...” R?lszd’s helpless laugh trailed off as he asked, “Do you think there’s a way for me to get out of here? I will never be able to get out. I have tried hundreds and hundreds of times before.”

At that moment, Minhyuk turned to look at the guard and said, “Open the doors. I choose this man as one of my talents.”

Creaaaaaak—

“...?” R?lszd looked in confusion at the door, which opened in just three seconds. Then, he said, “Even if I come out of this place, you’re now the Sun at the lowest point. And isn’t Nerva the brightest Sun now?”

Hearing R?lszd’s words, Brod’s face faintly smiled as he said, “You’re wrong.” Then, he turned to look back at Minhyuk. “This young man is the brightest Sun in the sky.”

Knight Commander Don had died before and was only revived, thanks to Minhyuk. When he died back then, the tight hold that the black magic had on him loosened. Because of that, he could regain the memories of his past that he had lost before.

His master was the emperor, who jumped in alone to save him despite being surrounded by tens of thousands of enemies. He also led the Red Sword Knights and commanded the world! His true master was none other than His Majesty Brod! But Nerva brainwashed Don and made him believe that the one he truly served was him.

After returning safely from Mandala's Prison, the only thing that kept him sane was the thought of stabbing his sword into Nerva's heart. He judged that he had the chance during the appointment ceremony, so he raised his sword and tried to stab Nerva in the neck when he approached him the moment he went to grant his ducal title. However, Duke Vlad moved faster than him. Don was unaware that Duke Vlad, one of the Luvien's Stars, had that much power. Right now, the bleeding Don was brought in front of the knights of the Swords of the Gods and the dukes with a rope tied tightly around him.

Nerva could not hide the bitterness on his face as he looked at Don.

'Why?'

Nerva thought back on the people who left his side one after another. The first was Knight Commander R?lszd. R?lszd had told him to step down alone even though he had only sat on his throne.

Is it because I became stronger? Because I became the emperor of the strongest empire?

The second was Sword of the Gods Luo. He turned his back on him and served Minhyuk after being captured by the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

The third was the most promising knight of the Red Sword Knights, Don. In fact, the Red Sword Knights followed Brod with love and care. Perhaps Nerva was very jealous of this relationship, and that was why he wanted to show them at least once that these people would also turn their backs on their masters and follow the greatest and strongest emperor.

Nerva believed that Don would continue to follow him even if he regained his memories. He thought that the man was already intoxicated by the power, position, and wealth that Don had given him.

Like that, everything between him and Don flashed in Nerva's head. Don's master was Brod. However, he brainwashed him and made it seem like he was the one that the knight was serving. And they had been very happy.

'I never knew that loyalty could also be expressed this way.'

Don showed Nerva genuine care. Not only did he care for him, he also loved him dearly. He often had tea with him, and they would chat and relax while laughing together. At the same time, he felt very jealous. After all, Don was genuinely loyal to Brod, and not himself.

This was also the reason why he was angry.

"You sinner! How dare you collude with the Beyond the Heavens Empire to assassinate this emperor!"

Nerva's killing intent flooded the entire palace. Nerva, who started everything with a lie and would end everything with a lie, was a monster. However, even if a monstrous existence stood before him, Don smiled through his bloody mouth and said, "Did you hope you could gain my heart like that?"

“...”

“Did you look at me and think that everything would be fine despite all the atrocities that you have done in the past?”

“...”

“That’s right! Were you happy that you poisoned all of the members of the Red Sword Knights that stood by my side so that you could become the emperor?!” Don shouted, his anger boiling over.

Who I want to protect, save, and love is Brod. How dare you manipulate it so that you could take me and force me to serve you?!

Nerva jumped up from his seat and went wild.

‘Beyond the Heavens! Beyond the Heavens! Beyond the Heavens!!!! All of these damned bastards always had this name at the tip of their tongues.’

‘I am the emperor of the greatest and strongest empire!’

‘I am the emperor that encompasses anything and everything!’

But Don just laughed at him. “You are the one left with nothing.”

Nerva picked up the sword next to his throne and took one step after another. He said, “Knight Commander Don, I am depriving you of your position as the knight commander of the Swords of the Gods.”

Thump, thump—

But the only thing flashing in Don’s head now was Brod.

‘I’m sorry, Your Majesty.’

Don believed that killing Nerva was a reward for him and some sort of apology.

“I deprive you of everything that you enjoyed in the Luvien Empire. The gold, the silver, the treasures, your ducal position, everything! I am taking it away from you!”

But the grin on Don’s face just grew more profound. He did not need for any of those. The only one that he needed was Brod.

Nerva finally stopped in front of Knight Commander Don. Using both hands, he lifted the sword high into the sky.

“And I am bringing judgment upon you for the crime of treason!”

Don chuckled dryly. *‘Now, I will be together with my true comrades.’*

For a moment, Don felt like he had seen his friends and comrades from the Red Sword Knights waving at him beyond the white light. When he saw that, he hoped, *‘Your Majesty Brod, I hope you will remain happy by his side for a long time!’*

The Emperor Minhyuk that he had seen and encountered was a good man.

Clang!!!

A man fell from the sky and struck down Nerva's sword. Then, he immediately grabbed Nerva's wrist before stopping entirely and standing there while staring at him. This was Brod. At the same time, another man walked briskly and entered through the open doors of the hall. This man was none other than Minhyuk.

Minhyuk stood inside the hall and declared, "I have already chosen two talents. One of them is Valentino, while the other one is R?lszd. As for the last one..."

"..."

"I believe he's no longer the Luvien Empire's knight commander nor your duke. He's nothing but a common knight, no?"

Minhyuk fixed Nerva with a cold glare and said, "I choose Don."

Chapter 938

Nerva did not care whether Minhyuk came to choose the talents he wanted to recruit or not. Knight Commander Don had tried to assassinate him, turning the entire Luvien Empire upside down.

Besides, although Minhyuk and the Beyond the Heavens Empire could choose three talents from his empire, there were conditions that he had to follow. First, Nerva had to approve his chosen talent. Second, Minhyuk could not choose among the knights of the Swords of the Gods or anyone who had a title and a position.

After considering these two conditions, Nerva judged that the Beyond the Heavens emperor would not have an infinitely smaller pool of talents to choose from and would not be able to hire anyone useful to them.

Left in a chaotic state, Nerva did not even care about Minhyuk and threw him to his aide. But Minhyuk appeared before him now and said, "Don."

"...Bastaaaaaaaard!!!" Nerva roared in anger, his voice rising along with his killing intent and covering the entire area.

Nerva's knights and dukes, including Duke Vlad, were gathered in this place. It was also the capital of the Luvien Empire, a nation at war with the Beyond the Heavens Empire. The moment Minhyuk entered the hall, these notifications rang in his ears.

[You have entered the Luvien Empire's Imperial Palace!]

[You cannot use a Return Parchment inside the Luvien Empire's Imperial Palace!]

[You cannot leave the Luvien Empire's Imperial Palace until Nerva gives explicit permission!]

[If you are forced to log out, you can leave the Luvien Empire's Imperial Palace!]

That was right. Minhyuk could only leave this place if he was given Nerva's explicit permission. Otherwise, he could die, and he would be able to leave. In other words, he could enter as he pleased, but he would not be able to leave as he pleased.

And now, Minhyuk had entered the center of a nation at war with him. Not only that, but he was also committing an outrageous act by taking a traitor under his wing.

Shiiiiiiiiing—

Shiiiiiiiiiiiiing—

Shiiiiiiiiing—

The dozens of Swords of the Gods raised their swords. And Duke Vlad? He watched the situation with his arms crossed.

‘Was it true? Did the Beyond the Heavens’ Emperor truly use Don to kill His Majesty?’

‘Will a war truly begin?’

In the past, the members of the Swords of the Gods—Beloch, Revor, Grat, and the rest—had become favorable to Minhyuk when they went to conquer Mandala’s Prison. Minhyuk had saved the dying Knight Commander Don and commanded and led them well until they came out of the dungeon.

But when Don suddenly moved to assassinate Nerva, each and every one of them threw a hypothesis and reported it to Nerva. Among those reports, there was naturally one that stated, *‘Minhyuk saved Don’s life.’* When Nerva saw this report, he added more flesh and used it as the reason to accuse Don of treason. Even though it was a lie, it had now become the truth in the eyes of Duke Vlad and the Swords of the Gods.

‘I did not expect that he was like that.’

This was a grave matter. Although the Luvien Empire and the Beyond the Heavens Empire were at war, things had not yet blown up. The two nations would now engage in an all-out war with this new development. Immediately after this, the troops of the Luvien Empire would be gathered, and all their allies would be ordered to invade their enemy's lands. Now that they had a justification, the Luvien Empire could take down the Beyond the Heavens Empire in just one day.

Minhyuk said, “The emperor that you believe in has risen to his throne by poisoning the members of Brod’s knight order!”

“Bullshit!”

“His Majesty Nerva had rightfully inherited his throne!”

Of course, none of the people present believed Minhyuk’s words. But Brod, holding on to Nerva’s wrist, said, “How far are you going to fall?”

There was a time when the Nerva, who Brod knew was a good and upright man. He was once a young man who declared that he would build a peaceful, relaxed empire without war. But now? This young man had turned into a monster.

“You’re the one who fell,” Nerva growled at Brod. “How dare you?! Do you know whose wrists you are holding onto, huh?!”

Nerva’s killing intent surged once more. Brod, extremely sensitive to killing intent, hurriedly raised his sword. Watching the scene, the Swords of the Gods thought that perhaps the Beyond the Heavens Empire was genuinely crazy. Did they think that they could survive like this?

But Brod stepped back and cut off the ropes that bound Don. This was the first shot. The Swords of the Gods, who had power close to that of a god, charged toward Brod. Those who were aware of the situation hurriedly closed the hall doors.

“Don!” Minhyuk shouted, throwing a sword toward the man.

Swoooooosh—

Thump—

Don swiftly grabbed the sword and parried the attack of the Swords of the Gods that charged at them.

Claaaaang—

“...Your Majesty, please forgive me,” Don said. The person that Don felt sorry for the most was Brod. He couldn’t even kill Nerva, who turned him like this. And that was not all. He even served Nerva for a very long time.

Brod smiled faintly at him and said, “I’m very happy now.”

“...”

Brod had already realized he could be happy even if he did not become an emperor. And this was all thanks to the master that he served now.

“I- I will make sure to protect your happiness.”

Knight Commander Don was the strongest knight among the Swords of the Gods, which is also why he was appointed one of the dukes of the empire. Even though his entire body was littered with injuries of varying degrees, he was still strong enough to deal with three Swords of the Gods simultaneously.

As for Brod? He was one of the strongest beings. Even Spear God Ben would not dare to fight against him.

Clang— Clang, clang, clang, clang, clang— Clang—

The battle between Brod, Don, and the Swords of the Gods continued fiercely. At that moment, Minhyuk’s gaze passed by the Swords of the Gods built by players, including the God of Archer Miao. There were no less than ten people and they were all at Level 600.

‘When is he coming?’ Minhyuk thought as cold sweat started to drip down his back.

Although Brod and Don were both strong individuals, the three of them alone could not deal with Nerva, Duke Vlad, and the close to thirty Swords of the Gods present here.

Amidst this strange tension, God of Archery Miao raised her bow and nocked an arrow swiftly. Minhyuk immediately jumped toward where Summoner Bastien was.

‘I have to take the initiative and control the flow.’

“Guided Lethal Shot...” Before God of Archery Miao could finish casting her skill, Minhyuk had already wielded his swords and cut down Bastien.

Slash– Slash, slash, slash, slash– Slash–!

Bastien, who was trying to summon his divine dragon, was cut and slashed 76 times in just one second.

“A- aaaaaaack! Keuaaaaaaaaaack!”

It only took one second, and one hit to kill him.

“Come,” Minhyuk said, his fingers curling in a come-hither motion as God of Archery Miao’s Guided Lethal Shot tore through the air and hit his chest. “Ugh!”

Despite the Transcendental Armor protecting his body, Minhyuk suffered considerable damage from the attack. Seeing this, the Swords of the Gods, who faltered for a moment, immediately returned to their senses and lunged at Minhyuk. Alex immediately cast magic and bombarded Minhyuk with attacks.

However, Minhyuk leaped to the skies, saying, “Ego Chain Sickle.”

Clang, clang, clang–!

The Ego Chain Sickle fixed itself on the ground and moved at high speeds to attack Minhyuk’s enemies. Of course, Minhyuk did not stay idle.

“Sword of Tempest.”

A sword with ego appeared as hundreds of blades appeared and blocked the Swords of the Gods. Minhyuk was doing an excellent job in dealing with the Swords of the Gods’ Second Knight Order in a way.

“Keuhaaack!”

A scream rang out in the hall. Minhyuk immediately turned to look in the direction where the sound came from. What he saw made his face turn ugly. Nerva’s sword had pierced Don’s abdomen. Meanwhile, Brod could not break away from the constant attacks of the Swords of the Gods and Duke Vlad. This was because Duke Vlad was said to be much stronger than Duke Ruffiso.

Clang, clang, clang, clang–

Brod could not even create a small gap to escape Duke Vlad's fierce attacks. But just when Minhyuk was about to move, another Guided Lethal Shot struck his back.

Baaaaaaang–!

Another bombardment of attacks from the other Swords of the Gods immediately followed this attack. Minhyuk, forced to deal with the other players, watched as Nerva pulled his sword out of Don’s abdomen. Blood spurted out of Don as Nerva raised his sword and slashed at his former knight commander’s chest.

“Keuhaaack!” Don screamed, his feet staggering from the blow.

At this moment, Minhyuk thought, *‘If our plans go wrong at this point...’*

If Don died here, their plans would be thrown out the window. If that happened, the Beyond the Heavens Empire would face an all-out war against the Luvien Empire.

Baaaaaaaaang—!

But at that moment, a spear pierced through the tightly closed doors and struck Nerva's sword.

Clack—

The doors were forced open, and two men strode in. One of the men was Valentino, who had now become the Beyond the Heavens Empire's dog. The other one was R?lszd, who had been imprisoned inside the Prison of Indolence for a long time and sacrificed his vitality to survive longer.

R?lszd was supposed to lead the Swords of the Gods; he was their knight commander before Don came. He was even called Divine Spear R?lszd and was the only one who could wield the Guardian's Spear, the same spear that he threw earlier.

However, for some reason, he was suddenly accused of treason and thrown into prison.

Rumble—!

The ground shook as nine spears appeared around R?lszd.

[R?lszd. Level 767.]

He was not with Minhyuk after leaving the Prison of Indolence because he went somewhere to retrieve the Guardian's Spear.

“Sir R?lszd?”

“R?lszd, why are you here?”

As mentioned, R?lszd was known as a traitor by the public and was sent to prison. That is why everyone was shocked to see him here. However, Nerva was the one who was most shocked.

‘How can someone stuck inside the Prison of Indolence be this strong...?’

Nerva was utterly unaware that R?lszd had sacrificed his vitality to endure and hold out inside the Prison of Indolence.

Then, R?lszd opened his mouth and said, “Your Majesty, until when will you act like a monster? Can't you see? You're the one eating away at yourself.”

R?lszd had decided to lend Minhyuk a helping hand because, just like Brod, he remembered what kind of person Nerva was before he gained power and became a greedy monster.

“Bastard! How dare a traitor like you talk to His Majesty like that?!” One of the Swords of the Gods shouted.

However, R?lszd just turned to him and answered, “Emperor Nerva had poisoned the Red Sword Knights and used such despicable and unscrupulous methods to climb his throne. Why do you think this young man over here has won the heart of the Battle God, huh?!”

R?lszd was once the idol of all the Swords of the Gods. He and Don both showed enough power and strength to gain the trust of all the knights. But suddenly, both of them were dubbed traitors.

The Swords of the Gods wavered and shook. They no longer knew what was true or what was false. They immediately turned to Nerva to seek for answers.

“Are you telling me that you believe the words of a traitor? And he’s even on the side of the Beyond the Heavens’ Emperor.”

However, R?lszd’s words failed to awaken Nerva from his stupor. Nerva continued to insist on his lies, leaving the Swords of the Gods at a complete loss.

Crack—

While Minhyuk chewed an Almond of Subordinate, R?lszd made a move. With a wave of his hand, ninety-nine spears glowing with black light appeared and floated around him.

“You are no longer the Sun,” R?lszd spat coldly as he sent the spears flying toward Nerva.

Just when everyone thought that the spears would stab through Nerva, they flew past him and slammed straight into his statue, holding the sun that was standing right behind him.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack—!

The statue of the greatest emperor, a statue that no one could break, fell and collapsed. And Nerva? He was left shaking as he stood in front of it.

“Summon.” Minhyuk opened his mouth and whispered, “Luo.”

Flash—!

With a flash of light, Luo appeared, standing right next to Minhyuk. Now, there were three witnesses present in this hall. Of the three, Luo, who was one of the Swords of the Gods up until recently, was the one who received Nerva’s orders to poison the Red Sword Knights. In other words, he was the living and breathing witness of the scene back then. If Luo testified here, the credibility of the words R?lszd and Don declared would become much stronger.

Minhyuk looked at Nerva and asked him once again, “Can I take Don with me?”

Nerva stared at Luo, R?lszd, and Don silently for a long time. Then, he finally opened his mouth and said, “You have my permission.”

Chapter 939

The Swords of the Gods grew even more shaken when they heard Nerva give his permission to Minhyuk. God of Archery Miao even murmured to herself, “No way. It’s not true, right...?”

Of course, there was a chance it was not the truth. But what was Nerva so afraid of right now? Why was he willing to send Minhyuk and his men away when they tried to kill him?

This might be the only natural course of action. There were already three living and breathing witnesses present in this hall. If Sword of the Gods Luo opened his mouth and said, ‘*Nerva personally ordered me to put poison in their food.*’ then the words that R?lszd and Don said would gain more credibility.

Luo was naturally Minhyuk’s man. However, he was also once a member of the Luvien Empire. The same was true for R?lszd and Don. If all three of them turned against the Luvien Empire and told the people what Nerva had done, chaos would ensue.

But even if Nerva told them, *'Kill everyone.'* none of the Swords of the Gods would move. Even though he was an emperor, the thought alone that the man they served used immoral and despicable means to reach that height was enough to confuse them. To top it off, R?lszd and Don, the two people they trusted and followed, might not actually be traitors added to their confusion.

Meanwhile, Duke Vlad, sitting on the sidelines, suddenly had an idea. He thought, *'Things are going quite well, huh?'*

Minhyuk helped Don up while Sword of the Gods Luo protected him on the side. Before leaving with his men, Minhyuk turned to look back at Nerva Sephiroth.

"Your Majesty! How can you let them go just like that?!"

"Is it true?! Did you really sit on your throne by using such immoral, despicable, and evil means?!"

Duke Vlad stopped them from questioning Nerva. He stepped forward and said, "Enough. Even if that is true, it does not remove the fact that he is the emperor you serve, right?"

Minhyuk's eyes narrowed as he looked at Duke Vlad. *'He did not say that for Nerva's sake.'*

Of course, Duke Vlad's words were valid. After all, nothing would change even if they knew that Nerva ascended to his throne using such despicable methods. Ultimately, the Swords of the Gods would continue to fight for the Luvien Empire and follow behind their emperor, Nerva.

However, there would be no end to the hushed conversations that they would have amongst themselves.

'Given the chance, the emperor's throne will definitely be shaken.'

Duke Vlad and Minhyuk's eyes met. Minhyuk realized that he could not read anything through the man's expression.

Meanwhile, Nerva stood still as he looked at the debris of his statue on the floor. Minhyuk was about to step outside and saw R?lszd looking at Nerva.

"Sir R?lszd?"

R?lszd was now Minhyuk's talent. Of course, just like he said before, he only had a few days left to live. Perhaps he would die today, or if not, maybe tomorrow. But with the help of Saintess Loyna or the God of Alchemists Mandala, his lifespan could still be extended for at least a year or two.

However, R?lszd just turned to look at Minhyuk with a bitter smile before shaking his head slowly. "..."

Minhyuk could not say anything. In the first place, it seemed like R?lszd did not want to live any longer. It was purely Minhyuk's greed to take him in so he could reinforce his military power.

Brod gently placed a hand on Minhyuk's shoulder. There was also a bitter smile on his face. R?lszd should have had a very relaxed and comfortable death. But he chose to help them get Don out of his predicament even if it cost him his life.

Right now, R?lszd was like the brightest Sun. The only thing that Minhyuk could do was bow to him.

‘...You are a good and kind emperor. I beg you, please do not stray and walk the same path that Nerva has walked,’ R?lszd thought, greeting Minhyuk with his own small bow.

Minhyuk left the imperial palace with his men, leaving R?lszd behind. Then, Duke Vlad said, “We should go out, too. It seems that His Majesty and the traitor have something to discuss.”

“...”

Those words were not said for the sake of Nerva and R?lszd. They had something to talk about—an emperor and a traitor? That was already enough to cast doubts among the people. But Nerva did not make any excuses, and this was also why the previous words gained more credibility. At this moment, the trust and faith of the Swords of the Gods in Nerva were slowly collapsing.

After Duke Vlad took everyone out, R?lszd continued to look at Nerva, standing in a daze in front of the wreckage of his collapsed statue.

“Why? Why did you do it?”

“...”

Nerva did not regret what he had done. However, for some reason, a sense of dejection slowly flooded his senses. He could also tell that R?lszd’s days were numbered. Perhaps it was because he knew this fact that he was willing to speak his heart out to this subordinate, who once trusted and followed him.

“I was jealous of *him*,” Nerva said as he stared at where Brod disappeared from. “I knew it right from the beginning. I lack the qualifications to become the Sun. But even so, I still wanted it more and more. I did not want to disappoint you and the others.”

“...”

“After trying it once, it became much easier. Since then, I have lived a life of taking things when I need them and throwing them away when they are useless to me. It was very convenient.”

“...”

“You must think that I’m dirty and hideous too, huh?” Nerva asked, his gaze focused on R?lszd.

At that moment, R?lszd suddenly keeled over and vomited a mouthful of blood. “Urk!”

Down on the ground, he looked up at Nerva and said, “You might be dirty and hideous, but you are the emperor I served.”

Just like Minhyuk had Ben, Nerva once had subordinates who were willing to risk everything for his sake. There were even some who were willing to give their lives just so they could protect him. And one of them was R?lszd.

"I still can't forget it. You told me that you would create a peaceful world and build a place without war and fighting. You even told me that you would live with me there."

This was the Nerva of the past. But now, not even a shadow of this man was left behind in Nerva. Even so, R?lszd stretched out his trembling hand and held Nerva's. He said, "Your Majesty."

"..."

Nerva's eyes reddened. Perhaps it was because he was facing a dying subordinate, and that was why the pureness he had left behind in the past had reappeared. R?lszd was very much aware that Nerva had already come a long way and could never return to how he was before.

"You have become bigger, stronger, and more powerful. So, why does it look like you're unhappy? I hope that you can shine brightly and..." The light in R?lszd's eyes slowly dimmed. As his head slowly fell, he used the last of his strength to say, "...be able to smile."

Nerva held R?lszd's hand tightly and could not let go for a very long time.

The moment Minhyuk led his men out of the palace, he warped back to the Beyond the Heavens Empire. Not long after he returned, he heard a notification.

[Beyond the Heavens Empire's R?lszd's had died.]

Although they hadn't been together for a long time, Minhyuk still found the man to be unfortunate and pitiful. Seeing that he had died, Minhyuk still felt a sense of bitterness well up in him.

"Sir R?lszd has died," Minhyuk said.

Brod said, "Please don't take it too much to heart. Sir R?lszd might have hated Nerva, but he was loyal to his very core. He must have been happy that he was able to fall into eternal sleep in Nerva's arms."

Minhyuk nodded, recalling the bittersweet scene. However, he still put it behind him and immediately summoned the Beyond the Heavens' priests. He also ordered someone to bring him some of Mandala's Recovery Potion. The moment they came, they immediately began to heal Don, who was suffering from several severe and life-threatening injuries.

"How is he?"

"He'll stabilize soon," one of the priests answered.

Minhyuk nodded. Now, all that was left for him to deal with was Valentino. He turned to the man and said, "Valentino, immediately set out for Aveid Territory. Pioneer and develop this barren land."

"I understand." Valentino did not say anything more. He was very much aware of the situation that he was in. He immediately left after receiving his orders.

Minhyuk, who watched him leave, checked out the status of their newly recruited talent, Don.

- Passive Skill: Time Reader*
- Active Skill: Eyes That Can See Through All Creations*
- Active Skill: Alvarrado's Swordsmanship*

Don was a more powerful talent than Luo. However, based on what he had experienced, he looked like he needed to take a break first. Besides, even though Minhyuk was highly favorable to him, he could not say that they had a close relationship as an emperor and a vassal. That was also why he intended to leave Don by Brod's side for now.

Minhyuk was feeling quite hungry. Perhaps it was because he had been working hard lately?

'I want to go out to search for something delicious. I haven't done it for quite some time.'

But didn't the others say that people would go and find something delicious whenever they were sad, too?

At that moment, someone knocked on the door.

"Come in," Minhyuk said, only to see Carron entering his office.

Minhyuk met and talked with Carron a lot these past few days. After recruiting the man to their side, Minhyuk saw a significant increase in migrants joining Beyond the Heavens Empire. And this was all thanks to Carron's efforts.

"I'm thinking of uploading Valentino's interview next. I came here to ask for your approval. Is that okay?"

"You interviewed Valentino too?"

"Yes. Aside from Your Majesty, Ali, and Death, I believe it would help us recruit more tankers if Valentino was interviewed. After all, it would give them insight into why a person from the Luvien Empire decided to change sides and join the Beyond the Heavens Empire."

"I see."

"You look quite exhausted," Carron suddenly said.

Minhyuk could not deny those words. “That’s right. I think I would feel better after eating something delicious. Do you have any good ingredients with you?”

“Don’t we have a lot of ingredients here in the empire?”

That was right. There were plenty of ingredients for Minhyuk to choose from and eat in the empire. But what Minhyuk wanted were not those ingredients but something special, something a bit more... delicious.

Seeing the expression on Minhyuk’s face, Carron realized that Minhyuk wanted some special ingredients. So, he thought long and hard about where Minhyuk could find some. Then, he said, “Your Majesty, why don’t you try and participate in the Infinite Battlefield?”

The executives were currently in the middle of a meeting inside one of Joy Co. Ltd’s conference rooms.

“We have seen a slight increase in stock prices after experiencing positive effects from our recent events and ads.”

President Kang Taehoon nodded in understanding. The Event Team’s leader used the light from the projection screen, the only light in the room, and pressed a button to shift to the next slide of the presentation.

“Next, we’re going to talk about the Infinite Battlefield.”

Simply put, the Infinite Battlefield was a place where anyone could duel. Players could freely join and fight to their hearts' content, and this had existed since the start of Athenae.

Kang Taehoon nodded as he listened to the report about the Infinite Battlefield.

“Ever since the update, the utilization rate of the Infinite Battlefield could be said to have increased by almost five times the normal utilization rate.”

“That’s right. Thanks to the update we made two months ago, the players could now compete freely against each other regardless of the players’ level.”

President Kang Taehoon looked at the next slide of the presentation and exclaimed in admiration, “That’s amazing.”

Then, he saw a familiar player’s name on the list of participants. This player was Alexander, the Weapon Master and the first Eight Pillars-class player.

“He has won 786 matches out of 786 in just two months...”

The executives were left stunned when they saw the report.

“This is proof that the Weapon Master is the best.”

The main reason why Alexander decided to participate in the Infinite Battlefield was because of his class. That was right. This was related to how he could acquire additional skills from his Weapon Master class.

If he could win 100 consecutive wins in the Infinite Battlefield, his qualifications would be recognized, and he would be able to obtain more skills. After receiving those skills, Alexander had grown rampant inside the Infinite Battlefield.

“From what it looks like, we can say that Alexander is undoubtedly going to be the Infinite Battlefield MVP this year,” President Kang Taehoon said. And, of course, no one could deny that.

“Let’s first discuss the ‘Infinite Battle’ and the ‘Battle of the Stars’, which will both be held inside the Infinite Battlefield.”

The Infinite Battle and the Battle of the Stars were events that Joy Co. Ltd. had prepared. However, disregarding the Infinite Battle, everyone knew that the Battle of the Stars would only be fun and exciting if excellent people like Alexander participated.

‘Otherwise, not only will Alexander fail to break through, but this event will also end up as a dud. Of course, we can obtain good responses for the Infinite Battle.’ President Kang Taehoon smiled bitterly. *‘Winning 786 out of 786 total matches. I don’t think there’s someone who can break this record.’*

President Kang Taehoon left the conference hall after entertaining such thoughts. When he walked out, he saw Team Leader Park Minggyu at the other end of the hallway. Why was Team Leader Park Minggyu not present during the meeting? His work had nothing to do with what they discussed in the meeting.

Team Leader Park rushed to Kang Taehoon and said, “President, I have something to report.”

“What is it?”

Minggyu said, “Player Minhyuk has created a character in the Infinite Battlefield.”

Chapter 940

“Your Majesty, why don’t you try and participate in the Infinite Battlefield?” Carron said.

Minhyuk, listening silently to him, piped up, “Even if I participate in the Infinite Battlefield, there’s no player in there that would accept a duel with me.”

Minhyuk was also very interested in the Infinite Battlefield, where players could bet as much money as they wanted on a match. The other side would then bet the same amount, and whoever won would take everything.

Many players have distinguished themselves and made a name in the Infinite Battlefield. Even the skilled ones with excellent control could obtain much more gold in this place than doing quests or hunting monsters.

The only problem was that if he had set a condition, an opponent with a similar set condition would be chosen randomly. Only after they had given their approval would a match be set. And just like Minhyuk said, if someone saw Minhyuk’s name there, they would never approve of it. Who would even dare to fight the Supreme?

“Ah. I completely understand what you’re concerned about.” But Carron shook his head. “You must have missed it since you have been so busy. There has been much improvement in the Infinite Battlefield since the update two months ago.”

Minhyuk’s concerns were a problem that many rankers faced. Yes, none of them could fully enjoy the Infinite Battlefield.

“Players are now given the right to create their unique nickname inside the Infinite Battlefield. They can also change their classes and choose one among the dozens of new classes available there.”

“Dozens of new classes?”

“Yes. Players would often have the urge to develop a new class every once in a while, right? Let’s take Your Majesty as an example. If you choose the swordsman class, all your skills as a Food God would automatically be modified and applied as a swordsman’s skill. You will also be given the basic skills of a swordsman fit for your level, like Enchant. If you choose the swordsman class, then you will also be able to use Enchant. However, using only those basic skills wouldn’t be the right choice.”

Minhyuk listened to Carron’s explanations intently.

“This is because you will only have the effects of Enchant. And what about the other outstanding players? Of course, they would have something more. Their transformed skills would have far better effects than Enchant alone.”

Minhyuk nodded in understanding as Carron continued, “Anyway, the point here is that you can choose a new class and change your nickname to hide your identity in the Infinite Battlefield. And there’s one more important thing. Let’s say this is the Infinite Battlefield of the past. If your opponent is ‘Minhyuk. Level 643’, would your majesty accept it?”

“This assumes that I’m a regular player, right?”

“Yes.”

“I will never accept it.”

Yes, that was right. No one would ever accept him as an opponent. Of course, the system would match him with someone at a similar level. However, no one would want to fight Minhyuk head-on by themselves.

“Because of that, they have updated it so players participating in the Infinite Battlefield can lower their level.”

“Lower my level?”

“Yes. For example, if a player at Level 600 lowered their level to Level 300, all their stats and skills would be lowered to match Level 300.”

“But even if you do that, a ranker would still be a ranker, right?”

Rankers weren't called rankers for nothing.

“Many people think that way. However, the desire and urge to win, even if faced with a ranker, is the essence of the Infinite Battlefield.”

Minhyuk felt like his participation was becoming more and more tangible the more Carron, who was very reliable and trustworthy, continued.

“Also, players going to battle rankers of the same level can also choose to use the *High Risk, High Return* option. This option would also allow the players to match with players with a 10-150 level difference with them. However, if the player bet 10,000 gold for the match, the chosen opponent would have to offer a higher gold. This compensated for their higher chances of winning against the player who initiated the match.”

Minhyuk momentarily pondered this option and realized that it could be pretty amazing. The fact that one could choose to match against opponents who were 10-150 levels higher than them would either mean that they were confident or that they had huge pride backing them up.

“There's also this. If you win against opponents with a higher level than your current level, you can obtain special points called *Infinite Points* after winning ten consecutive matches. It is a testament to how one continuously fights and wins against those with a high winning rate. Simply put, it is a special privilege given to those who achieve something others don't dare to do. The most important thing here is that you can gather and accumulate Infinite Points and use them to buy various things in the Infinite Store like artifact materials, gold, or cooking ingredients.”

Minhyuk looked like he was now very, very tempted. But then, he thought of something. Then, he said, “The Infinite Battlefield also has disadvantages, no? Say, if I choose another class, then I wouldn't be able to get much benefit. As a Food God, I do not have many attack skills. I don't think I will be able to have any clear advantage when fighting against players of the same level if I choose to take on a new class there.”

Of course, his current attack skills would be transformed. However, Minhyuk was concerned about whether he could match players' skills around a hundred levels higher than him and win with just the Food God's skills.

Then, Carron said, “I think the Food God class is the best class among all the existing PVP classes when the level is lowered.”

Minhyuk immediately perked his ears up and focused on Carron.

President Kang Taehoon was delighted when he heard Player Minhyuk decided to participate in the Infinite Battlefield.

“A powerful and influential player, considered the Supreme, will participate in the Infinite Battlefield.”

Of course, Kang Taehoon was aware that the Food God’s level would be lowered so he could participate in the PVP matches. In the other’s eyes, the Food God class seemed to be a class that would never be able to exert any shocking power in PVP. However, this was only the case because no one knew the exact advantages that the Food God had.

“The class with the highest stat for their level in Athenae is none other than the Food God.”

That was right. Among all the players in Athenae, the one with the highest stat-to-level ratio was the Food God. The Food God had around 1.5x more stats than the general players.

Why? Initially, the Food God had a skill called Food God’s True Worth, which allowed him to raise his stats by eating. Minhyuk, who only looked for delicious things to eat every single day, experienced a high increase in stats compared to other players, even without meaning to.

“This is good.”

President Kang Taehoon could already see it. He could predict that the somewhat dull events held for the Infinite Battlefield would become very interesting this time.

The Infinite Battlefield also had a ranking system. This ranking system was determined by one’s total wins and winning rate. Even lower-level players could become rankers if they had excellent skills and control.

Logan, who ranked 1,320th in the Infinite Battlefield rankings, had been active since the early days of the Infinite Battlefield. He also boasted a high winning rate, with 11,375 wins out of 13,313 matches. It was so high that it was enough to make him shine. Logan was also a BJ and had a relatively stable number of audiences he had attracted with his funny comments and ability to overwhelm and defeat his enemies.

“Bros, I really can’t get a good match today.”

Countless viewers jumped in to comment when they heard Logan sigh.

[You crazy bastard. Kekekeke. Can you really do it like this?]

[Hey, where’s your conscience...?]

[Don’t you think expecting a match with your high winning rate is too much?]

Logan smacked his lips. Indeed, his winning rate was truly too high. He could only either find players who bet low or fight against someone with a higher level than him.

Ring!

[You have a match! Please check your opponent for the match!]

The notification for a successful match rang. Logan immediately went to check who he was matched with.

Logan's eyes grew wide. "B- Bros! This is a pushover, right? We got a pushover, right?!"

The guy that he matched with had 0 wins and 0 losses. However, the bet amount made Logan think his opponent was a pushover. It was in platinum!

[Wow! It's a real pushover. Guaranteed!]

[Those people entering the Infinite Battlefield for the first time would always think that their skills in hunting monsters would work for PVP. Lol.]

[The bet amount is huge!]

[Maybe he's a chaebol?]

Logan immediately realized that he would be able to film some fun and exciting content today. He had already imagined the title of his ZTube video. It would go like this: *'I showed a newbie who knows nothing about what the world is like.'*

Logan and the viewers felt like the opponent was too cheeky and pretentious.

'Is there really a player who will bet ten platinum for their first match alone?'

The bet amount of ten platinum presented to Logan right now was truly too high. In fact, it was an amount that he could only see once a month.

Of course, there was also a chance that the opponent was a famous *ranker*. But inside the Infinite Battlefield, it wouldn't matter if one was a ranker. If they challenged others recklessly like this, then they would suffer. Why? There was a vast difference between high-level rankers and Infinite Battlefield rankers, who specialized in doing PVP.

"I'll make sure to do a good job in comforting him. Haha!"

Logan immediately agreed to the match. All that was left was to obtain the other party's consent.

'Come on, fish. Bite! Bite! Bite! Bite!' Logan desperately prayed.

[The opponent has approved the match!]

[The Infinite Battlefield begins!]

A flash of light engulfed Logan. When he opened his eyes, he appeared inside the Infinite Battlefield. The Infinite Battlefield would appear in different forms.

'So, it's a desert this time.'

Logan chuckled. Just like he told the viewers, he intended to cut down the player who knew nothing about the Infinite Battlefield and comfort him immediately. He boasted, "Gosh. He made a huge mistake in his first match in the Infinite Battlefield. I'll make sure to go easy on him."

[Lolololol.]

[You'll go easy on him?]

[He sounds kind, but he doesn't look like it. Bwahahahaha!]

[Yep! He'll cut the opponent down in ten seconds. Kekeke!]

"Ah, bros! I'm not that kind of person."

At that moment, Captain Rice's figure appeared in front of Logan. He was dressed as an ordinary assassin, with his face covered with a mask. Captain Rice was constantly changing the weapon in his hands.

"Dagger.

"Longsword.

"Axe.

"Dual sword.

"Oh... this is fascinating."

[No. pfft. Lololol. This is his first time!]

Inside the Infinite Battlefield, one could equip whatever weapon they wanted and use any equipment they had. They could also transform their weapon and equipment into whatever form they wanted. Just like how their character was adjusted, their artifact's abilities would also be changed and tailored to the level that they were currently in. Of course, God-rank artifacts could exert much stronger power even if transformed.

"But since I'm an assassin, then I should use the dagger," the man said as he stood before Logan.

At this point, Logan understood that the man did not use a dagger and was not an assassin-class player.

'He's full of mistakes. Well, anyway, he's just a newb.'

Players would always have this thought in mind, *'I think I will be good in that class?'*

But the reality was different. Their chosen class would be less powerful than the one they had played for years. This was especially the case for assassins, a class that required a high amount of control.

"Please come at me first. I will be as gentle on you as I can."

"???"

"And... Please don't feel too heartbroken even if you lose. This is the only way for you to learn."

"Ah. Thanks! I will accept your kindness wholeheartedly!" The man answered cheerfully.

Meanwhile, Logan firmly believed that he would be teaching an Infinite Battlefield newbie today.

Flash—

“...?”

Logan could not see where his opponent went.

Spurt—

Then, blood spurted out from Logan’s side.

‘What the hell... is this...?’

[Your HP has dropped below 75%!]

Logan could not understand what just happened. Even if the players of Infinite Battlefield had good artifacts with them, there had been no case where they could deal this much damage with a basic attack. Besides, he and his opponent were clearly on the same level. To put it simply, this amount of damage should have been impossible.

The flustered Logan finally found out the reason. *‘Stats...?!’*

If the opponent possessed incredibly high stats, the story would be different.

Logan was a fighter-class player. In reality, he was also a practitioner of mixed martial arts and was versed in various martial arts used worldwide. He could not be easily dealt with. So, he tried to move to defend himself from his opponent’s attack.

Flash— Flash, flash, flash— Flash—

A fierce battle ensued.

‘Are you telling me this is his first time being an assassin?! No. Wait. This...!’

“Gnawing Assassination.”

Unfortunately, before Logan could finish the thought, blood spurted out all over Logan’s body as his opponent stabbed him with his dagger thirty times in just two seconds.