

Gourmet Gaming

Chapter 16: Proposal

#7. Proposal

"Whaaaaaaaaaat?!"

Minhyuk found his glorious future as a foodie already in a crisis.

"Twilight Graveyard only allows players between Level 10 to 15 to enter."

"Is...is that so...?ahem..." Minhyuk mumbled sadly, feeling disappointed at that moment. Despite his disappointment, he decided to have his fill of red bean jelly first.

Allon went inside to get a carton of milk, and poured him a glass.

"Here, don't be too disappointed. Drink this. I'm not usually this generous though."

As Allon handed him the glass, Minhyuk's hands instinctively reached out for the carton of milk instead.

"I, I don't know how to stop...!"

He wanted to get more milk. Allon, who didn't know whether to laugh or cry, handed him the whole carton of milk.

"Here, it's?fine."

Gulp, gulp—

Minhyuk took the carton of milk, all 1 liter of it, and gulped it down. Drinking milk while eating red bean jelly was like icing on top of the cake.

"I have to go and level up..." ?He mumbled to himself.

Allon thought that right now was the perfect time.

"Then boy, do you think you could do me a favor?"

"Yes?"

.

"If you go to Mount Rumad, there are 'Chestnut Demons' there. If you hunt those guys, they will drop 'chestnuts'. Can you bring me those?"

Ring!

[Quest: Collect 50 chestnuts.]

Rank: E

Requirements: Available only to those who have tasted Allon's red bean jelly.

Rewards: 50 chestnut red bean jelly, 20,000 gold

Penalty for Failure: You will lose Allon's favor, and you won't be able to buy any more red bean jelly from him.

Description: A quest that can only be triggered if you have tasted Allon's red bean jelly. He's the master of making chestnut red bean jelly, however, he does not have any chestnuts to make them. Hunt chestnut demons and bring him chestnuts.

"Chestnuts?"

Chestnuts were usually piled together in a bunch, and grilled, but it was also an ingredient that could be used in a variety of dishes.

For example, they could be used to make the delicious 'Chestnut Braised Spicy Chicken'.

Minhyuk was keeping quite a lot of chicken in his food storage inventory. After all, he only thought about eating every day.

Furthermore, there was the chestnut red bean jelly as a reward; the chestnut kernel that could be chewed inside the soft red bean jelly.

'Just imagining it makes me happy.'

"Hunting for chestnuts and eating chestnut red bean jelly sounds good, yeah?"

"Oh, I think so too!"

"You can only obtain the chestnut quest from me. Plus, if you give me 100 pieces instead of 50, then your rewards will double. In the same vein, if you give me 200, then your rewards will quadruple."

Minhyuk nodded enthusiastically.

'I need to get to Level 10 so I could eat pork... ?Before I do that, I should eat my fill of chestnut red bean jelly... Or I could also steam or grill chestnuts!'

"But, you have to be careful. The chestnut demons are stronger than you think. If you don't pay attention, you might die from their sharp thorns. Boy, I can see that you're quite stronger than others on your level."

"I can do it. Hehe. Also..."

"Hmm?"

Allon saw Minhyuk reaching out his hands with a brilliant smile.

"Please give me another 5,000 gold worth of red bean jelly!"

"Keok, al..already?!... Are you a hippo?!"

It had taken Minhyuk less than 40 minutes to finish off the 25 pieces of red bean jelly.

Minhyuk bought an extra 5,000 gold worth of red bean jelly, before turning around and heading to the chestnut demon's hunting ground that Allon told him about.

Allon thought about something as he watched his back.

'Perhaps, he may be able to hunt the chestnut demon king and change the quest rewards? Hmm... Eyy, that's impossible. That young friend is just Level 1.'

He then found another player passing by.

"Oy, come and taste my red bean jelly."

When Minhyuk started climbing the mountain, he noticed that there were no other players present in his surroundings.

Instead, what he saw was a patrol guard.

"Boy, are you going to hunt chestnut demons?"

"Yes. That's right."

"I see. Usually, Most people form parties to hunt chestnut demons. Boy, I guess you're Level 10, huh?"

"I'm Level 1 though?"

".....Go back."

"What?"

Minhyuk looked at him strangely.

The patrol guard, Hans, sighed.

'There are always guys who come here without knowing anything.'

"Chestnut demons are Level 4 but they're usually stronger than other monsters of the same level. Even though they can't take blows well, their attack power is still at Level 6. At your level, you'll be dead in one hit."

"Ahh... Thank you for your concern!"

"Yeah." Hans smiled innocently at Minhyuk thinking that he was a good listener. He decided to tell the latter more.

"In addition, chestnut demons give you lower EXP and item drops compared to other hunting grounds. It's better for you to go somewhere else."

"That's alright."

However, Minhyuk still went past the guard.

"B, boy! Do you think what I said was just for fun?!"

It was Patrol Guard Hans' job, guiding those who were unaware, to the right hunting grounds.

The hunting ground that matched Minhyuk the best was Cobalt Rock since it was where Level 1 to 4 players could easily hunt.

"That's not it. I didn't look down on Mr. Patrol Guard!"

"Players who come here are at Level 3~5 and they usually form parties. Even so, no one was able to hunt properly..."

Before he could even finish what he was saying, Minhyuk discovered a chestnut demon nearby.

The chestnut demon that appeared was literally a thorny chestnut with tiny arms and legs attached to its body. Anyone could see that their hands were round because they did not have any fingers.

"Kkaebi, kkaebi!"

The chestnut demon cried out loudly while Minhyuk was observing it closely.

'Delicious chestnut!'

Minhyuk could not hear Hans, who was talking behind him.

Fortunately, the chestnut demon was not an aggressive-type mob that attacked players first.

"There are always those who don't listen."

Hans clicked his tongue.

[Bardy Swordsmanship]

[+9 to all 5 basic stats for 5 minutes.]

At that moment...

Shiiing!

Minhyuk pulled out the sword by his waist and slashed towards the chestnut demon.

The sword flashed with a crimson light.

[Dauntless Strike]

[Each attack inflicts additional 20% damage.]

Minhyuk believed what the guard said about hunting chestnut demons being dangerous. That was the reason why he had used Bardy Swordsmanship the moment he attacked.

Slaaash! The source of this content n/o/v/(e)bi((n))

"Kuaack!"

The chestnut demon was soon felled. It took only one strike.

Gasp! Hans' eyes widened like a startled rabbit.

"H..how?"

Before he could speak, Minhyuk heard a series of notifications.

[You have leveled up.]

[You have acquired 3 chestnuts.]

Since Minhyuk had received the chestnut quest, he could receive the chestnuts without touching them separately. He also reached out to pick up what dropped from the chestnut demon.

[You have acquired 61 gold.]

[You have acquired the chestnut demon's thorn.]

"Hmm?"

Minhyuk's forehead creased.

'The chicken gave about 50 gold. But, this common mob gives only 60 gold?'

He tilted his head in confusion, but he smiled happily when he saw the chestnuts in his inventory. He then proceeded to check his stats window.

(Minhyuk)

Level: 2

Class: None

HP: 230?MP: 200

STR: 19+11??AGI: 15+14 ?STM: 15+5

WIS: 15+5 ?INT: 15+5 ?Rep: 10

Fullness: 100%/10

Bonus Point: 5

Minhyuk added 3 bonus points to his STR and the remaining 2 to his AGI.

He had sensed it when he was cleaning the chickens. It was easier for him to clean and trim the chickens when his STR was high.

Minhyuk thought to himself as he observed his stats. 'It's really higher compared to other players.'

The regular stats were already high enough, but with the addition of the stats from the items with '+', the total was at another level altogether.

There was also the combination of Bardy Swordsmanship and the Dauntless Strike, so it was possible for Minhyuk to kill the monster in a single hit.

'Maybe it's possible to actually finish it off without the skills.'

"Boy, you're not Level 1, right?"

"Yes, I'm Level 1. Ah, right, I'm Level 2 right now."

"....."

Hans stared at Minhyuk blankly. Minhyuk's strike was neat, efficient, and without any superfluousness. His movements were very quick.

'This guy.'

He did not know how Minhyuk raised his stats, but he could not help but wonder.

"Boy, I'm sorry I disregarded you. You're much stronger than I thought."

Hans cleared his throat. As a soldier, he wanted to know the secrets to getting stronger.

'If he's that good at only Level 1, there must be something special, right?'

"So, is it possible for you to tell me your secret?"

"Hmm..." Minhyuk hummed in a low voice for quite some time before he started speaking, "I eat well, and exercise diligently."

"Is...is that it?"

The guard looked at him with a blank expression.

Minhyuk quickly turned around and left to hunt more chestnut demons. It might have sounded weird to the guard back there, but what Minhyuk said was the truth.

Minhyuk had a thought as he continued to hunt chestnut demons. 'There are no players around, and yet, there are a lot of mob monsters.'

And him?

'Chestnut demon, one shot.'

So what did it mean? He was able to monopolize the chestnut demons to level up.

[Bardy Swordsmanship]

[+9 to all 5 basic stats for 5 minutes.]

Fwoooooom—

Minhyuk's body was filled with strength. Even without Dauntless Strike, he was still able to one-shot the chestnut demons with his sword, just by using the Bardy Swordsmanship. As Minhyuk's level continued to increase, it would eventually be possible for him to do it without the Bardy Swordsmanship. Minhyuk quickly continued to hunt the chestnut demons in his surroundings.

Stab!

"Kuek!"

Lunge!

"Kwaak!"

Slash!

"Kgghkek!"

Minhyuk took a break from his hunting. He had become skilled. Earlier on, he had been slightly afraid of the chestnut demons because they were considered to be real monsters. However, his obsession with food trumped his fear, which made it easier for him to overcome it.

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

Soon, he reached Level 7 in a flash, and through his usual allocation of 3 to STR and 2 to AGI per level, he soon had an additional 15 STR and 10 AGI.

(Minhyuk)

Level: 7

Class: None

HP: 248?MP: 200

STR: 37+11??AGI: 27+14 ?STM: 15+5

WIS: 15+5 ?INT: 15+5 ?Rep: 10

Fullness: 100%/10

Bonus Point: 0

He had also collected 100 chestnuts. Earlier on, the notification for the completion of the quest had rang out, but he continued to collect more chestnuts.

His sole reason was so that he could build up his chestnut stash, and eat whatever was left after turning in the necessary amount for the quest. According to Allon, it would be impossible for him to gather chestnuts once he submitted the quest.

Just then...

"Kyaaaaa!"

He heard a woman scream. Minhyuk quickly headed over with a curious look on his face.

She was 12th in the local rankings, known as Alicia, the?Witch of Agony, in the game.

Her real-life name was...

Lee Ji-ah.

Lee Ji-ah sighed as she looked at the cherry tomato salad in front of her.

'I don't know if I'm a gamer or a celebrity.'

In a way, she could be compared to a female celebrity. The current?Athenae?Rankers were very popular all over the world.

What else could she say? Lee Ji-ah's appearance was on par with celebrities, that it was like a slap to the actors' faces?

She was experiencing the same popularity as the brightest stars these days, with her long black hair, misty doe-like eyes, sharp nose, slender jawline, and her flawless white skin. Her figure was also perfect.

'But did they think that this figure just came out of nowhere?'

Lee Ji-ah roughly looked over her capsule while chewing on her cherry tomatoes.

'Damn it...'

It was not that long ago when she got defeated by a non-Ranker. At that time, she realized something.

'I'm too weak at close combat... too weak!'

While it was true that she was playing a witch, she was still able to handle fights in close-combat.

She had been a top-ranker in *Versal*, the game before *Athenae* rose in popularity. She was a Light Knight in *Versal*, which was why she was confident in her close-combat abilities, even though she was a Witch in *Athenae*.

That was why she started practicing in her alt-account recently.

In reality, *Athenae* did not allow an alt-account system, but Ji-ah had been given special permission. The reason was because she had reached the highest level when participating in the country's closed-beta testing for *Athenae*.

Therefore, she practiced on her alt-account constantly, deleting the character and restarting it repeatedly.

'I have been lacking in confidence lately.'

She wanted to rediscover her initial passion. Perhaps, this was why she was utilizing such an extreme method, so she could fan the flames of her original excitement for the game. As per usual, she connected to the game, logging on as a new character that she could train.

This time, her character's name was Armin. Her face was completely changed as well. *Athenae* gave her special permission to change her appearance since she was given two IDs. Another reason why she was training in her alt-account was to avoid attention from other people.

As soon as she logged in, she went through the motions of the scarecrow training grounds, hunting training grounds, before quickly entering Isbin Village.

As she walked through the village, she suddenly remembered...

'Wasn't the chestnut demon hunting grounds considered to be difficult for beginners?'

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Most players would be reluctant to train at the chestnut demons hunting ground, since the mobs provided low experience and item drops. It was why the place had plenty of mobs roaming around.

However, based on time efficiency, the place could be considered to be the better choice compared to other hunting grounds. There were plenty of mobs, and if a player was supported by enough skills, they would definitely level up fast.

'Besides, what better opponent than those that are higher than yourself, right?'

Armin soon arrived at the chestnut demons' hunting grounds.

Swish!

"Kuek!"

Chestnut demons were quite strong compared to other mobs of their level. However, they were no match for her, who was labeled as one of the top GodCon.

Slaaash!

Armin quickly hunted some chestnut demons and shot to Level 4 in an instant.

'Too easy.'

Just as she had that thought, a huge chestnut came out of an overgrown bush. It had its thorny skin peeled off with part of its fleshy kernel showing. To be exact, that was on the monster's head as its body started to rise up.

She soon saw the whole thing in its entirety...

It was a chestnut demon that was three times bigger than normal, but still a bit smaller than an orc.

'Chestnut Demon King?'

Her forehead creased as she looked down at her weapon.

'A wooden sword...? Can I even use this wooden sword to defeat a Level 15 Chestnut Demon King? Should I run away?'

'No, that's an 11 levels gap, it would be good if I could challenge it with just a wooden sword. It's the easiest way for me to level up.'

With that thought in mind, she rushed straight at the monster.

Slam!

"Kuhack!"

Her wooden sword struck at its neck. The monster swayed for a bit, before swinging its arms at her fiercely. The two started to exchange multiple blows.

This was definitely the Light Knight of the past, Armin. She quickly narrowed the distance between them and pressured it.

Slash!

Slam!

Every time she struck it with her wooden sword, thorns would rain down on her.

'How can its HP be this high!'

Just as she thought that, the Chestnut Demon King narrowed their distance in an instant.

Slam!

Its arms struck past her body.

Bang, bang, bang!

Sharp thorns rained down on her and penetrated her body.

"Kyaaa!"

She let out a small scream as the Chestnut Demon King approached her.

[Your HP is below 20%]

"...Damn it."

Her HP fell drastically in one shot. It would definitely not be an issue if it had been a party of Level 4s.

At that moment, a man suddenly appeared out of the thickets. The man's eyes widened when he caught sight of the huge chestnut hanging on top of the head of the Chestnut Demon King.

"It... it's the great king of chestnuts...!"

'What's with this person?'

"It's a huge chestnut! I've never seen a chestnut this big!! Woow! It's very fleshy, it must be hard to roast. Wow! Wow! Wow!" ?Minhyuk kept on nodding as he exclaimed in joy.

"Are you going to help me or not?!"

"...If I help you, will I be able to get that chestnut?"

Armin had seen that kind of bright look before.

'Those are the eyes when someone gets at least an Epic item... and yet, his eyes were shining brightly when he saw the chestnut on top of the Chestnut Demon King?'

"You can have it, what's your level?"

She was dragging herself away from the approaching Chestnut Demon King.

"Level 7."

"Crazy..." She breathed a sigh in defeat.

The chestnut king would definitely kill her and this crazy person together.

"Can I have it? Please don't do anything like stealing it, yeah?"

"How can a Level 7 like you face the Chestnut Demon King.....?!"

[Bardy Swordsmanship]

[+9 to all 5 basic stats for 5 minutes.]

Rustle, rustle—

Minhyuk pulled the Sword of Rebellion out.

Dash!

He quickly narrowed the distance between him and the monster.

'He...he's fast...!'

'He's only Level 7??That speed does not make sense. It's not just that... '

He quickly pierced through the sides of the Chestnut Demon King at a high speed.

'He looks like a player who has trained for quite a long time...!'

As Armin thought this...

Slaaaaaash!

[Dauntless Strike]

[Each attack inflicts additional 20% damage.]

"Kuuaaaaaaaaaack!"

The Chestnut Demon King shrieked, its thorns shooting up in the air.

Fwooom!

The arms of the Chestnut Demon King moved to catch the fleeting man. At that exact moment, Minhyuk's eyes shone brightly.

[Vital Strike]

[Additional 17% ATK power for each successful strike.]

Minhyuk could see all three of the vital points of the Chestnut Demon King. The '+' effect would not be activated if he did not stab any of those three spots. He accurately thrust his sword towards one of the vital points, which was the bottom of the stomach, of the Chestnut Demon King.

[Additional 17% ATK power.]

Creeaaak!

"Kuaaack!"

'It's accurate... Like a person who has striked a thousand, no... ten thousand times...?Just how many years of kendo did he do to get to this point?'

At that moment, the Chestnut Demon King collapsed very slowly.

Thuud!

Minhyuk struck the head of the Chestnut Demon King.

Slash!

Then...

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

"Ooooooooooh! I've gained a chestnut that's as big as my head!" Minhyuk held up the chestnut, which came from the head of the chestnut demon king, as he shouted with joy.

Minhyuk felt happy. He was in a very good mood. This was because he had gotten a big chestnut unexpectedly.

"Miss, miss, do you know of an acrostic poem for 'Bam'?"

Armin stared at him blankly.

"Beautiful chestnuts;?Absolutely tasty;?Make me a ton!"

"....."

"What about this one?"

"....."

"Blanched chestnuts are bland;?Additional sugar I add;?Man, it tastes great!"

'He's definitely a crazy person...!' Armin sighed.

Minhyuk went on his own way as he held his chestnut and hummed happily.

"You should take the items. A good one came out," Armin called out.

In fact, a situation like theirs could be considered vague and ambiguous. It would definitely create plenty of trouble between players if not handled carefully.

However, for her, it was just a mountain of artifacts.

"The items? It's already very kind of you to give me the chestnut...!"

'Someone who heard us might think that the chestnut is the epic item.'

"I don't have any use for it anyway."

"Thank you!" Minhyuk did not refuse anymore and took the items.

[You have acquired Chestnut Demon King's Polished Thorn.]

[You have acquired Chestnut Demon King's Necklace.]

[You have acquired 26,431 gold.]

'Come to think of it, I think I might have heard that I leveled up twice. I'm Level 9 now.'

He could soon leave this place after raising another level.

Minhyuk first checked the Chestnut Demon King's necklace.

(Chestnut Demon King's Necklace)

Class: ?Rare

Durability: 1,000/1,000

Defensive Power: ?40

Special Abilities:

?STM+4

?+100 DEF against chestnut demon's thorns

Description: ?The probability of this dropping after hunting the Chestnut Demon King is very rare.

It was a rare-class item. When hunting for chestnut demons, the defensive power will increase by 100, in addition, there was a +4 in STM which was equivalent to having an increase of 40 in one's defensive power.

The reason why the defensive power of the necklace was lower than an armor was because it was an accessory-type artifact. These types of artifacts tend to have a lower defensive power. However, what was usually worth considering were the special abilities attached to the item.

He then checked the Chestnut Demon King's Polished Thorn.

(Chestnut Demon King's Polished Thorn)

Material Grade: D

Special Abilities: Additional attack power when making weapons.

Description: The Chestnut Demon King's polished thorn. Can be used as a quest item or be sold in stores.

"Nice, nice."

Minhyuk disappeared into the thickets with a satisfied look.

Armin struggled to get up to look at where he ran to. She then leaned her back against a nearby tree.

"Beginner Recovery."

[Beginner Recovery is activated for players below Level 10.]

There were plenty of convenient welfare systems for players below Level 10. In this case, once the player took a rest, their HP could recover by itself.

After pulling out the thorns from her body and throwing them away, Armin could see light seeping through her wounds as they slowly recovered.

'That player... how can he be that strong?'

She had some doubts.

'Did he get a legendary class at that level? No... that doesn't make sense, his skills were a bit too ordinary. And yet... his skills and artifacts don't make sense for his low level?'

She then recalled another aspect of the fight.

'No matter how good his artifact is, his movements were still too good to be true.'

Armin had seen plenty of real-life athletes among the Rankers. Control was, after all, very important in Athenae as it was a virtual reality game. Minhyuk's skills were very similar to that of those in the rankings.

'Sigh... I don't know anymore.'

She leaned her head comfortably against the tree. With the sole exception of the Chestnut Demon King, the other mobs in here would not attack first.

She relaxed and took a break for a moment, and before she knew it, she had fallen asleep. When she opened her eyes again, she realized that an hour had already passed. She had fully recovered as well.

.

'If I were more skilled, I could have taken down the Chestnut Demon King... Looks like I've really come to rely too much on magic...'

Armin bit her lips as she rebuked herself. It was a reason for her to grow and develop, moving forward.

At that moment...

Zooooom—

Zooooom—

It was the sound of a weapon swinging through the air. Curious, she moved to take a closer look. As she pushed past the bushes, she saw the player from before swinging his sword.

'...Is he training?'

She was quite surprised.

'Who will train without anyone pushing them to do it?'

She felt as if her world had been turned upside down. The player was full of perspiration as he swung his sword diligently.

'He should know that what he's doing is practically inefficient...'

Ordinary training, except for attacking the scarecrows, would not yield any increase in the stats.

Of course, if one trained their swordsmanship repeatedly, they could become more skilled at it. However, before reaching Level 10, it was common sense and much better use of one's time to just hunt monsters and use the points gained to increase their skills.

'So why... Do..don't tell me...?!'

She suddenly felt like she understood it.

'Did he develop himself through repetitive training?! He's fine with it even if his stats don't go up?!'

It was the only thing that made sense to her. Training continuously would eventually help a player improve, even if there was no increase in their stats.

'Aaaah...'?Armin bit her lips.'Even a high-level person like me has lost my initial spark.'

In the past, she used to cast her magic repeatedly, just so she could improve her skills. Right now, that player was in the middle of a rigorous training session himself.

Armin hid as she watched him silently.

After he finished exercising, Minhyuk mumbled to himself as he tried to catch his breath.

"Hoo..... In real life, I have to exercise for 5 hours before taking a break."

'He... he has to exercise for 5 hours in real life?!'

She was very shocked.

'Who the hell is this player? As expected, strength is not something you can have in a snap...!?'Having a higher level doesn't mean that one has reached the summit!'

Regardless of their standing, even a low level person had something that she could learn from.

She watched as Minhyuk started to prepare something again. He took out a burner, a pot, and one bottled water. In addition, he pulled out a chicken from his inventory.

'Huh?'

She tilted her head in confusion.

"Huhu... Spicy braised chicken with chestnuts!"

'The harmony created when the sweet, potato-like texture of the chestnuts meets with the spicy taste of the spicy braised chicken... '

Minhyuk started making spicy braised chicken with chestnuts on the spot. As soon as he finished cooking five chickens, he began to bite on it with a happy smile.

The smell floated towards Armin's nose.

'It...it smells delicious...'

Drool!

She unknowingly wiped her drool away.

'What did I eat in real life today??A handful of cherry tomatoes, a salad, oh, and a detox drink too.'

'Wow, he really eats deliciously. Wow, no, no! How can you eat that in one bite!'

She was very surprised. Just when there were only two chickens left...

'How can he eat this deliciously?'

Her body moved unconsciously. She really did it unconsciously.

"He, hey...!"

She came out of the bushes then said, "Ca..can I have a bite?!"

"...?"

Minhyuk looked very puzzled when he saw the female player from earlier coming out of the bushes.

"Ca..can I have a bite?!"

Minhyuk felt conflicted.

'Kgghk, there's only two chicken left, if I put eight bowls of rice in here, it would barely be enough.'

However, she had given him the big chestnut. That was not all. She had not hesitated in giving him the other drops as well.

"I understand. Then, just a bit..."

"Thank you!"

She quickly sat in front of Minhyuk and picked up a big chicken leg.

Then...

"Waaaaow!"

Chomp!?She ripped off a big piece.

'De..delicious...!'

The dish was well-seasoned and the sweetness of the chestnut had penetrated the soup well. It was cooked well and the meat was very tender, not tough at all.

Chew, chew—

She ripped another big piece off and started eating without restraint, before turning to Minhyuk to say, "I know now."

"What?"

"How you're so strong compared to other players. Don't you train repeatedly every day? I want to be strong too."

"...?"

1. Godly Control

2. Pronounced as B-ah-m.?This is the Korean pronunciation of chestnut.

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Minhyuk tilted his head in confusion.

'But, I'm only exercising for the food to digest, so that I can continue to eat delicious food?'

However, he felt like he did not need to explain that.

"There are a lot of people in reality that do not even exercise at all. That's why you're?really?amazing. I have a suggestion for you, but before that, I have to tell you who I am."

Armin was determined. To be honest, it was not that big of a deal for her to reveal her identity. She could always restart her character if she had to.

"I'm the Witch of Agony, Alicia." As Armin said those words, she thought to herself...

'He's probably going to be surprised, right??I'm 12th in the local rankings, after all. I'm the Witch of Agony.'

She was quite confident of herself. No, in fact, she had the right to be proud of herself. She thought that Minhyuk would definitely be surprised, with his eyes wide open and mouth agape. However, what she saw was only Minhyuk putting a chicken wing in his mouth and then taking out the bones cleanly.

"Bone extraction magic! You're the Witch of Agony? I~ s~e~e~"

"You're not surprised...?"

"I'm surprised. So surprised! Ah, my chest is pounding! I fell off of my seat."

She looked at him suspiciously while he gave a nonchalant response.

"Ah, no. I'm really the Witch of Agony!"

"Who said you're not?? Phew, it was so surprising that my chest... Even stopped beating for a moment."

Grab!

Minhyuk grabbed Armin's wrist.

'Come to think of it, this guy is really handsome.'

Without realizing it, Armin's heart skipped a beat. Then, she heard Minhyuk speak in a serious tone.

"I'm begging you, are you still going to eat two chicken legs?! I've only three left... Wow, I didn't expect you to be this kind of person?!"

"..."

Armin stared at Minhyuk blankly.

'Are chicken legs more important than my identity...?'

Minhyuk looked like he was extremely displeased. His eyes were glaring widely and he had a sulky expression.

Armin could not help but apologize when she saw his state, "S...sorry."

"Hmph, it's good that you know. Watch out for the chicken legs next time."

After getting it off his chest, Minhyuk grabbed a chicken leg and chomped on it.

Armin giggled.

'What is this...'

A lot of people wanted to shake hands with her wherever she went. She was considered a top star after all.

'It is really quite difficult to endure. I can't even go out and enjoy things, for myself. I usually spend my time at home, reading books and exercising. It's really like hell.'

'Does this person like to eat so much?' This was a thought that suddenly came to her. 'There was only one reason why I became a sorceress.'

If Armin thought deeper about it, the reason was because she loved the Witch class. To be honest, she had not felt as much happiness as when she was playing the Light Knight class. Yet now, she could feel a different thrill every time she used magic, even more so when she was named as the Witch of Agony.

"Actually, I want to ask you to join our guild, Artheon."

However, Minhyuk's attention was focused solely on the food. After Minhyuk finished the spicy braised chicken with chestnut, he lifted the lid off of a different pot, and started to loosen the rice he previously prepared.

"Hot, hot, hot, hot!"

He scooped a ladle of rice, mixing it thoroughly with the remaining sauce of the spicy braised chicken with chestnut.

Armin's words would definitely have shocked others.

Artheon. Among the existing domestic guilds, it was widely recognized as the most powerful guild. And their guild leader was the Witch of Agony, Alicia, although she was currently playing as Armin.

She saw Minhyuk clearly.

'This person is motivated, he can grind and polish himself without any external push. Plus, he is very strong for his level. He definitely has a great attitude.'

As the guild master, Alicia could determine whether a person will go far or otherwise. With that said, the man in front of her gave her an odd sense, from the moment she saw him training.

She grinned widely after she made her offer.

'He's totally unconcerned.'

Anyone else would have been thrilled.

In fact, Artheon was a guild that not everyone could join just because they wanted to. There were even rumors flying around that one could only get in the guild by bribing the members with tens of millions of hard cash.

Minhyuk saw Armin watching him as he ate.

Armin gulped in a daze as she watched Minhyuk mix his rice.

"Ah alright, I'll allow you to have a spoonful."

"Th...then I will have just a bit..."

Before Armin knew it, she found herself mixing rice together with the man. She took the spoon that the man handed over to her. Seeing the chestnuts peeking through the well-mixed rice and sauce, she opened her mouth and scooped a big bite. The sweet sauce that was mixed well with the rice made her smile.

"Ha...happiness..."

"Nothing can be more blissful than eating, right?"

"Yeah. In reality, I only eat cherry tomatoes, salad, and half an apple every day."

Minhyuk paused at her words. He was aware of that torment more than anyone else.

"Eeey. Then, you can have two more bites. Wow, I, Minhyuk, am such a humanitarian. I hope you still have your appetite!"

Armin grinned.

"You really don't care about me or Artheon, but you definitely care about eating. The average person would be jumping in joy at my offer..."

"Are you certain that you can have fun once you join a guild? Is it because you'll hear people say 'woow~'?at your high level and good items?"

"Eh?"

"I'm playing this game because I enjoy eating... When you're playing, you're playing to have fun, right? I don't need to join a guild, nor chase and seek high level players. I think that's not necessary for me to have fun."

As Armin heard those words, she blinked her eyes at Minhyuk. A thought suddenly crossed her mind.

'That's right... you have to have fun when you're playing games...'

Before she even realized it, it had become her job.

'Games were made so we could have fun and enjoy ourselves. Do I really have to train with the sword? I just should do what I want like this man in front of me.'

'Isn't that what having fun means?'

"You've got a point," Armin smiled brightly. Before they knew it, the two of them had finished their meal. Reêad latest *novels* at [noov.e/l/bin\(.\)com](http://noov.e/l/bin(.)com)

Minhyuk and Armin stood up.

"Then, I'm going to go and find something more delicious..." Minhyuk proclaimed as he turned around.

Armin hesitated for a brief moment, before calling out, "Can...can I add you as a friend?"

"Hmm..."

"I'll buy you something delicious later."

"I'll add you now!"

"Not right now, I'll add you once I get off of my alt character. I'm very thankful for the spicy braised chicken with chestnut today~"

Armin flashed a gentle smile. Nodding, Minhyuk quickly turned and moved to leave.

"Just to let you know, I could eat 100 servings in one sitting. The price of my meals are as high as the price of a house."

"Pfft.?Yes, yes. It's fine."

'He's a person that can make you smile until the very end. 100 servings alone??That's definitely impossible, right?'

Minhyuk disappeared from her sight. Armin nodded as she watched his retreating figure.

'Yeah. I should do what I want to do.'

She came to realize this truth at a strange place.

[You have leveled up.]

Minhyuk finally reached Level 10.

In total, he had received a total of 15 bonus points, 10 from the Chestnut Demon King, as well as the 5 points he recently received. He allotted 5 points to his STM, 5 to his AGI, and 5 to his STR.

(Minhyuk)

Level: 10

Class: None

HP: 343?MP: 200

STR: 42+11??AGI: 32+14 ?STM: 20+9

WIS: 15+5 ?INT: 15+5 ?Rep: 10

Fullness: 100%/10

Bonus Point: 0

He had already collected 200 chestnuts.

The chestnut demons were only around Level 3~4, the more he hunted, the less experience he gained. However, Minhyuk's hunting speed was still very fast. That was why he reached level 10 so quickly.

While he was hunting...

[Alicia has sent you a friend request.]

[Yes?/?No]

"Yes."

Minhyuk nodded. He then saw Alicia's information in the friend's window.

[Alicia / Sorceress / Lv. 412]

"Oh... For real?"

He was a bit surprised when she called herself Alicia. She was indeed very famous.

To be honest, Minhyuk had a lot of things to be suspicious about. Athena had no alternative character system but she had called herself Alicia. Aside from that, Minhyuk was not that surprised, compared to normal people.

His father was the CEO of Ilhwa group, and he had been in the company of a lot of celebrities, before he started suffering from his eating disorder.

She had even asked him to join Artheon.

Minhyuk's mind, on the other hand, was set on eating. He knew he had to find a guild that could accommodate his whims. Even so, he had his father as his backer.

Right now, he might be enjoying what he was doing, but his real purpose for playing the game was still because it was his treatment. If Minhyuk was really determined to continue eating, then he could just ask for his father's support.

Items, high-leveled support, gold, he could have it all. But, Minhyuk was not doing this just for the fun of eating. Even if Minhyuk did decide to join a guild, he would definitely choose to join either General, or a friend. It was hard to be a part of Artheon where there was nobody that he knew.

"Wait a sec...come to think of it... I haven't added General as a friend yet."

He had forgotten about it.

'Where is the 'add friend' button...'

Not long after, Minhyuk discovered the search box in his friends' list window.

He entered General and typed the code number that was given to him. Each nickname had an attached code number, that was why it was possible for different players to have similar nicknames in Athena.

Once Minhyuk entered the code, he pressed on the "Friend Request" that popped up.

[You have become friends with General.]

He heard the notification and not long after a whisper from General came.

[General: Man~ You know how to add friends now? Oohjujuju.]

[Minhyuk: I'm such a man, yeayea]

[General: Did you eat sweet red bean jelly?]

[Minhyuk: I ate it, it was really delicious...]

[General: So where are you now?]

[Minhyuk: I'm heading back to the village now. Ah, more importantly I just met the player Alicia the Agony.]

[General: ?Again, again. I told you not to lie to your hyung.]

[Minhyuk: She was a novice though, she told me that she was Alicia herself then suddenly wanted to add me as a friend. She said that she would buy me a meal.]

[General: It's not Alicia, maybe it's Olicia hehehehehehehe]

[Minhyuk: But it's really Alicia? Her level is 412?]

[General: ...For real?]

[Minhyuk: Yes, for real.]

[General: Wow... crazy...! You're now friends with Alicia the Agony? The person famous for being extremely cold? No, what did you do, how did you get close with Alicia?]

[Minhyuk: I was just eating diligently...]

Minhyuk was also very puzzled. He had just been eating diligently, and was trying to finish his digestion.

[Minhyuk: ?How about Artheon? She asked me to join but I refused.]

[General: ...Why didn't you go there, you'll definitely get a lot of support from there!]

[Minhyuk: Is the guild important? Actually, I hesitated when she asked to add me as a friend, she wasn't even sorry about eating my chicken drumsticks.]

[General: What do you mean by chicken drumsticks again? Anyway, it's good to know more people in Athenae. You have received a contact. Congrats.]

'Is this something really worth celebrating?'

If it was from the perspective of other players, then Minhyuk thought that it was quite possible.

[General: ?Hyung's still hunting so I'll send you another whisper later. Have fun!]

[Minhyuk: Yes, enjoy!]

Minhyuk closed the?whisper?and continued down the mountain.

'When we really meet later, maybe...I could really eat enough food that's worth as much as a house?'

As he thought that, he walked at a brisk pace in order to get his chestnut sweet red bean jelly faster.

He practically flew straight towards Tasty Sweet Red Bean Jelly, standing still in front of the store the moment he arrived.

"Hello!"

Allon came out quickly with a warm welcome, "Oh, boy, you're back!"

"I've collected the chestnuts."

"How many did you get? 50?"

It had not been that long since he left the store, that was why Allon thought that Minhyuk only got 50 pieces.

"200 pieces."

"...200? In such a short time?!"

"Yes, it was quite easy though?"

The players who received Allon's quest in the past would sometimes tell him...

'You're giving me such a difficult quest just to get some chestnut sweet red bean jelly?'

However, Minhyuk had gotten him 200 chestnuts in such a short amount of time.

"Ah, I also got this."

Minhyuk rummaged through his inventory. He then pulled out the Giant Chestnut. There had been no information at all when he inspected the giant-sized chestnut.

There were cases where the items were completely useless. Another possibility was that it was not technically owned by Minyuk, and the reason why there was no information was because he had taken it away.

Thud!

Allon's eyes widened and he dropped what he was holding when he saw the Giant Chestnut.

Chapter 19: Proposal

"B...boy!! Did you really hunt this?!"

"Someone was trying to hunt it, but they asked me for help, so I caught it!"

"Oooooooh... I can make you a?special?chestnut red bean jelly with this chestnut!"

[Collect 50 Chestnuts Quest has upgraded to a C-rank quest.]

[Quest: Collect 50 chestnuts.]

Rank: C

Requirements: Available only to those who have tasted Allon's red bean jelly.

Rewards: 10 special chestnut red bean jellies and 50 chestnut red bean jellies.

Description: A quest that can only be assigned by association if you have received Allon's 'Chestnut Red Bean Jelly' quest. You will get a special chestnut red bean jelly as a reward which is many times better than normal, since you attained a Giant Chestnut from the Chestnut Demon King.

"D..did you say special chestnut red bean jelly?!"

He was very happy when he heard that.

'Special, I have a hunch that it would taste even better than the normal red bean jelly.'

"That's right, I'll give you a special chestnut red bean jelly in a while. Ah right, I'll also give you the reward for the 50 chestnuts."

Minhyuk smiled in satisfaction when he heard those words, and he could not help but drool at the thought of it.

'I need to get some exercise in real life.'

He did not want to wait in boredom. Minhyuk was filled with anticipation as he logged out.

The moment he came back after he finished his exercise, Allon held out an exquisitely wrapped box filled with red bean jelly.

[You have received 10 pieces of special chestnut red bean jelly.]

He then held out another box filled with regular chestnut red bean jellies.

[You have received 80,000 gold.]

[You have received 200 pieces of chestnut red bean jelly.]

Minhyuk opened the box of special chestnut red bean jelly urgently, and saw the special chestnut red bean jellies wrapped in golden plastic wrappers. He tore off the wrapper, barely containing his excitement, and placed the bouncy chestnut red bean jelly into his mouth.

As he took the first bite, the sweet flavor of the red beans and the soft chewy chestnuts came together, creating a fantastic combination of flavors. He could not help but smile as he tasted the sweetness of the red bean jelly.

[You are the first person to have tasted the special chestnut red bean jelly.]

[You have acquired +5 on all 5 of your basic stats.]

[You have gained +5 reputation points.]

"Oh?!"

Minhyuk was very surprised. The delicious special chestnut red bean jelly had given him a stat increase.

"I told you, I was an alchemist back in the day."

'He did? It must have been a part of his endless chatter.'

In fact, it was extremely difficult to acquire Allon's special chestnut red bean jelly.

First off, the player had to sample his red bean jelly. Then, they would receive his quest and had to hunt for chestnut demons. Up to this point, most of the players would be willing to go this far.

However, after the players started hunting the chestnut demons, they would always give up on the quest. In fact, they would start cursing since the experience and item drops were extremely stingy.

Then, there was the Chestnut Demon King, which was not a common monster. Furthermore, the chestnut on top of its head was not something a player would get automatically. The person who was undertaking the quest had to be the one to remove

the Giant Chestnut from the head of the Chestnut Demon King. Most of the players had thought that the large chestnut was a part of the monster.

Due to the long and tedious process of getting the special chestnut red bean jelly, Minhyuk somehow ended up as the first person to have ever tasted it.

Minhyuk went and checked his stats window.

(Minhyuk)

Level: 10

Class: None

HP: 448?MP: 250

STR: 47+11??AGI: 37+14 ?STM: 25+9

WIS: 20+5 ?INT: 20+5 ?Rep: 15

Fullness: 100%/10

Bonus Point: 0

"Kgghk..."

'That's quite high.'

Minhyuk was not completely unfeeling about his stats. No matter how one looked at it, the feeling of being strong was quite good.

'Of course, it can't beat food and eating.'

"Is it delicious?"

"Yes!!! It melts?so?gently in my mouth."

"Yeah, you've worked hard. Boy, I got the ingredients for chestnut red bean jelly, all thanks to you. Ah, right. Are you going to go there now, boy?"

Minhyuk stopped chewing when he heard those words. His expression grew solemn. It was as if he had been called to march towards a battlefield.

"That's right."

He clenched his fists. 'I have been waiting for this moment for a long time. A long time...!'

"Well, come now, boy. Do you really have to look that serious?" Allon gulped dryly as he saw the intensity and ferocity of Minhyuk's gaze.

Minhyuk caught himself and grinned sheepishly, "Pork is delicious no matter how you eat it!"

"That's true. But boy, are you really just going there to eat pork?"

"Of course not. Huhuhuhuhuhu...!"

'There are a lot of things needed to eat pork. And I need gold in order to get those things.'

Thinking back, Minhyuk had gone to Isbin Village so he could meet with General, after which, he went to meet Allon and ate red bean jelly.

'Didn't Instructor Roina say that I can make a fortune if I were to sell the chicken feathers that I pulled?'

Roina had taught him a lot of basic things before he left for Isbin Village, like how to make use of the collection shops.

"I'll see you next time. Please make me more delicious red bean jelly at that time!"

"Sure, go on."

Allon looked at Minhyuk's back with a smile.

The general merchandise store was located near the central plaza. There were quite a lot of novice players around.

"I'm selling 15 goblin claws, here!"

"Yes. 15 pieces for 2,800 gold. Here you go!"

"Yes, thanks for your hard work."

"Goodbye."

Hamel, the merchant's lover who bought the goblin claws from the other player, sighed.

'I want my work to end quickly so I can go home and take a rest. Today was one hell of a Monday. People just kept on pouring in one after the other.'

Then, a man stopped in front of her.

'Wow... He's tall...'

She was quite amazed with how tall the player was.

"I want to sell some miscellaneous items."

"Yes. What would you like to sell?"

"Chicken feathers and chestnut demon thorns."

"Please place them here."

Hamel pushed a machine forward and pointed at it. If a player placed the items they wanted to sell on the machine, the machine would show how many of the items there were in total. It looked like a big bathroom scale, with a large basket placed on top of it.

'Perhaps he has about six chicken feathers?' Hamel thought of the possibility.

Chicken feathers were quite cheap so it was common for game-savvy players to hunt them and sell them all together.

"Then, I just have to put the chicken feathers in here?"

"Yes."

Hamel saw the player take out all of the chicken feathers from his inventory. There was only a set quantity that a player could take out from the inventory at any one time.

Not long after...

"Huh?" Hamel was puzzled when she saw the number written on the machine.

"I...is the machine broken?"

50 chicken feathers were clearly written on the scale. Then, soon after, the numbers continued to rise on the scale, and the guy still continued to pull out more items from his inventory.

"Heek...?Lo...look at those chicken feathers...!"

"A single chicken can only give you 1~2 feathers at most, right?"

The number on the scales soon stopped at 130. Minhyuk was forced to stop when he could not place any more chicken feathers on the machine.

"It's already full?"

Hamel was speechless.

"Even if you caught plenty of chicken, there would be no benefits to your strength, why would anyone do this?"

.

"Yah, yah, amazing. That player. It's him, right?" Players began to whisper behind them.

"Ardo's Chicken Hunter...!"

Minhyuk tilted his head in confusion at the surprised NPC, Hamel, while players continued to whisper behind him.

'Ardo's Chicken Hunter?' The source of this content n/o/v/(el)bi((n))

Not long after, the whispers and murmurs started to grow louder.

"That player was famous for solo-raiding the golden chicken."

"Heek... He even faced the golden chicken alone?"

"That was an amazing event. So that person was him? The one who cooks chicken immediately after catching it? Doesn't he look totally handsome though?"

"Wow... Look at how unfair life is..."

Minhyuk started to feel embarrassed. To be honest, he did not like to be the center of attention.

At that moment, Hamel spoke up, "You can head inside to use the giant scale. It would be better for you to go there. Come, I'll show you the way."

Hamel quickly asked another employee to replace her. She then led Minhyuk inside, who of course, did not forget to take back the chicken feathers that he put on the scale.

This time, he was brought in front of a large scale. He then started to place the chicken feathers on it. Before he knew it, the number had already reached 500.

'W...what the hell. Just how much chickens did he hunt...!' As Hamel thought about it, she looked over only to see Minhyuk with a dejected expression.

"Ah, I thought I ate about 700 of them. So it was just 500?"

'He, he ate them?!'

She did hear the players outside talking about how he cooked them.

Then...

"Wait, there's more."

What Minhyuk pulled out was none other than the golden chicken's beak and the polished thorn of the chestnut demon king.

After everything was placed on the scale, Hamel quickly tapped on the calculator. Cold sweat broke out on her forehead.

The reason was simple...

'So... so many items, plus the player brought special items...!'

She had no choice but to be impartial. Isbin Village was open to everyone, but usually, only beginners loiter around.

"582 pieces of chicken feathers worth 60,300 gold... the chestnut demon's thorns... 45 pieces for 15,000 gold... the golden chicken's beak... 500,000 gold... and the chestnut demon's polished thorn for 100,000 gold..."

Hamel continued to key in the figures on the calculator with a?tap tap tap.?She then wiped the cold sweat off of her brows when she saw the total on her calculator.

"The total is 675,300 gold."

"Oh..."

'Listening to it, it seems that there were quite a lot.'

The notifications rang all at once.

[You have successfully sold more than 600,000 gold on your first deal.]

[You have acquired the title 'A Patient Seller'.]

[You have acquired 1 reputation point.]

"Hmm?"

Minhyuk checked the title in confusion.

[A Patient Seller]

Stackable title.

Title Effect: +3 on all 5 basic stats.

"I got... a title. A Patient Seller?"

"A, a title? Wow, this is the first time that a title appeared in our store...!"

"Is this something great?"

"Of... of course it's amazing! You can only obtain this title if you have hunted the items and sold them yourself! It's also important to note that it should be your first transaction."

"Ah..."

'It seems like it was really the case.'

"Please wait."

Hamel placed her gold bag down.

"I'll buy everything for 700,000 gold!"

"700,000?"

"It's on the house!"

Hamel could foresee it. If she got into the good books of this player today, he would definitely sell her more good things in the future. This was also possible because Minhyuk had a higher reputation compared to the other beginners.

"Please make use of our store services again!"

"I'll visit again!"

Hamel succeeded in getting a worthy customer.

Yadu was the owner of the grocery store. He stared blankly as he watched Minhyuk drag several carts.

"Boy, are you going to buy all of this? By any chance, is your guild having a get-together today?"

Occasionally, there were get-togethers in the game. These gatherings were like family gatherings where many people could attend and feasted together.

"I'm going to eat all of these alone!"

Yadu was left speechless so he whipped his calculator out and tapped on it.

"20 plates of dipping sauce, 20 tubs of red chili paste, 10 tubs of soybean paste... 50,000 gold worth of lettuce, 40,000 gold worth of sesame leaf... 30,000 gold worth of cucumber chilies... onion... tofu... uhmm...?mumble, mumble, mumble... it's already at 350,000 gold..."

Yadu, who was busy checking out the things in the carts, saw the man dragging two more carts. As expected, the carts were also full of groceries.

"Oh my goodness..."

He was completely shocked, as cold sweat broke out on his forehead.

"I didn't buy more than I thought, how much is the total?"

Minhyuk, who was getting ready to eat pork, smiled brightly then confidently called out, "I'm buying a lot, so please, give me a discount!"

Chapter 20: Someone Better than You

[I didn't buy more than I thought, how much is the total?]

Lee Minhwa, who was watching the monitor, turned her head and locked eyes with Team Leader Park, who had a serious expression.

"Team Leader."

"Yeah." Team Leader Park sighed. He was wondering if his worldview had been turned upside down.

"He doesn't care about the legendary quest at all...?"

"Seems like it."

Roina only mentioned red bean jelly and Allon to Minhyuk. With only that, she had gotten around the inhibitions and influence of the God of Athena.

"My god...he actually wanted to eat red bean jelly, more than obtaining a legendary class, so much that he went straight to see Allon..."

It was so ridiculous to the point where Team Leader Park almost laughed.

"Ah, that's right. Player Minhyuk. Isn't this his first dungeon hunt?"

"Yes, that's right."

"Compared to solo field hunting, aren't you supposed to form a party for your first dungeon hunt? In the first place, Twilight Graveyard wasn't made for party hunting, right?"

Team Leader Park nodded. A party was the requirement for the first dungeon hunt quest.

'No, by right, Minhyuk would have to meet the hunting NPC, and ask for the hunting NPC's guidance, to trigger the first hunt.'

Most general RPG games had stages. Swinging one's sword, picking up items, going on one's first hunt. Once a player completed these steps, they would be able to move on to the next stage. Few RPG games broke away from this tradition.

In the same vein, Athena required players to undertake a party hunt quest. In fact, players were not allowed to enter the dungeon alone before finishing the quest.

"What, it's a party hunting tutorial, so it's not that hard. And, he would be able to get a job after finishing Twilight Graveyard."

"Well..."

'Maybe he was interested in the items that the boss mob drops?'

"Ah, how is that player doing, the one who received the Puppeteer class?"

"Yes, the secret class Puppeteer. It's a much stronger class than what we first thought, he's growing very fast. Anyhow, that player right now..."

.

Team Leader Park was wearing a curious expression, while Lee Minhwa looked back at him with astonishment.

"...He's looking for party members to go to Twilight Graveyard?"

Minhyuk finally met with Charlie, the hunting NPC that Roina recommended. She had told him that he would have a smooth hunting quest if he met with Charlie.

"Oho, you have already hunted the chestnut demons? Boy, I think you're a bit strong."

"Thank you for your praise. Hehe."

"You're going to Twilight Graveyard... Boy, you have to form a party for your first dungeon hunt."

"Eh?"

"You should know that parties are very important in Athenae, right?"

"Yes, I heard about it."

"That's why it's impossible for you to go on your first dungeon hunt without a party."

Party hunt. A hunt where several people gathered together to attack a dungeon that was hard for them to defeat on their own. The experience, items and gold would be clearly divided between the party members.

'I...I had been too preoccupied with pork. I looked into the Twilight Graveyard, but I didn't look through the rest of the tutorial.'

"Well then, go party hunting. Ah, wait. You don't have to come back to me to get the rewards for the party hunt. Also, unlike other tutorials, you will be able to get experience if you catch monsters."

Ring!

[Quest: First Party Hunt]

Rank: Tutorial

Requirements: None

Rewards: +5 bonus points, 10,000 gold

Penalty for Failure: None

Description: Party hunting is a very important aspect of Athenae. Learn the system for party hunting.

Minhyuk thought about it for a moment.

'D...don't tell me...'

He was extremely worried.

'There are other players who want to get pork, like me...?!'

Of course, this was just Minhyuk's personal concern. There would definitely be no other player like Minhyuk.

'Eyy, I don't know if we can share the pork though...'

Minhyuk was genuinely concerned about the things that he did not know about. As he mulled over those things, he bid goodbye to Charlie and moved towards the central plaza.

"Your desired job is close at hand, get them here. Quickly!"

"Who wants to join the Lizard Tail Quest, urgently needed!"

"I'm Blue Palm's Powerade Flavor!"

"Looking for? Athenae? GF! I'm thirteen years old, and they call me Fire Fist Ace in school! Not too long ago, I defeated Shanks of Eunpyong Elementary School!"

The central square was still as lively as ever.

Minhyuk looked around to find people recruiting party members to raid the Twilight Graveyard. He squeezed through the gaps between players and continued to look around.

At that moment... The source of this content n/o/v/(el)bi((n))

"Twilight Gathering, quickly looking for members. One spot left!"

"Oh."

Minhyuk walked towards the voice and saw a cheerful-looking man. The player was wearing the Beginner's Leather Armor and holding a spear.

"Your Twilight Gathering party is going to the Twilight Graveyard, right?"

"Yes, you're right," He nodded at him kindly.

"Can I join your party?"

"What's your class?"

Minhyuk's words got stuck in his throat.

'Come to think of it, I heard that everyone can change their class once they reach Level 10.'

Of course, anyone could switch from their regular class, if they satisfied the conditions for a Special class in the future.

"I don't have one yet. Ah, but I'm already at Level 10."

"Hmm..." The man groaned at Minhyuk's words.

"Is this your first party hunt quest?"

"Yes."

"Well, it doesn't really matter. It would be the last Twilight Gathering, so one more person is fine. We'll bring you along for the ride."

He then stretched his hands, which were held in a fist, towards Minhyuk. If two players bumped their fists lightly, they would be notified of a party formation.

Tap—

[Would you like to join the Twilight Gathering Party?]

[Yes / No]

"Yes."

[You have joined the Twilight Gathering Party.]

"Then, this way please. I'll first introduce you to the two other party members who joined before you. Ah right, my name's Roy. I'm a spearman, and I'm at Level 15."

"I'm Minhyuk."

"Oh, your name is cool."

Athenae?only showed the nicknames and the levels of the players in the party window, hence it was necessary for people to report their job classes to one another.

The two men walked together until they saw a man and a woman sitting on one of the benches in the central plaza.

"I've brought the last party member. Say hello."

The woman had brown bob hair and a shabby beige robe. It was quite obvious at first glance, that she had just changed class to a novice Mage. The man was about 170cm in height. He had red hair, and was holding a shoddy hatchet while wearing a shoddy leather armor, to nobody's surprise.

"Hello. I'm Rakku, a mage. I'm Level 13."

"I'm Minhyuk. Level 10. I have no class yet."

"Ah, no class..."

Before Rakku could help it, she shot a quick glance at Roy, the party leader. She did a double-take when she realized what she had said.

"Ah, ah, sorry," Rakku quickly apologized to Minhyuk. She was probably apprehensive because Minhyuk had a low level and had no job class. However, she recollected herself and apologized, because she thought that Minhyuk would take offense with her words.

"Ah, it happens. It's fine."

'It's just a game but she has manners.' Minhyuk thought to himself.

"Party Leader."

"Yes?"

"He has no class and he's a complete novice, wouldn't it be too risky for us?"

"This would be the last Twilight Gathering, so it's fine. Besides, I can deal with the attacks so it should be fine. Actually, we should be able to break it with just the three of us, but I still got another one, just in case."

"Is that so?"

The man did not even bother introducing himself properly. He just said his name curtly at Minhyuk and stared at him.

"I'm Ver."

"Hello, I'm Minhyuk."

"...?"

Chew, chew?

Minhyuk believed that he did not need to consider being kind to someone who was unfriendly to him. That was why he just ate his bread without any concern.

As for Ver, he did not like Minhyuk the moment he saw him.

'Ah... He's handsome. Annoying.'

Ver was an ugly man. When he stood next to Minhyuk, he somehow looked like a hobbit. And even though they had only just met, he had already decided that he was in love with Rakku. To be exact, he was a man who was quick to fall in love with any woman he met.

'Tsk.'

Even though Minhyuk was not interested, Ver still thought there was a feeling of rivalry between them, albeit one-sidedly!

"You're very tall."

Chew, chew. "Thank you!" ?Minhyuk replied happily to Rakku's compliment.

'Ah, as expected I hate him...' ?Ver's forehead wrinkled in disgust. It was a common case of inferiority complex.

"Then, let's depart now."

"Yes!"

"Depaaart~"

Four players walked to the exit of Isbin Village and headed for the forest.

"Is your fullness low?"

"No, I'm eating because it's delicious."

"Deli...cious?" Rakku tilted her head in confusion at Minhyuk's calm response.

'I think he has already eaten about ten of those.'

It was normal for a character to feel full after all of that. However, Minhyuk was still eating the castella cake diligently.

'It's really delicious...!'

Minhyuk had already earned lots of gold, that was why he was rich enough to buy many pieces of castella bread. He had even bought milk, and as he drank it with the soft castella, the combination melted gently in his mouth.

'I hate castella, but when I watch him eat it... I...I feel like I want to eat one.'

Rakku tilted her head in confusion.

"Rakku, have you seen the movie?'A Man's Story'?"

"Yes, I've seen it."

Her forehead creased because of Ver. She knew when a man was interested in her, compared to a man who was not. Ver was very obvious with his flirting. While she was not a person who was sold on looks, Ver was coming on too much, just?too?much.

"Do you like spaghetti?"

"I hate it."

"Then what type of rice do you like?"

"I don't eat rice because I have allergies."

"...You're allergic to rice? Then, did you watch the movie?'Bad'?"

"Yes."

"That's right, it hasn't been released ye... Huh?" Ver looked at her blankly.

Rakku, who did not want to put up with his pestering, quickly went over to Minhyuk's side. With stars in her eyes, she watched Minhyuk eat deliciously. Meanwhile, Minhyuk had just gulped down the white milk after stuffing half of the castella in his mouth.

Her throat bobbed.

Gulp.

"Can I have some of tha..."

"Impossible."

'He stopped me with a no in an instant...'

Rakku pouted in dismay, while Minhyuk smiled brightly. He was kind, but that did not mean that he would share his food with just anyone. He truly was a peculiar man.

"Today's party sure is lively." Roy grinned. "We're near."

The other players nodded at his words. They exchanged a few words here and there as they walked. It was mainly Roy and Rakku who talked, while Ver and Minhyuk stayed silent.

"Ah, you're doing this for the quest."

"Yes, if I finish this quest, they will give me a novice staff."

'Well, it was one of the usual reasons.'

Not long after, they arrived in front of the Twilight Graveyard. The entrance to the dungeon was quite similar to the entrance of a cave. They saw a guide written on top of it.

[Limited to Level 10-15 players, up to 4 party members only.]

Some dungeon instances would have such a thing written, while some did not.

"Then, let's get in positions. Me and Ver will pull aggro on it and strike it, while Rakku will shoot at it with magic. Minhyuk, you can help us out when we really need it. Don't overdo it."

'A Level 10, plus it's his first party quest.'

In fact, sometimes, novices could make mistakes and ruin a party hunt. That was the reason why Minhyuk became someone who he would call on, only when needed.

"Yes, I understand."

"I have activated the automatic distribution system; we're splitting the drops into 4 equally. If you obtain a good item, you can sell it separately."

As soon as the automatic distribution was activated, all the gold and items would be divided into equal parts. For example, if they obtained 40 gold, then each of them would receive 10 gold. In the case of items, it would be given randomly, and if anyone was lucky, they would be able to get a lot.

However, there was not much difference to the items that each individual could receive. Furthermore, they would not know who would receive what item, unless they were willing to divulge.

"I don't think anyone would eat and run. Let's go."

They walked into the Twilight Graveyard dungeon.

[You have entered Twilight Graveyard.]

[There will be a penalty for leaving the instance without completing the raid.]