

Great Mage 671

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Season 2 Chapter 371

“...”

The Great Medium looked at Lukas' expression.

She couldn't tell what he was thinking. One thing was clear, and that was the fact that he was still calm, at least outwardly.

But in the next moment, she realised that wasn't actually the case.

“There are people other than Peran and Torkunta that remember me.”

The voice that came out seemed to be composed. However, with the amount of attention she had focused on him at that moment, it was easy to pick up the slight quiver.

The Great Medium nodded as she pretended like she didn't notice, and Lukas continued.

“Diablo and Lucid.”

“...the Elder Lich is an integral part of this story. In fact, it might be safe to say that he is the key. It might be hard for you to accept, but the beginning of all of these errors stemmed from his curiosity.”

“The beginning of all of these errors?”

“I also didn't remember you at the beginning.”

The Great Medium's emotionless voice became surprisingly cold.

“One day, I suddenly realised something was wrong, but it was only after I accessed the void records that I learned about 'Lukas Trowman'... Do you understand? You didn't come to my mind, I looked you up. Do you know what that means?”

“...it was information that you came across, not memories.”

“Yes. That's correct.”

If that was the case then the Great Medium couldn't be considered Lukas' acquaintance. Instead, as she said, she was more like someone who read about 'the life of Lukas Trowman' in a history book.

Perhaps even in a face to face situation like this, she only had a strange feeling like she was having a conversation with a historical figure.

Even though they had once been comrades that had fought an enemy together.

“The same is probably true for Peran and Torkunta. They too, with a bit of luck and chance, were able to remember you to an extent... Maybe there are others who also had strange feelings.”

The Great Medium lifted two fingers.

“And that’s because two factors intertwined.”

“What are the two factors you’re talking about?”

“As I mentioned before, one of them is Diablo. Shortly after you disappeared, he was able to find clues ‘about the world’ all over the continent.”

“Clues about the world...?”

“Don’t you know? You were able to become Frey Blake because of a clue.”

...The box.

The Great Medium was talking about the black box.

“After that, Diablo learned of the void record’s existence, and he succeeded in approaching it. And that was when he became the first person in this universe to learn about you.”

“...!”

The Great Medium’s words took him by surprise.

In other words, in this universe, the first being who learned about Lukas Trowman’s existence was none other than Diablo.

“...you are weak now. The external force you had as an Absolute is no longer there. That means that you no longer have the ability to resist the power of disappearance. If Diablo hadn’t remembered you, you would have disappeared as soon as you returned to this universe, without even realising it.”

“...then the reason some people barely remember me...”

“...is because Diablo remembers you.”

He understood what she meant.

The Great Medium had said that the thin threads that connected him to this world, which stemmed from Diablo, were the reason Lukas hadn’t disappeared.

“Diablo has the potential to become an Absolute.”

The Great Medium looked at the man who had been an Absolute in the past and spoke.

“Of course, the difference between having the potential and actually becoming one is like the difference between heaven and earth. But one thing is important here. Albeit slightly, Diablo has the ability to resist the power of disappearance.”

“Then what would happen if Diablo died?”

At this point, the Great Medium fell silent again.

Lukas wasn’t sure if she was giving him more time to prepare or if she herself needed to prepare.

“Then the power of disappearance would come upon you once again. And without the Absolute’s external force, you will not be able to stop it.”

“...that means.”

“Right.”

The Great Medium’s eyes met Lukas’.

“This time, you would disappear for real.”

“...”

Silence.

A heavy and long silence.

Lukas didn’t know what to think.

But there was something that he needed to ask the Great Medium before all of that.

“...why are you telling me all of this?”

“...”

“You could have hidden this all from me. If you had, then I would have killed Diablo without thinking about anything, and I would have disappeared without knowing anything. So I need an answer. Why did you tell me?”

The Great Medium was staring at the floor. Unlike before, it felt like she was intentionally avoiding Lukas’ gaze.

“...because... I felt that you at least had the right to know.”

“...”

“At this point, I am probably the only one who knows the long journey you took as a human being. Diablo wouldn’t have looked that deeply into it, but I did... I have great respect for you, and everything you have done.”

There was clear respect in the voice that softly flowed out. But it didn’t feel real to Lukas at that moment.

“So I wanted to respect you now. I know it’s selfish. But no matter how cruel it is, I wanted you to have this choice.”

Lukas let out a laugh.

“Whether to fight and disappear or remain silent and watch the continent suffer through this crisis?”

The voice that came out was so sharp that he had trouble believing it was his own.

The Great Medium didn’t seem to notice it. However, she spoke in a much quieter voice.

“...or, there is a third option.”

“...”

Lukas knew what the third option was.

—To fight on Diablo's side. It was against his cause, but it was a reasonable choice to defend himself.

And it wasn't impossible.

Diablo would probably not have any unwillingness towards Lukas joining his side. In fact, he would probably welcome him with open arms.

And then what would happen?

With Lukas' knowledge and guidance, it might be possible for Diablo to reach 10 stars. The levels of the other hundreds of Wizards, including Cairo, would also rise exponentially.

If the powerful undead army, including Lucid, was added, then there was probably no force on the continent that could stop them.

Even if the Circle were to unite once again, it still would not be enough.

...The Great Medium.

This woman would never stop Lukas from making a choice. Even if he decided to stand on Diablo's side and betray his current comrades, she would not say a word.

"...it's because you know."

Lukas spoke.

"You know what choice I will make, so why did you show me these options?"

"..."

"Did you think that Lukas Trowman wouldn't mind saving the people on this continent even though he had been completely forgotten? Did you think he would make another heroic sacrifice with a smile?"

He could feel the heat gradually rising in his voice.

He knew this was a childish outburst. Nevertheless, Lukas couldn't help but let out his emotions now.

If he endured even this, he really couldn't tell what would happen to him later.

"If that was the case, Great Medium, then you were very wrong this time... I am weak now. Both physically and mentally. I'm weaker than when I fought the Demigods as the Great Mage 4,000 years ago, and I'm much weaker than when I was Frey Blake. I... Now, I..."

It took some courage to say the last words that were hanging on his tongue.

"...don't want to sacrifice myself."

He didn't want to.

He'd come back.

Regardless of the process or form, Lukas had returned to his home universe.

The moment he'd realised that, he had thought with all his heart that he was lucky to be alive, even if it was shameless.

Although he was different, and everything was different from how it was in the past, he thought that he might be able to live like a human again.

He wanted to talk with his past comrades, make jokes, and go on trips with his friends when the weather was good.

Lukas, Lukas Trowman...

"...I want to stop being happy now."

"..."

The Great Medium didn't say anything.

He wasn't sure what kind of expression she was making or what kind of gaze she was looking at him with.

All Lukas, who had lowered his head, could see was the blanket covered by his shadow.

"I'm sure you need some time to think."

With those words, he heard the Great Medium get up from her seat.

She opened the door but paused before she stepped out of the room.

And said.

"...I'll wait."

Click.

The door closed, leaving a silent room.

Lukas didn't open his mouth anymore.

* * *

Lukas remained at a loss until Peran returned that evening.

He concealed his turmoil. He didn't want Peran to see something like that.

"Fortunately, everything worked out."

"Lady Iris and Lady Anastasia are both active in the treatment. Haha. They said that Lady Snow will soon be completely cured."

The way he rambled on reminded him of an excited child. Even his eyes were glittering with hope.

Lukas couldn't help but stare blankly at him for a moment.

"It was all thanks to you, Lukas."

“...huh?”

“You said that it would be possible to heal Lady Snow. Sorry, but to be honest, I didn’t quite believe you.”

“...”

“I thought you were just saying that to comfort me. But you weren’t,”

It was a pleasant mistake. Peran added in a laughing voice.

“You gave me hope, Lukas. Thank you so much.”

Lukas closed his mouth.

...Peran Jun.

The possessor of a talent that far surpassed his own. There were no flaws in his personality, and he had the charisma and charm to lead people.

‘However.’

It wasn’t enough.

That alone wasn’t enough.

Lukas wasn’t sure what he was thinking. And yet, his mouth seemed to move of its own volition.

“Peran.”

“Mm?”

“Can we defeat Diablo?”

“...what do you mean?”

“You saw for yourself how strong Diablo is. The Sword King that he revived is also amazing. That’s not all. Diablo is probably hiding more trump cards as well.”

Lukas continued without giving Peran a chance to speak.

“Even if Snow is cured and joins you, it will be difficult to defeat Diablo.”

“It might be.”

Peran nodded weakly.

“As you said, our victory is not guaranteed. However, I see hope.”

“...hope?”

“Lady Iris has gone to convince the Grand Master. I don’t think he will turn down our request. So I believe this could be an opportunity.”

Peran’s eyes lit up as if he was daydreaming.

“It’s an opportunity for everyone to understand that just because you are right, it doesn’t mean everyone else is wrong.”

Those words struck Lukas heavily.

“You’ve had this thought since they decided to subjugate Diablo.”

“Haha. Sorry. Was I too excited?”

“...”

Lukas looked Peran in the eyes.

Honest eyes. As soon as he saw them, Lukas recalled a scene.

A scene of five heroes fighting a bloody battle against a divine being. It looked tiring and painful, but at the same time, they emitted a blinding glow.

And that glow was now emanating from Peran.

If that was the case, then I...

“...”

“What’s wrong? Lukas.”

“...nothing.”

As time passed, the scene began to change.

New figures began replacing the old ones.

Ivan, Anastasia, Snow, Nix.

And in the centre of them was Peran with his arms outstretched.

‘Succession.’

The moment he had that thought, a smile subconsciously spread across his lips.

It felt like a tangled thread in his mind had unravelled.

Right. He’d already lived a long time.

As he felt a refreshing but at the same time depressing wind, Lukas called his friend’s name.

“Peran.”

“Yeah?”

“Let’s defeat Diablo. Certainly.”

Peran’s face instantly became even brighter.

“Definitely.”

As he looked at that expression, Lukas had a thought.

If it was Peran, it might be possible.

To create a new Great Mage who would succeed Lukas Trowman.

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The next day.

As she faced Lukas, the Great Medium realised that he'd made a decision.

She could tell from the first moment that she looked at him. Because Lukas' face was no longer covered by a shadow.

'He will fight.'

This man had chosen to fight Diablo in the end. He knew the consequences, but he still chose to help the cause.

...The cause?

No. Those words were an insult to Lukas. The Great Medium didn't know what kind of thoughts he had when he made the decision. And there was no one qualified enough to ask.

So she would just complete the rest of the role she'd been given.

Because there were still things she needed to tell Lukas.

"Diablo isn't in this world right now. Iris couldn't track him either."

"Do you mean he went to another universe? That's impossible for anyone but an Absolute."

The wall between universes wasn't so low that it could be crossed by beings who only had 'the chance of becoming an Absolute'.

It was similar to the power of disappearance in that external force, which only Absolutes were capable of using, was the only power that could counter it. In the case of universal travel, it would be impossible to withstand the pressure that came with crossing dimensions without external force.

"I don't mean a different universe. I mean a different world. Don't you remember? There used to be two worlds that neighbour this continent."

"The Celestial World, and the Demon World."

He recalled one of the truths of this world that he'd heard from God in the past.

The Demigods were originally beings who would become angels, and the Celestial World was the world they were supposed to live in. But things had gone awry and everything went down the drain.

"Is Diablo there?"

“He’s not in the Celestial World or the Demon World. After you left, a new neighbouring world appeared.”

“Another one?”

“That world is a bit strange. That world existed for a long time, but no one discovered its existence. Diablo and I were only able to learn of its existence through the void records.”

Lukas thought of the black box.

And the remnants of Frey Blake that he found inside it.

...He had a vague idea of what that world was like.

“Let me backtrack a bit. Yesterday, I told you that the reason that some people could remember you was because of a combination of two factors. I only explained one of those things to you.”

That was true. At that time, his mind had been in too much of a mess so he didn’t realise.

The first factor was Diablo. He had managed to access the void records, which allowed him to learn about Lukas’ existence. And that was why Lukas hadn’t been destroyed.

Then what was the other reason?

“...”

The Great Medium hesitated for a long time. Her mouth opened and closed over and over again.

Lukas realised that she was afraid to say the words that waited on her tongue.

“...I can’t feel his aura.”

“But him, you mean...”

“Dawns.”

Dawns.

The name of the god worshipped by the Great Medium and Hitume Ikar.

It was also another name for God, the creator of the multiverse.

“He’s always busy. Unless it is a Cosmic Event then he probably wouldn’t even care about it.”

“I know that. But even then, I could still feel his ‘presence’, albeit vaguely. I could always feel the existence of a thread that connected me to him.”

“...and you can only barely feel that thread now?”

“Yes. It’s like...”

The Great Medium’s expression seemed to say that she didn’t want to say her next words, but she forcibly finished her sentence.

“Like his existence will soon disappear.”

* * *

Diablo was walking through a desert the colour of the sky.

His only companion was an undead knight that he'd created by pouring all of his knowledge and essence as a Necromancer.

For him, the Sword King Lucid alone was enough.

No. To be precise, any being that wasn't at least on the same level as Lucid could not enter this world.

Crunch.

For a while, the only sound that could be heard was their footsteps in the sand.

It was almost impossible to tell just how long they had been walking without saying a word.

After a while, Diablo heard the footsteps of other people besides Lucid and himself.

They didn't even try to hide themselves.

Soon, the owners of the footsteps appeared.

There were three people.

Diablo continued walking as if he hadn't noticed them.

They all had similar appearances to Lucid. In other words, they were knights. Just like Lucid, they were all completely covered in armour such that not even an inch of skin was visible.

Their destinations were probably the same. And they wouldn't hurt Diablo.

He knew that.

And yet, Diablo still felt chills as though his life was in danger. It felt like he was walking naked beside three tigers. Even if they didn't show any intention to hurt him, he had no choice but to feel fear while being so close to an apex predator.

Right.

Even Diablo, who was a 9-star Wizard, was nothing but prey for these three beings.

It was at that moment.

One of the three knights, the knight in red armour, turned to look at Lucid.

"..."

The other knights turned to follow him.

For a while, the three knights silently looked at Lucid.

That was when Diablo started to grow nervous.

'Don't tell me they can't accept a being like Lucid...'

Even if they were to draw their swords and swing at Lucid, there was nothing Diablo could do about it.

He would have no choice but to watch as the weapon that was vital to his plan was destroyed.

Trying to suppress his anxiety, he watched the situation. However, Diablo was worrying for nothing.

The knights looked away and started walking once again.

—After walking for another indiscernible period.

The knights finally came to a stop. And Diablo did as well.

However, their reasons were different. For the knights, it was because they had arrived at their destination, but Diablo's body stiffened because he was unable to control his emotions.

A castle loomed before their eyes.

When he finally was able to see this castle with his own eyes, his entire body trembled without him realising it.

'I see it...!'

He was finally able to see the castle!

That meant that Diablo finally had the qualifications to enter.

The Red Knight spoke.

"Follow me."

[...]

His long awaited statement of permission.

Unable to overcome his excitement, Diablo tried to take a step forward.

"Not you."

But the Blue Knight standing beside him stopped him.

[What?]

"You are not yet qualified. Go collect more lost items."

[...]

The knight was not joking. In the first place, it was not even possible.

That was why Diablo couldn't help but stare at them blanky.

If the permission wasn't directed at him, then it could only be for one person.

Diablo looked at Lucid.

It was an unexpected development. This dead man, the knight of death that had been revived by Diablo, had been granted permission to enter before Diablo himself.

[This... I brought him back...!]

Diablo shouted fiercely.

He knew that he could not force these knights to change anything for him. Nevertheless, he couldn't back down so easily.

Even if it was ineffective in the end, he was only one step away from the truth of the world that he had longed for for so long.

He could not walk away like this.

[If Lucid has the permission to see, then I, his owner, should naturally have the same right.]

"..."

[I can also see 'the castle'! I've met the conditions you told me about! So why won't you allow me in?]

"You're not qualified."

Once again, he heard that inorganic voice.

Just as Diablo began to grit his teeth.

—.

A voice. No. A trace.

He heard something as if someone was whispering to his very soul. Or at least, he felt it.

The movements of the knights froze for a moment, then the Red Knight turned to look at him.

"Follow me."

[What...]

"You are qualified. The King has acknowledged your entry."

[...!]

King...!

Would he finally be able to see that being?

If Diablo had a heart, it would definitely have been beating heavily at that moment. He followed the Red Knight into the castle.

And when he witnessed the scene within, Diablo sucked in a deep breath.

It was as if dozens of worlds had been broken, crushed, and roughly mixed together before being left as they were.

The background reminded him of the universe. Stars scattered within a pitch black space shined their light on the surroundings.

But in the centre of it all, the space had the appearance of broken glass. Everything that spread beyond that broken space had a completely different appearance.

In one shard of space, there was a large civilisation of intelligent lifeforms that he'd never seen before, in another, a primitive race could be seen hunting creatures several times larger than themselves.

'Different universes...!'

Diablo shuddered slightly.

Each and every one of those shards of space was the entrance to a different universe...! It was a treasure trove of knowledge that Diablo had spent so long searching for.

The three knights walked steadily through the dark, chaotic space.

Lucid was already with them as if he had become one of them.

[...]

When he saw this scene, Diablo couldn't help but have a strange feeling.

For some reason, Lucid suddenly felt very distant from him.

'...no, that's not possible.'

After all, he was an undead that Diablo himself had raised.

He was his greatest masterpiece. A soul that he had taken a long time to corrupt, the perfect body, and the greatest command techniques he could find.

Just like a craftsman might sometimes feel unfamiliar with his work, this strange feeling was only temporary.

Pushing aside his unnecessary thoughts, Diablo followed after them.

Hundreds of worlds. Thousands. Perhaps they had passed even more than that.

Diablo slowly became uneasy.

It felt like he was slowly sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss. Could he even return to his own universe? Just as his anxiety was beginning to reach its peak.

Thud!

The three knights suddenly fell to their knees and bowed their heads.

Diablo was startled.

He looked around quickly before he eventually caught sight of it.

A grey throne that sat so far away it was hard to see.

'I can't reach it.'

Perhaps it was just a feeling. But Diablo felt that even if he were to run as fast as he could, he would never get any closer to the throne.

In truth, the throne was in a shabby state. There were many cracks on it, and it was covered in dust.

In addition, there was no one sitting on it.

[...]

Nevertheless, Diablo gritted his teeth as he looked at it.

Someone was there.

However, Diablo could not tell who it was. He knew that someone was there, but he could not see them.

It wasn't just about power or authority. It was something far beyond that, that existed between Diablo and that being.

--

Once again, he heard the strange voice.

Then the three knights slowly rose to their feet.

"As the king commanded."

"We have brought the deceiver."

"Who broke the rules."

The three knights spoke one after the other.

Afterward, they drew their swords in an orderly manner and pointed them downwards.

Puk!

The swords pierced the space in front of them.

The three swords then gave off different coloured lights, forming a triangle.

And after a while, a figure appeared in the centre of the triangle.

A figure that was familiar to Diablo.

[Lord?]

...No.

It wasn't.

It wasn't the Lord of the Demigods who had terrorised the continent in the past. They were surprisingly similar to Lord, but it wasn't him.

Something was different... Like it was a higher level being.

But...

'Why are they so weak?'

He could tell that much.

This Lord-like being was very weak.

Diablo believed that it must have originally been a cosmic level being that he couldn't even lay his eyes on. Probably a being on par with the one sitting on the throne.

But now, they were so weak that even Diablo could kill them.

[Who the hell... is that...?]

The three knights didn't answer him and instead raised their swords again.

Then, they slowly approached the Lord-like being.

It was clear that they intended to swing their swords and cut the being's head off in an instant.

Just as Diablo was certain of this.

—

The voice sounded once again.

And for the first time, the knights expressed surprise. Then they turned to the throne as if to verify what they'd just heard.

Srrng—

After a while, the knights returned their swords to their sheaths.

And as one, turned their heads to look in a particular direction.

The direction Lucid was standing in.

"Black Knight."

"Draw."

"Your sword."

Diablo snorted at those words.

[He won't listen to your orders. I'm the one that made...]

However, before Diablo could even finish his sentence, Lucid drew his sword.

[Ah...?]

Then, as if he understood his role, he began to walk towards the being that resembled Lord.

The following events happened in an instant.

Shuk-

A single slash.

It sliced through both sides of the neck without resistance.

There was no blood. In fact, nothing came out of the body. It was like cutting the head off of a puppet.

The severed head wavered like smoke for a moment before disappearing without a trace. The body soon followed suit.

The 'being' disappeared without leaving a corpse behind.

[What... the hell is this...]

Diablo could not understand anything at that moment.

He simply stood there in shock.

Rumble-

But at that moment, the space around them began to shake.

A creak echoed as if the very dimension itself was screaming.

Even the 'universes in the fragments' seemed to feel the vibrations as they all shook in fear and wondered what was happening.

'...is this not happening only in this space but throughout the entire multiverse?'

Was that even possible?

Diablo had seen the void records. He knew that there were an infinite number of universes.

His gaze flickered sharply.

[Who the hell did you guys just kill?]

It was not a question that expected an answer. It was more like a cry of fear.

But the knights replied in a blunt tone.

"God."

[What?]

"God."

"Was killed."

"At last."

The knights then spoke together for the first time.

"And now it begins."

That statement was the truth. Because something actually started with that declaration.

A Cosmic Event on a scale that could not be found in the long history of the multiverse.

The death of God that they spoke of was not a lie.

Because all of the Absolutes in the Three Thousand Worlds immediately realised the death of God.

And of course.

The Rulers were no exception

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The Great Reynolds Forest, the home of the elves, was a forbidden land for all other races.

From time to time, slave hunters, Martial Artists, or Wizards looking for a place to train would come, but even they didn't dare to venture too far into the forest. At most, they would sneak around the outskirts before leaving soon afterward.

Because they knew if they entered without permission, they would die.

The most sacred place in the Great Forest, 'Lilund', the High Elf village built among the roots of Hruhiral.

In the heart of this place, where even Elves could not enter without permission, stood two people who were clearly not elves.

One of them was a girl with silver hair, and the other was a tall woman with purple hair.

An elf woman with snow white hair laid on the ground in front of them as if she was dead.

"This is Lucid's work."

It was Anastasia who opened her mouth first.

She clicked her tongue as she looked at sword scars on Snow's body.

"The death energy has seeped deep into her body. She was attacked by a sword covered in death energy. It's not just the wounds, there is also a curse that prevents her body from healing naturally and instead is causing it to slowly rot."

"There is no problem getting rid of that much. The problem is afterward."

Anastasia had said that it wasn't difficult to save Snow.

Peran, and her bodyguards, the Swordnaz, would be jumping for joy with just that much, but Iris thought that it was not enough.

"The clean up is going smoothly, but what about the after effects?"

"..."

"After the treatment is over, will Snow be able to use a sword without any issues?"

Anastasia did not answer for a while.

She'd been focusing on the medicinal aspect like crushing herbs, grinding gems, and adding various additives.

"Lucid's sword practically melted all of the nerves that were directly connected to her right arm."

"..."

"If they were just severed, or the damage was minimal, then we could put it back together, but this situation is a bit complicated.

"Can't you recreate them?"

"It's not impossible, but it would take too long."

"How long?"

"About 5 years."

"..."

Iris fell silent.

Although it was clear that she wouldn't be able to help in the fight against Diablo right away, she thought that they might only need to wait for a month. It was possible that the fighting would begin even before that.

"It would be possible for her to hold a sword. But her thumb, index, and ring fingers won't work well. If she were to wield a sword in her right hand, she would only be able to hold it with two fingers, but if it's like that..."

"She won't be able to use her true power."

No matter how good of a Swordsman she was, it would be impossible. It was not something that could be overcome with mental strength or willpower.

It was physically impossible.

Snow de Predickwood had survived, but her power had fallen to less than half.

...Of course, the fact that she had survived at all was a miracle in itself. However, they had wanted her to take the role of Lucid's opponent.

Could that be possible when she wouldn't be able to even hold her sword properly?

"..."

Silence descended once again.

Only the soft clatter as Anastasia continued to process the materials rang out softly.

Finally, it was Anastasia that broke the silence.

"Remember that man?"

“That man?”

“The 9-star Wizard. I think you said his name was Lukas Trowman.”

“...why are you mentioning that person?”

“Do you know him?”

The question made Iris speechless for a moment, but she responded without thinking.

“No.”

“Really?”

“Yes. But why are you mentioning him all of a sudden?”

“...when I suggested we chase after Diablo, I was a bit agitated.”

It wasn't a 'bit'.

At that time, Anastasia had completely lost her composure. She knew that too as she was a bit red in the face as she said those words.

“At that time, when I snapped at him, the expression on his face was...”

For a moment, she didn't know what to say.

After a while, she muttered in a slightly embarrassed manner.

“It was a bit... memorable.”

For some reason, she was unable to erase that man's face from her mind.

His sad, bitter expression.

For some reason, the moment she'd seen that face, she'd felt guilty for running her mouth without thinking.

“My memories weren't duplicated perfectly, so I can't be sure. That's why I was wondering if you knew him from before.”

“What do you mean by 'before'? 4,000 years ago?”

Iris' voice wavered a little. But Anastasia didn't notice her discomfort and instead spoke with a bitter smile.

“Am I talking nonsense? Just forget it.”

“...”

But Iris couldn't say anything, nor could she forget it.

...Because her heart felt heavy. It felt like something was stuck in her throat.

She'd noticed this strange feeling for a while now. When exactly did it start? She couldn't exactly remember.

However, one thing was clear, that strange frustration had grown even more after meeting that man.

It made her feel annoyed, angry, and even affectionate...

"...Anastasia."

"Yeah?"

"I think that man-"

Suddenly.

Rumble...!

"...!"

A sudden tremor shook them without warning. Their entire bodies shook so much that it was even hard to remain seated.

Anastasia stopped mixing the medicine and shot to her feet.

"An earthquake? No, is someone attacking?"

Although it was unlikely, common sense dictated that the only enemy it could possibly be was Diablo. He would not hesitate to spread his evil hands into even a sacred place like this.

"It's not."

But Iris' expression hardened.

As she had inherited some of Lord's power, she had a vague idea of what the phenomenon was.

"It's not an earthquake. Space itself is shaking."

"What?"

"The space is screaming! Almost like-"

Like it would collapse at any moment.

Iris swallowed those last words. She needed to figure out the source of this tremor.

She clenched her teeth.

"Please take care of Snow, Anastasia."

"Huh? Wa-, wait! Where are you-"

Ignoring Anastasia's cry, Iris leaped through space.

When she reappeared, it was at the top of the World Tree.

There, she was able to see across the entire area with a glance.

“...”

However, as she looked around, her eyes gradually widened with shock.

This...

“...impo...ssible.”

Her stuttering voice was filled with disbelief.

These vibrations had no ‘source’.

Instead, all the space in her sight was shaking.

To be precise, the entire world was shaking.

* * *

It was the most beautiful thing Diablo had ever seen.

A cracked space that creaked incessantly.

A space that was filled with countless universes, large and small.

The entire thing fell apart.

Space itself collapsed.

The natives of those universes struggled to accept that fact. But there was no way for them to prevent their impending doom.

If an island you were on sank, you could escape to a continent.

If the continent sank, you could escape to the vast sky.

And even if the planet reached the end of its lifespan, it was possible to find another planet.

In fact, many of the civilisations that existed in the cracks had already developed interplanetary travel.

However, if the entire universe was collapsing, if all the matter and particles that formed the universe were shattering one after the other.

There was no way to escape it.

[Ahh...]

Diablo let out a soft sound that even he himself was not sure was fear or awe.

[What... the hell... is this...]

“The timeline of the Three Thousand Worlds is being unified.”

“As a result, the lower level universes are collapsing.”

[What does that mean...?]

“When this ends, the number of universes in the Three Thousand Worlds will be reduced to less than half.” [What the hell are you talking about?]

It was a statement that surpassed Diablo’s degree of understanding.

The number of universes in the Three Thousand Worlds would be halved?

Did that mean that half of the countless universes would disappear together with God?

‘The hell...’

How many lives would be lost because of this ‘vibration’?

That thought gave him goosebumps. Diablo’s gaze shook.

“In this way, your dream has come true.”

In an unfeeling voice, the White Knight continued.

“The universes that survive will become faintly connected to each other. The restrictions will disappear, and all living beings will have the potential. If you are qualified, you will be able to realise the existence of other universes and make contact with them.”

[In that way... Hu, huhuhu.]

Diablo let out a laugh.

It was only then that he realised what he’d done.

Of course, his influence on the death of God and the destruction of the universes was minimal.

However, Diablo had still helped. By his own will no less...!

[Kuhahaha...!]

It was a simple pleasure.

A pleasure that he had never experienced since obtaining his skeletal body.

The results were simply and abundantly clear.

In the end, Diablo had contributed to the destruction of countless universes in a single day. Even the beings who ruled above the Absolutes could not boast such an achievement.

He also could have prevented this tragedy. Even if he only had meagre strength, there was still a possibility.

But he had chosen to turn a blind eye.

And this fact pleased Diablo even more.

[Will the surviving universes also go through such a process? White Knight of Conquest?]

“Someday.”

[I see. So it is an inevitable end.]

The Red Knight spoke.

“This place is now connected to all of the universes. And all of the items that were lost in the Apocalypse should have appeared here as well.

[What does that mean?]

“That means that several entrances have been opened.”

Diablo burst out laughing once again.

[The inhabitants of the universes who cannot accept their end will come to this place. Even the Absolutes. I don't know what kind of place this will become.]

A war of an unimaginable scale.

[Then the battle that will be fought here is the real 'Great Game'?)

“Universes that have reached the end of their lifespans, universes that have stopped developing, and universes that have not proven their potential will be forgotten.”

“No one but us would remember them.”

“So this is not a game.”

“It is a fight to not be forgotten.”

[...and you will be the judges.]

It was at this moment that something flashed before Diablo's eyes.

Thud...

There was a heavy sound, and he realised that the throne was moving away from him. No, it wasn't the throne that was moving. It was Diablo that was leaving. As if time was being reversed, he was being sent back through the space that he had travelled before. All against his will.

After a while, Diablo found himself standing in the desert once again.

The castle was no longer visible.

Did it move to another space? He wasn't sure.

[Kukuku...]

With a chuckle, Diablo turned around without hesitation.

Just as Lucid, who was standing blankly beside him, was about to do the same, he stopped.

[...]

With his legs rooted to the ground, he turned his head to look at the sand dunes in the distance that rose up like small mountains.

Diablo turned to look at him.

[What is it?]

[...]

[Is someone there?]

After a moment, Lucid turned his eyes away and began walking forward.

Diablo glanced at the dunes again, but he couldn't feel any presences. So he also turned his eyes away and followed Lucid.

Soon after, when they were already out of sight, two figures emerged from behind one of the dunes.

"His senses are still as sharp as ever."

"Who is that man?"

"Lucid."

"...so that guy is the Sword King."

The man, Kasajin, continued.

"Why wasn't it Iris? I wanted to show you what kind of woman she was."

"Shut up. Before I smash your fragile bones."

"Kukuku."

Kasajin chuckled.

"You don't understand what's going on. But there is no need to think too deeply about it. Didn't you already experience the qualifiers?"

"..."

"...it will get much louder in the future. So follow me well. You'll be done for if you get lost here, Sedi Glaston."

After saying that, Kasajin turned around and left first.

The girl with pitch black hair followed him while muttering.

"...it's Trowman."

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 374

Being 8 stars was not enough.

This was something Peran had realised in the previous battle.

He needed to be strong.

Much stronger than he was now.

9 stars.

To play his part in the fight against Diablo, he would need to make that distant state his own.

So Peran went to visit Lukas.

Although he wasn't sure how it happened, last time, he had appeared as 'Frey Blake' and completely overpowered Diablo with nothing but his magical skills.

That scene had been embedded into the deepest part of Peran's mind.

"Do you know how to reach 9 stars?"

"I do."

He couldn't help but freeze slightly when he heard the prompt response.

Lukas, on the other hand, had a calm expression.

...It was a strange feeling. Not so long ago, Lukas seemed a lot more complex. It felt like he had troubles that he didn't know how to deal with and that he couldn't share with him.

But now, he felt carefree.

It seemed that he'd come to a conclusion. That was a good thing, and it was something he should be happy about.

But, for some reason, Peran felt conflicted instead.

'I'm being too sensitive.'

Peran shook his head.

"Can you teach me?"

"There is no need to rush. You're moving quickly enough. It's almost impossible to reach your level at your age."

"...I know that."

Others might mistake it as arrogance, but Peran nodded as if it was natural.

At the very least, he didn't need to act humble in front of Lukas.

"However, in the current situation, I will just be dead weight in future battles."

"There is no other Wizard in our camp other than you. Besides, you were able to use spells even while enduring Diablo's pressure, which caused even him to feel threatened by you."

"There's you."

Lukas smiled at those words.

“I can’t now.”

Peran felt his heart sink.

It felt like the strange feeling he’d been having for a while was finally being materialised.

“Did something happen?”

“Why?”

“...you just feel... a bit strange.”

He couldn’t say more than that because it was nothing more than a feeling.

Lukas looked at Peran with a mysterious glint in his eyes, but he simply nodded.

“Nothing happened. I’m fine.”

“But...”

Just as Peran was about to say more, the door opened with a click and the Great Medium walked in.

“Am I interrupting?”

“No. It’s fine.”

Lukas answered first before asking.

“What is it?”

“Iris and Anastasia have returned.”

“They came back so quickly?”

“They came without even going for the Grand Master, Ivan. It seems they want to talk about the tremors that happened not so long ago.”

Looking at the Great Medium’s expression, it was clear that it was a serious situation.

Peran got up first and started walking out of the room. Lukas didn’t move.

“Lukas?”

“You go and come back.”

“What about you?”

“There’s something I have to do.”

“But this is important...”

“Peran.”

It was the Great Medium, not Lukas, that interrupted him in a soft tone.

She shook her head gently at him.

“Leave him be for now.”

“...”

A lot of words were stuck in his throat, but none of them came out of his mouth. Instead, after hesitating for a moment, Peran nodded.

“Understood. I’ll be right back.”

“Right.”

Peran left the room and Lukas’ gaze met the Great Medium’s.

“Do you intend to entrust everything to him?”

As expected, she was quick to notice.

Since there was no point in hiding it, Lukas nodded.

“...I know about Peran’s talent. But he is too young.”

“That’s why I’m looking forward to it even more. Aren’t you curious about where Peran could reach in 10 years?”

“...”

The Great Medium didn’t know what to say.

For the first time, she felt greatly conflicted.

She wondered if it was really a good idea. To remain silent after witnessing all of those tragedies.

“...if it’s Peran, he might be able to replace me.”

In the end, the Great Medium had no choice but to leave the room without responding to those words.

Click.

The door was closed and Lukas was once again left alone in the room.

Now then. What should he do?

Should he write a note for the future? A note that would give Peran hope if he lost his way or became frustrated.

No. When Diablo died, everything he wrote would disappear with him.

It would certainly be different from a normal death.

It would probably be so lonely, to die without leaving any trace of his existence.

It was at that moment.

[When I first saw you.]

A voice sounded without warning.

Who was it? Lukas looked around but he couldn't see or feel the presence of another person.

Nevertheless, the voice felt like a whisper in his ears.

After a while, Lukas was finally able to identify the source of the voice.

—The Box.

The faint voice had come from the black box.

Of course, it no longer had the shape of a box. Instead, it looked like the abandoned shell of an insect. The smooth lustre had become dry and the straight sides had become wrinkled.

[I saw a possibility.]

“...”

Lukas knew who this voice belonged to.

[You have lost everything. Lukas Trowman.]

God's voice was weak and light as if it would fade away at any moment.

Lukas looked around.

In the past, whenever God appeared, he would completely freeze time and space. It was a power that only he had, something that Absolutes were not capable of.

But that wasn't the case now.

He could still feel the flow of air. He could still hear the sound of footsteps outside the door. And he could still see dust particles floating in the moonlight.

Time wasn't frozen.

“Not everything. But it's accurate to say most things.”

[Kuku.]

It was a pleasant laugh.

Lukas couldn't help but ask.

“What's your condition now?”

[...]

“I heard it from the Great Medium. She said your presence was faint. And just a moment ago, a spatial tremor strong enough to shake the entire world occurred.”

[Indeed, Lukas Trowman, your senses, and eyes have not deteriorated in the slightest.]

“Don’t dodge my question, give me a straight answer. What the hell happened to you? What is happening in the multiverse?”

God didn’t answer and there was silence for a long time.

The room was quiet.

Just when Lukas was beginning to wonder if the connection had been broken.

[Do you not resent me?]

God asked a question out of nowhere.

[Some time has passed since your return. You must have felt bitter this entire time. All of your achievements, all of your experiences, everything you’ve built, all of them disappeared.]

“I did feel it.”

[Despair?]

“Yes. Enough that I felt like I was drowning.”

And he’d struggled with pain and sorrow.

An unprecedented pain that he had never felt in his entire life had gnawed at his entire body.

“I resented you. I hated you and cursed you.”

Ironically, there was no sign of resentment in Lukas’ voice.

“But the Great Medium explained it to me. You weren’t being malicious, it was just a law you had created.”

[So you accepted it?]

“I complied. Because I no longer have the ability to change anything.”

God chuckled.

[I don’t feel any agitation in your voice. Whatever it is you experienced, you have once again overcome it and found your answer.]

“...”

[I don’t have any feeling of guilt. However, when I look at you... Right. I feel a bit sad.]

“You shouldn’t be sympathetic. It’s worse than your sarcasm.”

[This isn’t sympathy. It’s atonement.]

At that moment, Lukas felt an eerie sensation like his entire body was sinking. Like he was sinking in the sea with a heavyweight attached to his body, and he didn’t have the strength to swim up. He couldn’t even make a sound.

God’s voice sounded in his ears once again.

[As I expected, you need to disappear completely, Lukas Trowman.]

Immediately after those words, Lukas vision flipped.

* * *

“Spatial vibration.”

The moment everyone entered the room, Iris opened her mouth.

“It’s my first time hearing about that.”

“That’s right. It’s a term I just made up.”

Iris spoke in her characteristic, calm voice.

“I just received reports from my subordinates scattered across the continent. Approximately 2 hours ago, they all felt an earthquake that lasted for 5 minutes.”

“That is a geological impossibility.”

Anastasia spoke up.

“If an earthquake were to occur on a continental scale, the effects would be catastrophic. The ground would split open and the ocean would overflow...”

“...are you saying compared to the magnitude of the earthquake, the damage is too small?”

“It wasn’t small, it was nonexistent.”

When they heard Iris’ words, everyone’s expressions became serious.

“That’s why I called it a ‘space vibration’.”

“That makes it sound like it wasn’t the ground, but space itself that was shaking. But clearly... Lady Iris is an expert in this field so I won’t question it more.”

Peran meekly nodded at her opinion.

“The spatial vibration might have something to do with Diablo.”

“On what basis?”

“There is none. To put it simply, I’m assuming because of the timing and my gut feeling.”

He wasn’t sure about the feeling part, but Peran could agree with the timing.

The earthquake had occurred about a day after Diablo had disappeared. No, the space vibration.

It was too coincidental to dismiss as pure coincidence.

“Ah. There is another thing. Immediately after the spatial vibration occurred, I could sense Diablo’s presence once again. I’m certain that he wasn’t in our world before the spatial vibration ended.”

Of course, they weren’t entirely sure where Diablo had been hiding.

The most likely option was the Demon World, but... they couldn't be entirely sure about that either. In truth, there had been several cases where Diablo's presence had disappeared from the continent. Iris had gone to the Demon World during one of those incidents, but she couldn't find him there either.

In other words, it was possible that Diablo knew about a world that Iris didn't, and he also had the means to enter it.

"Something is obviously going on. I think that things will only get worse for us as time goes on, so I intend to fight him as soon as Snow wakes up."

"When do you think Lady Snow will wake up?"

"I can't be sure, but it would at least take a week. Perhaps even two or three weeks."

"I see. How is her condition?"

"..."

Iris and Anastasia fell silent at the same time.

"Lady Anastasia?"

"There will be some aftereffects."

"By aftereffects..."

"She won't be able to hold a sword properly."

Peran shuddered.

"That... is rehabilitation... impossible?"

"It is possible, but it will take a long time. However, you should know better than anyone else. What Snow will be like when she wakes up."

"..."

She would probably grab a sword regardless of her physical condition.

Peran had a complicated expression.

He had the desire to stop her, but would Snow listen to him? And what if he did manage to stop her?

If they fought Diablo without Snow, their chances of winning were less than half. Even if she was weakened, she was still the greatest Swordsman on the continent.

"Firstly, we'll need to convince Ivan. And Jekid, even though he's retired. If we can get his cooperation, we wouldn't have to overwork Snow."

"...I... see."

Peran nodded his head reluctantly. He understood. Of course, he still wasn't alright with Snow joining them, but he understood.

It was then.

The Great Medium, who had been silent this entire time, finally opened her mouth.

“I have something to tell you.”

There was a hint of determination in her voice.

“Is it about Diablo?”

“No.”

“If it’s not important, we can put it off till later. For now, we are too pressed for time to discuss the future.”

“It is important.”

...She didn’t know if it was right to talk about it here. Or what the consequences of doing that would be.

She also didn’t know if it would help Lukas or not. After all, he seemed to have already accepted his fate.

So this might just be for her own self satisfaction.

‘Even so...’

Even if it was just an act of self satisfaction, she felt that it would be wrong to keep her mouth shut when she knew everything.

It was like telling Lukas about his own disappearance upon Diablo’s death.

Peran, Nix, Anastasia, and Iris.

Those who were here deserved to know.

At least by knowing the truth, they would be able to make their own decisions.

“...to believe or not is up to you. But I would like to tell you about that man named Lukas Trowman.”

Iris and Anastasia made puzzled expressions at that moment.

This was an expected response. After all, those two had completely forgotten everything.

On the other hand, Peran and Nix’s expressions became strange.

Looking at all of them, the Great Medium thought.

“From now on, I’ll tell you everything I know.”

Perhaps this was also her role.

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#) **Season 2 Chapter 375**

After the Great Medium finished her story, silence fell in the room for a long time.

One thing was clear, everyone in the room was experiencing immense shock.

But among them, the person who was the most shocked and confused was Iris.

'... that man...'

She didn't even know what to think.

The first thing Iris did was deny it. It couldn't be true.

She had never been infatuated with anyone before. From the start, she was the type of person who couldn't fall in love with another person. In addition, Lukas' appearance was in no way her type. Then what was her type of man? In the first place, had there ever been a time when she'd felt anything for a man just because he was handsome?

"Hey."

Anastasia called out to Iris.

Fanning her face with her hand, Iris turned to her.

"What?"

"Your... face is red."

Iris flinched slightly and bit her lip.

In her heart, she wanted to smack Anastasia's mouth, but she held it in because she knew it would just be further acknowledgement of her agitation.

"...I can't accept it."

The conclusion that escaped her lips was natural.

But Iris turned her head to look at another person.

"I have to see it for myself. Peran, where is that man now?"

"..."

"Peran?"

"Ah, yes."

Peran came to his senses. Nevertheless, his gaze was dull as if his mind was elsewhere.

Perhaps Iris wasn't actually the most surprised among them.

"Where is Lukas now?"

"...the room. He should be waiting in the room. Should I call him?"

"Please."

Peran slowly got up from his seat and left the room.

It felt like his chest was being squeezed and his throat was dry.

'...Lukas.'

Lukas Trowman.

Another hero who had existed 4,000 years ago.

The story was truly hard to believe.

In fact, even two of the heroes that represented the Era of Light had completely forgotten about him. Even after the Great Medium had finished her explanation, they found it hard to believe what she said.

Then what?

Did Peran Jun believe everything the Great Medium had said?

The fact that Frey Blake was actually Lukas Trowman?

"..."

He didn't know.

In the first place, Frey did not reveal his true identity to him 10 years ago.

That wasn't all.

Frey, no. Lukas never stopped moving after he separated from Peran. Without hesitation, he ran forward, covered in wounds.

He fought Apostles, Demigods, Apocalypses, and finally Lord.

...And in all of that fighting.

He hadn't asked Peran for help, not once.

Crunch.

He clenched his fist. Without realising it, his footsteps became heavier.

He could understand.

10 years ago, Peran Jun was weak. He was just a 6-star Wizard. Considering his age, it was a great achievement, but he knew that against Demigods, he was no different from a bug.

So even if Lukas asked Peran for help and he agreed, he would have been of no help in the war.

He knew that.

He knew it, but...

Was that really all?

Had Lukas really not reached out to Peran just because he was weak?

A question suddenly appeared in his mind.

Lukas, did Lukas really consider him a friend?

According to the Great Medium, Lukas' true friends were the four heroes from 4,000 years ago.

The Black Witch, Great Sage, Sword King, and Magic Warrior King.

Compared to him?

Peran had never considered himself lacking when compared to others. But when he was compared to the great heroes of the past, he humbly accepted it.

"..."

Peran shook his head.

Now wasn't the time to think about that.

Instead, it was what the Great Medium had said at the end that was more important.

...Diablo.

Currently, apart from the Great Medium, he was the only being that remembered the existence of 'Lukas Trowman'.

If they killed him, then Lukas' existence would disappear for good.

Was Lukas expecting such an end?

"..."

Peran's hand, which he had stretched to grab the doorknob, paused.

Then he lifted it to touch his face.

Was he angry now, or was he disappointed?

And if he was disappointed, in who?

In Lukas? Or himself?

"..."

He couldn't open the door.

Suddenly, his body stiffened.

"Aren't you going to open it?"

He flinched at the sudden voice.

Without him realising it, Nix had appeared behind him. Perhaps she had followed Peran as he left the room, but he had been so distracted that he hadn't even noticed.

"...I'll open it."

As he said that, Peran changed his expression. He didn't want to show such a face anymore.

"Huu."

He took a deep breath before knocking on the door.

There was no response.

Thinking that maybe the sound had been too quiet, he knocked on the door again, louder this time.

And yet, there was still no response.

“Lukas?”

Even after calling his name, he didn’t receive an answer.

He was filled with indescribable anxiety.

Peran exchanged glances with Nix for a moment before opening the door suddenly.

The inside of the room, which was soon revealed, was empty.

In other words, Lukas was nowhere in sight.

“Nix.”

“...I’ll check the area.”

With those words, Nix’s figure disappeared.

Suppressing his anxiety, Peran combed the room. But he couldn’t find any traces. As if Lukas had evaporated, the room was no different from when he’d left not so long ago.

Except for one thing.

Except for what he’d assumed to be the shell of the black box on the table.

* * *

It was possible for those who became Absolutes to leave their home universe and enter other universes.

However, there was a universe that they had to go to before they could begin their rescue effort.

Everyone in that universe was an Absolute. Therefore when considering the level and tolerance of that universe, it could be called the best in the Three Thousand Worlds.

A world where every being was an Absolute.

Commonly called [Apex Universe].

When Lukas had first gone there in the past, he had met a senior Absolute who taught new Absolutes the basics.

The [Senior] had explained a lot of things to him.

And it was from that senior that he’d first heard about ‘that world’.

-At first, it was just an assumption.

In his usual, languid tone, the senior spoke.

-Imagine if a being was completely forgotten without even any trace of them in literature. What would happen then? If every trace of a being in a universe were to disappear.

-What do you mean?

The senior was one of the few beings that Lukas spoke politely to.

This was for three reasons.

Firstly, the senior was very strong. Even Lukas, who later became a Lord, had no chance of victory.

Secondly, the senior didn't tolerate informal speech. In particular, when he was spoken to informally by a rookie Absolute that had just stepped into the Apex universe, he would beat the party in question until the word politeness was engraved into their skulls.

And the most important reason.

Lukas acknowledged that he had many things to learn from and admired about the senior.

-When you become an Absolute capable of using external force, it doesn't matter if no one remembers you. As long as you don't lose yourself, you will be able to maintain your presence in any universe. However, that is different for the vast majority of mortals. For them, others must be aware of the fact that they exist. Only then can they 'exist'.

Now that he thought about it, the senior must have known.

That the moment one became an Absolute, they would be forgotten by everyone in their home universe.

-Does that mean that as long as someone 'discovers' them, it would be possible for them to exist?

-Right. However, there must be worlds that no one remembers, countless beings that have been forgotten. Even I have personally witnessed the destruction of tens of thousands of universes and cannot remember them all.

-Isn't there someone who would remember everything?

-You're talking about God.

Lukas nodded.

God.

It was said that everything in the multiverse was recorded in the void records that he read and recorded, the akashic records.

The senior's lips curled into a smile.

-Everything that exists has a capacity and a limit. You should know as well. What god is.

-...

-Omnipotent, the saying that anything is possible for him was false from the start. In the first place, those words are contradictory.

He was right.

The God that Lukas knew had never been omnipotent.

Instead, he gave him a strong human feeling, as if he had similar emotions.

God knew how to joke, he sometimes trailed off at the end of his sentences, and he sometimes used a conceited tone.

-That's why it was just an assumption at first. If there were beings that even God forgot, would they disappear completely? Would there still be any traces of them in the Three Thousand Worlds?

-...

-It didn't take long to figure out it wasn't just an assumption.

-What do you mean?

-The capacity never decreased.

-...capacity?

It was a statement that he couldn't easily understand.

-Let's say there are 1,000 universes. And let's say that each universe occupies a space value of 1. One day, the universes from 1 to 100 disappeared. If that occurred then you'd get 100 free spaces by subtracting 900 from 1,000. But that isn't the case. The total capacity value did not decrease at all.

-...

-If you fill a cup with water then throw out half, you will create a certain amount of free space in the cup. But would the thrown water disappear? It wouldn't. There isn't just space inside the cup. If you think of the cup as one universe, and the space outside of the cup as the entire multiverse...

-...throughout the history of the multiverse, nothing 'disappeared'.

The senior nodded.

-Everything that seemed to have disappeared simply entered a space that Absolutes are unable to observe.

-...that space.

-The trashcan of the multiverse, the world after extinction. There are many names for it. My friends and I just call it something simpler.

The senior's voice was like a whisper, barely audible as it drifted into his ears.

* * *

"..."

Lukas slowly sat up.

His head throbbed. It wasn't a headache. Instead, it felt like his forehead had been scratched. He could also feel an itchy sensation in his clothes. This texture... was it sand?

He laid his hand on the ground, and as expected, he felt sand. After all, it was sand that had burrowed into his clothes.

...He had just been in his room. And he'd heard God's voice...

He tried to remember the last thing he heard.

'You need to disappear completely.'

Right. That was clearly what he said.

He wanted him to disappear? What did that mean?

"Wow! You're finally awake!"

He was awakened from his thoughts by a lively voice.

When he looked up, he saw a woman looking down at him with her head tilted to the side.

"...who are you?"

"That's what I want to ask! Who are you, uncle?"

It was a voice that didn't have any vigilance. Lukas got to his feet.

"Lukas."

"I didn't ask for your name!"

She covered her mouth and giggled.

Lukas looked around.

It was a familiar sight, but he wasn't quite used to it.

But there were two things that were distinctly different from his last visits to this place.

Firstly, it didn't feel like he was dreaming. At that time, it had felt a bit unstable. It felt like he was holding on to a rope that was slowly breaking. 'I can't stay in this place long', that was the feeling he got.

But it was different now. No matter how he looked at it, it felt real.

And secondly, he couldn't see any signs of Kasajin, who was always with him when he woke up.

"Ah! Uncle! Be careful!"

Along with that urgent cry, he was suddenly covered by a shadow.

That meant that something had appeared above him.

Lukas looked up and soon stiffened.

"...!"

Where did it come from?

A monster with wide jaws.

That looked like something which would normally be seen in water.

It had a bizarre appearance.

Inside its jagged toothed mouth filled with teeth the size of Lukas' forearm, was another mouth.

Lukas paled in an instant, and his body reacted instinctually.

His arm stretched out almost like it had a mind of its own.

Fwoosh!

And soon after, a giant flame erupted from his palm. The strength of the flames was astounding.

In an instant, the entire body of the creature which was covered in thick hide was burnt to ashes. The monster, which had likely been tens of metres in length, had become nothing more than a small pile of ashes in the blink of an eye.

"Wow~!"

A voice that seemed to be filled with shock or admiration sounded from behind him.

But Lukas couldn't help but be more surprised than she was.

Silently, he began to inspect his body.

And he realised.

His broken mana room had been fixed.

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"How did you do that?"

The woman came rushing over and called out to him in a surprised voice.

Instead of responding, Lukas stared at her for a while.

Compared to her voice, she looked very young. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to call her a girl instead of a woman. Contrary to her exceptionally noticeable navy blue hair, and her boisterous voice, she had a particularly small figure. Her thin cheeks and skinny limbs were prominent features. They gave the impression it would be much better if she gained a bit of weight.

"...?"

Despite being stared at so closely, the girl didn't seem particularly bothered. Instead, she simply tilted her head to the side in a relaxed manner before opening her mouth with a soft 'ah'.

"It's Pale."

"Pale."

"That's my name."

She pointed to herself with her finger and smiled.

Was that her real name? If so, it was a very unique name.

Lukas wasn't particularly wary of her. However, he couldn't help but wonder if her innocence was an act or not.

"I haven't seen another person in a long time. So it's nice to meet you!"

Pale walked up to him and stuck her hand out. But Lukas walked past her, ignoring it.

"You shouldn't go that way."

He wasn't walking particularly quickly, and Pale, who was able to follow behind him, advised.

"You seem to be familiar with this place."

"At the very least, when it comes to this place, I'm your senior."

As soon as he mumbled those words, a smug reply came back.

...Senior. For a moment, he felt a strange feeling that came with that word.

"Why can't I go this way?"

"It's a territory."

"Territory?"

"Yeah. If you set foot there, you'll get painted."

"..."

He didn't know what [painted] meant.

Lukas pondered for a moment on whether he should follow Pale's advice or not.

'...although I can use magic now.'

He wasn't sure if it was a temporary phenomenon or not.

In addition, the mana that he had used had yet to be recovered. Did that mean that he would not be able to regain the mana he used? ...He didn't know. There was too little information.

Lukas looked at Pale and came to a conclusion.

Firstly, he should get information about this place from her.

* * *

A desert that seemed to stretch infinitely in every direction.

He could clearly feel the sand beneath his feet. As he expected, unlike last time, he didn't have the feeling that he would return after a while.

'The Imaginary World.'

Lukas realised that this was the world after extinction that even Absolutes feared.

Perhaps the 'black box' had been a gateway to this world.

The grey desert was neither hot nor cold. There also didn't seem to be any separation between day and night.

The surrounding landscape was also frozen as if even time had stopped. In the end, there was only one thing that changed drastically.

It was the sky. The sky constantly changed its colour as though it was a mixture of paints. It was now glowing, but it didn't give off a mysterious feeling like an aurora.

'Why was I sent here?'

Lukas wondered as he sat in the middle of the desert.

He understood that this was the Imaginary World. But he had no idea why God had pushed him into this world.

'I needed to completely... disappear?'

Clearly, this was a space where only the forgotten could enter. At least that was the concept that Lukas understood.

If that was the case, then what? Had Lukas now become 'a being that didn't exist' in his home universe? Before they had even gotten rid of Diablo?

'I can't yet.'

There was still more he had to teach Peran.

Crunch, crunch.

Pale was eating a scorpion the size of an adult's palm raw. Green slime dripped from her mouth.

When their eyes met, Pale smiled brightly and held out half of the scorpion to him.

"Ay, I'll be generous! Here!"

"..."

"Are you not going to eat?"

"...I'm not hungry."

He couldn't say that looking at her had caused him to lose his appetite, so he simply looked away.

“Mmm. Don’t regret it.”

Pale murmured those words, but she didn’t offer the rest of the scorpion to him anymore and instead brought it to her lips. Once again, the crunching sound filled the air.

Lukas tried to ignore her and continued his thoughts.

He was at a loss.

A life without a goal would be boring and worthless.

That was how Lukas felt now. He had lost his purpose. It was no exaggeration to say that the purpose he’d found in an impossible situation had been forcibly stripped away.

He’d intended to make Peran his successor, and he’d really been prepared to die. Then, he was suddenly dragged into the Imaginary World, and now, he was sitting in front of a woman he didn’t know.

At that point, he couldn’t help but feel that fate hated him. Everything that he wished for didn’t come true, and the things that he didn’t want, usually happened in even worse ways.

“Twet.”

In the meantime, Pale had finished her meal. She spat out a piece of scorpion shell, licked her lips, and hummed in satisfaction.

Lukas hadn’t managed to obtain much information from Pale.

Maybe she was hiding something, or maybe that was just the way she talked.

In any case, Pale’s answers to most of Lukas’ questions were vague, and her facial expressions were so vivid they were unreadable.

“Then I’ll take my rest!”

This attitude was a good example of it.

As if she’d just finished talking, Pale nodded before laying down on the desert sand. She didn’t snore, but she was clearly fast asleep in an instant.

Lukas sighed before looking up at the sky once more.

The sky was still glowing.

* * *

The next day, Lukas was about to take a step when he suddenly fell to the ground.

“What...”

He hadn’t tripped on anything. In the first place, there were no rocks in this desert. And he hadn’t tripped over his own feet.

When he looked down, Lukas’ expression hardened.

His feet had disappeared.

To be precise, from the soles of his feet to his ankles had transformed into white smoke.

“Uncle, didn’t you eat anything yesterday?”

Pale tilted her head to the side before she continued.

“This is why you should have eaten when I gave it to you. Ugh.”

“...is this because I didn’t eat the scorpion?”

“Naturally. If you don’t eat, you’ll disappear.”

Pale scratched her head.

“Ay. I guess it can’t be helped. I was going to save this to eat later.”

She rummaged through her pockets for a moment before pulling something out.

It was a tailless mouse with five eyes.

“Does this mean you owe me one?”

Lukas wasn’t a picky eater, but he was still not relaxed enough to see a rat as food.

“Aren’t you going to eat? You’re going to disappear.”

“What will happen if I disappear?”

“I don’t know, I’ve never disappeared.”

“...”

Now that she mentioned it, that was right. It would be dangerous to let this continue.

Lukas reluctantly collected the mouse. And after looking at it for a while, he decided he wasn’t going to eat it raw, so he made a fireball and baked it. Nevertheless, the smell was disgusting, and the texture of fur as it slid down his throat was nauseating.

Gulp-

As soon as he swallowed it, a disgusting stench filled his nostrils. He stayed still for a while because he knew the moment he let his guard down, he would end up vomiting.

Sss...

At that moment, his feet, which had become white smoke, regained their shape.

That wasn’t all, a portion of his mana also returned.

“Five meals!”

Pale shouted.

“...what?”

“You have to eat a meal five times, for every time the sky changes. Otherwise, you will start disappearing from your toes. If the sky changes three times while you’re in that state, your entire body would disappear.”

This was the type of information Lukas wanted to hear.

“Isn’t there anything better to eat?”

“There is. But the chubby ones are usually in ‘the territory’.”

“...what is the territory?”

“A place we can’t go.”

“What will happen if we go there?”

“We’ll get painted.”

“What does it mean to get painted?”

“I don’t know.”

“...”

Whenever he asked questions, he would also be met with this mysterious answer in the end.

As a result, the only way for him to learn about this ‘painting’ experience, was to experience it for himself.

“Uh!”

Suddenly, Pale raised her head and looked into the distance.

They could see small shapes meandering towards them.

At first, Lukas thought it was a large, centipede-like insect, but it wasn’t.

It only looked like that from a distance, but as they grew closer, it became possible to see its true appearance.

Dwarves.

Dwarves with a height that only reached Lukas’ waist.

They all looked like boys and girls, and they didn’t appear dangerous.

“...!”

“...!”

When the dwarves spotted Lukas, their faces turned bright. Then they began circling around Lukas. Their joyful expressions and exuberant movements made it seem like they were dancing.

However, unlike their ‘loud’ body movements, they did not make a sound.

Could they not talk?

Suddenly, a dwarf girl signalled to Lukas with her hands.

'Sign language?'

It probably was.

The other dwarves kept smiling with bright expressions, but there was no sign of them speaking any words.

He wasn't sure if it was because they didn't have vocal organs or if it was for some other reason.

When Lukas remained silent, another dwarf girl pulled his clothes. But she didn't pull with all her might; the strength she used was so weak that Lukas only felt like his clothes had been caught on a branch.

"Wow! These are natives! I think they're trying to invite you."

This was her first time seeing something like this. Pale smiled happily.

"Invite me?"

"Follow them first! Maybe they'll treat us to nice food!"

As she said that Pale began to walk with an excited gait. There were no dwarves around her.

All the dwarves had surrounded Lukas.

"..."

If he stayed, he wouldn't be able to learn anything.

So Lukas obediently allowed the dwarves to pull him along.

The dwarves gathered into a line like they had when they appeared. They even advised Lukas to join them, before finally advancing. Pale happily followed behind them with a smile on her face.

This would have been a ridiculous sight for anyone who saw this, but the dwarves all had serious expressions.

They walked for an unknown length of time.

Suddenly, the leading dwarf stopped. Naturally, the dwarves following him stopped as well. Then, they started looking around as though they were looking for something.

Pale also swung her head around, seemingly copying their actions.

Are they ensuring that no one is around? At first, Lukas was cautious, but he couldn't sense anything.

Perhaps the leading dwarf realised that too because he nodded once before taking a step forward. And then disappeared.

Shuk! Shuk!

No. He didn't disappear.

When the second and third dwarves also disappeared after taking a step forward, Lukas noticed a small indent in the sand. Upon closer inspection, he realised that there was a small ant nest there.

In an instant, dozens of dwarves disappeared.

“This is going to be fun!”

Pale jumped into the ant nest with an excited shout, and Lukas slowly followed suit.

Just in case, he took a deep breath before he jumped in, but he didn't have any trouble breathing. If it wasn't for the grains of sand digging into his clothes, he might have mistaken it for being washed along a river.

Instead, all he could see was darkness.

After a while, the sand rapids stopped and Lukas suddenly felt like his body was floating in the air.

No. It wasn't a feeling. It was real.

Lukas body was falling from the sky.

Just as he wondered how he would respond since he seemed to be very far from the ground.

Whoosh!

One of the dwarves who had entered earlier caught Lukas before throwing him to another dwarf. This process was repeated several times.

“...”

He was being tossed about.

Pale, who had entered before him, was laughing as she was thrown by the dwarves. Minutes later, the excited dwarves deposited Lukas to the ground and he was finally able to look around.

He would not have thought that a city existed underground. The city had an ancient aura like that of a historical ruin, but that feeling was partially obscured by the liveliness of the dwarves.

“Follow, come.”

One of the dwarves spoke. They hadn't said a single word before, but now they had definitely spoken, even if the tone was a bit rough.

“Where?”

“Us.”

“Follow, come.”

The dwarves smiled as they led Lukas into the inner city.

Through the holes in the small houses that served as windows, small dwarves stuck their heads out. They all seemed much smaller and weaker than the dwarves that were guiding Lukas. Their eyes that looked at Lukas and Pale were filled with fear and wariness.

Pale waved brightly and the dwarves flinched visibly before jumping back into their buildings like turtles.

A dwarf tapped Pale on the back of her hand.

“Ah.”

“Provoke, stop.”

He seemed to have said it in an intimidating tone, but, unfortunately, it wasn't intimidating at all.

“They, not warriors.”

“Eh? Then are you guys warriors?”

“Right.’

“We, warriors.”

The dwarves responded with proud expressions. They didn't seem to be joking or bluffing, so they probably sincerely felt that way.

However, the noisy atmosphere diminished as they entered the heart of the city.

It wasn't long until they arrived before a huge cathedral.

“From here, only you.”

A dwarf pointed at Lukas.

Then he looked at Pale and shook his head.

“Blue hair girl, can't.”

“Not allowed.”

“Uwaa. Why not?”

Pale made a disappointed expression.

Then she turned to look at Lukas.

“You will get to meet the Lord! I'm jealous!”

“...Lord?”

“I wanted to meet him too. Uwa. Uwa.”

Pale twisted her body around while making strange sounds.

Lukas didn't get the chance to ask more. At the urging of the dwarves, he walked to the front of the cathedral.

Creak-

The huge iron door opened, revealing a chapel. Lit torches that hung on both sides of the room gave it a gloomy atmosphere.

...He was beginning to have a strange feeling.

The atmosphere in the chapel was not strange. In fact, he was used to it.

Tap tap.

The sounds of his footsteps echoed quietly in the building.

Lukas paused after walking for a while.

There was someone on the altar.

“...”

When he saw that back, Lukas couldn't help but suck in a deep breath.

That figure...

[An interesting guest.]

“...!”

As soon as he heard that voice, his doubts became certain.

Lukas stepped back, subconsciously raising his mana.

Then, the figure on the altar slowly turned around.

A body that gave off a holy white glow.

A lack of features.

...It wasn't an illusion.

He wasn't mistaken.

This being,

The one whose relationship with Lukas could only be described as tumultuous opened his mouth.

[How did you come here? Unfamiliar yet familiar being.]

The Lord of the Demigods looked at Lukas.

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 377

Lukas stood there for a while as if he had been nailed in place.

He'd thought that he wouldn't be surprised by anything he experienced for the rest of his life. This was especially so since he'd been prepared to disappear just before being sent to the Imaginary World. The less regrets he had in life, and the more he suppressed his emotions, the less he would care about the world.

But this time was different.

His head went white. This wasn't just a metaphor, it really happened.

On the other hand, Lord slowly tilted his head to the side.

[Hoh.]

Interest filled his voice.

Tak, folding his fingers, he closed the book in his hand. It was only at that moment that Lukas realised he was even holding a book in the first place.

That was the extent that Lukas' entire consciousness and gaze had been focused only on Lord.

Then, Lord started to approach him. That fact alone was enough to pressure Lukas.

Widening the distance between them once again, Lukas warned quietly.

"Don't come any closer."

The caution in his voice could not be hidden.

Lord accepted without any fuss, stopping his walk instead of getting closer.

Instead, he spoke again.

[You are wary of me. No, are you afraid of me?]

Afraid?

Him, of Lord?

That was definitely not possible. His dead pride chose this moment to raise its head once again.

[What is the reason? Isn't this our first meeting?]

"Our first meeting?"

What was he talking about? No, wait a moment.

Now that he thought about it... When Lord saw him for the first time, he said something.

'Unfamiliar yet familiar being.'

...It was only at that moment that he finally realised that it was clearly a strange statement.

Did that mean that he wasn't just saying that?

Lukas' inner worries must have been revealed by his expression since Lord seemed to pause for a while.

He seemed to think about something before speaking again.

[Stranger, what is your name?]

His tone was calm, his gestures gentle.

...It was strange. Lukas couldn't help but feel that again.

The being standing in front of Lukas was without a doubt Lord. But there was clearly a strange feeling of incongruity.

More than that.

'Should I just answer directly?'

He hesitated for a moment, but it was abundantly clear that Lord bore no hostility.

In the first place, even if Lord was hostile, did Lukas have any way to respond to it? Lord was a being that he could only fight if he was at least 10 stars.

He was the type of being who could even defeat new Absolutes as long as the environment was in his favour.

Lukas quietly said his name.

"...Lukas."

When Lukas finally answered, a bright smile appeared on Lord's white face.

[Lukas. Hmmm.]

Lord nodded once before turning around again. Then, he opened his closed book and continued to read.

At that moment, Lukas realised the source of his feeling of incongruity.

The current Lord was not interested in him.

The Lord he knew before also hadn't really cared about him, but that was the inevitable indifference a being who was close to an Absolute would naturally have. As proof of this, Lord always displayed intense emotions to any being who grew strong enough to threaten his and the Demigod's stronghold. Lukas was a prime example.

That was the strangest thing for Lukas.

The relationship between Lord and Lukas was so bad that it could not be described in a few words, a few lines, or even a few pages.

Each of them had stood at opposite points of conflict, and they always faced each other without any intention of retreat so that they could prove to the other that they were in the right.

They fought, and fought, and fought some more.

Finally, in their final fight, Lord killed himself.

Lukas didn't win the fight. He could say that he won, but he couldn't say he won.

Because it was Lukas' enemy who had set himself on the path to destruction.

...Instead. When their beliefs had clashed head on, it was Lukas who had lost the confrontation. Even though he'd managed to reach the unprecedented 10 stars, he'd still lost. At the time, Lukas still wasn't convinced, but he had no choice but to admit it.

Lord's obsession with his people was much stronger than Lukas 'hope of humans'.

"...hey."

Lukas called out for the first time.

This time, Lord didn't close his book, instead, he simply raised his head slightly.

[Is there anything else? Do you have business with me?]

"..."

[Ah. You must want to ask for permission.]

"Permission?"

[You are free to stay in my territory as long as you like. I'll even give you food for free. I will tell the 'miglings'.]

"Not that..."

Lukas couldn't help but sigh slightly.

The thought that Lord would harm him had faded for the most part, but his caution grew instead.

"Who are you?"

[Hmm?]

"I don't think you're the Lord I know."

[...'the Lord I know'.]

Lord seemed interested as he repeated Lukas' words. Once more, he closed his book. This time was different from before. He didn't keep the book in his hand but placed it on the altar beside him.

Then he turned around to face Lukas again.

It was as if he was finally ready to talk.

[Who are you?]

"I told you I'm Lukas. Did you forget about me?"

[That's a funny thing to say. I never knew you to begin with.]

"What?"

[Lukas... Then what is your last name?]

"Trowman."

[...]

Lord fell silent again, except, this time, he appeared a bit startled.

[Trowman...]

He repeated Lukas' last name before suddenly letting out a laugh.

[Indeed, so that's what it is.]

"..."

[This is quite rare. But I believe I understand where the nostalgia I feel when I look at you comes from to an extent.]

"Nostalgia?"

[I'm quite interested in you. And you, seem to have a lot of questions you want to ask.]

Lukas hesitated for a moment before nodding.

[I'm an intellectual. I believe I have the knowledge to answer any of the questions you might have.]

"..."

[However, I have no intention of simply giving you the answers you seek. Because that would go against the rules of this world.]

"The rules of this world?"

[To put it simply, it is equivalent exchange.]

In other words, if he wanted answers, he would also need to provide something worthwhile.

"I currently don't have anything."

[I know that. That's why I wasn't interested in you at first. But just now, you managed to grab my attention. That is no different from proving your worth.]

"..."

[Let's do this. We will exchange questions.]

It seemed that Lord also had questions he wanted Lukas to answer.

Lord began walking towards a nearby table. There also happened to be two chairs on either side of it.

After taking a seat at the table, he gestured to Lukas.

[Of course, you're more than welcome to reject my offer. The choice is yours. What will it be?]

...There was no choice.

Lukas walked towards the table.

* * *

[This question and answer exchange will end when you are no longer able to answer my questions.]

“Will you be asking the questions first?”

[Right.]

“...what if you can’t answer my questions?”

[I don’t think that will happen, but... I will put a failsafe if you are worried that might occur. In the event that I can’t answer one of your questions, I will allow you to ask two more questions. Now. Is that fair enough for you?]

“...”

Lukas nodded his head, but as Lord said, he didn’t actually think such a situation would occur.

This was probably because of the calm confidence that echoed in Lord’s voice.

But it didn’t matter.

Even if it did occur, Lukas had nothing to lose with the conditions that had been put in place.

[Then I’ll start right away. Were you a former Absolute?]

It wasn’t a question. Lord’s voice was filled with certainty.

This question was simply to further verify something that might as well have been a fact.

Lukas tried to guess the intentions behind the question, but he couldn’t think of anything. In the first place, he knew too little about the other person.

Reluctantly, he nodded his head in assent.

“Right.”

[Hmm.]

There was a hint of satisfaction leaking from his voice. It felt like he was barely holding back the words ‘as expected’.

Afterward, Lord gestured with his chin. It meant that it was his turn.

Lukas licked his dry lips.

The first question.

Its importance didn’t need to be emphasised. After all, there was no guarantee that Lukas would be able to answer Lord’s next question. In other words, it could possibly be his first and last question.

That was why it couldn’t be wasted.

Lord’s knowledge was vital for helping him accurately understand his current situation. He was different from Pale who was waiting outside.

If he missed this opportunity, it was possible that never be able to create a similar situation. Of course, he couldn't be certain of anything since it was just his assumption.

He thought for a long time, but Lord waited without saying anything. This was because he understood the pressure that Lukas was facing.

Or perhaps he was just patient.

...As expected, he was different.

"The gap between you and me."

Lukas began.

"And the strange feeling I have. What is the reason for them?"

[Hoh.]

Lord's voice was coloured with genuine admiration.

At first glance, it might seem like a question that was just grasping at the air, but it was also a question that could lead to the most answers.

He'd had a feeling that a question like this would appear, but he hadn't thought it would come right at the start. This meant that this man was very intelligent and had a lot of experience.

Lord replied cheerfully.

[Talking about that might take a long time.]

"Does that mean you can't answer?"

[Of course not. I was simply asking for your understanding in advance. However... Right. It might be a bit difficult for you, who was once an Absolute, to accept.]

"..."

[Do you know where this place is?]

"...the Imaginary World?"

Lord let out a laugh.

[Are you saying 'you know' simply because you know the name?]

To correct the above. It wasn't just a laugh, it was a loud laugh.

If another person had reacted like that, it might not have mattered, but when the other person was Lord, Lukas couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows slightly.

It wouldn't be a lie to say that he felt a bit insulted, but he managed to stop himself from displaying it.

"I know that it is a place where things that are completely forgotten and not remembered by anyone come. Is there anything else I need to know?"

[If you were living in the Three Thousand Worlds, that would be enough. However, after stepping in here, that becomes a different story. You need to know more. That's the only way to exist.]

It was as if he was saying 'in order to survive'.

...Disappearing.

Lukas was able to understand one thing about that term.

Death probably didn't exist in the Imaginary World.

Instead, one would cease to exist.

Body, soul, and consciousness.

'What would happen then?'

Where would the beings who were forgotten even in the Imaginary World go?

Lukas' contemplation was broken by Lord's voice.

[It's not just the things that have been forgotten. This world also contains the 'abandoned possibilities'.]

"...abandoned possibilities?"

[There are a number of things that could possibly occur. Didn't you know that? In any one universe, there are an infinite number of possible futures.]

Lukas suddenly got goosebumps.

This was because he finally understood what Lord was trying to say.

"That can't be true. Parallel universes can't exist."

This was something that all Absolutes knew.

[Who was it that said that? Was it God? It's a pity that all of the Absolutes were tricked by that deceiver.]

"Deceiver?"

[Put your confusion aside for now. I'm not finished answering. Now. Let me just ask one thing so I can give a more accurate answer. What kind of being was your 'me'?]

"...the Lord of Demigods."

[What are Demigods?]

"..."

It was clear that Lukas was speechless.

He never would have imagined a day when Lukas Trowman had to explain 'Demigods' to Lord.

If anyone had been there to witness this scene, they would have seen his jaw hanging in front of his chest.

“It was the generic term for a race who were born with transcendent power. Of course, there was no real commonality that could group them together as a race. Every Demigod had different appearances, characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses.”

Lukas’ gaze focused on Lord.

“And it was Lord who brought them together and led them.”

[In other words, you mean me.]

Lord chuckled.

[Right. There was such a possibility.]

“Possibility...”

Fragments of the information Lord gave him gradually came together, creating a conclusion that he would not have reached otherwise.

“...who are you?”

This was one of the biggest questions Lukas had.

[My name is Michael. The Representative of God, the One in Charge of the Heavenly Realm, and the One Responsible for the Three Worlds.]

“What?”

[That must be different from the information you know. However, it is the truth, Trowman.]

It felt like Lord was smiling.

[We basically share the same universe.]

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 378

“That’s not possible.”

He wasn’t talking to Lord.

The fact that Lukas had muttered his thoughts in such a manner was proof of his confusion when he was faced with a situation that he found difficult to accept.

The fact that parallel universes existed.

In other words, it meant that even in a single universe, the number of space-time possibilities were basically infinite.

And if all of the possibilities that didn’t occur entered the Imaginary World...

“How big is this world...?”

After becoming an Absolute, he'd learned about the Three Thousand Worlds. At that time, he had been more shocked than he'd ever been in his entire life.

But at that moment.

The shock he was feeling was comparable to, if not more potent than, at that time.

At the same time, he could instinctively foresee one more thing.

This was probably not the only secret of this world. In fact, it might only be the tip of the iceberg.

[No one knows the answer to that question.]

Lord, no.

Michael answered.

[Any being that is strong enough can claim any unclaimed territory as their own.]

“...territory.”

It was a word Pale had mentioned earlier.

[You are quite strange.]

“Strange?”

[Right. Even those who have the power to become the Lord of an area would not recklessly set foot into someone else's territory. Unless the gap between them is wide enough to be overwhelming, it would be no different than putting their neck into the other person's mouth,]

“Those guys outside had said it was an invitation.”

[Of course, it was. However, there is also the possibility that it could have been a trap.]

“...in other words, I could have died without knowing anything?”

[Who knows. However, you are strange.]

Michael said the same thing again.

[There is nothing I can do to you right now. Even though you are in my territory and just out of arm's reach from me.]

“...”

[But the strangest thing is the fact that you are in the Imaginary World in the first place.]

Lukas didn't say anything, but Michael continued to speak in a pleased tone. He was like a researcher boasting about his achievements, or a professor giving a lecture about an interesting topic.

[Only the completely forgotten should be able to come to this place.]

Lukas blinked.

“...only the completely forgotten?”

[Right. ‘Completely’.]

Michael re-emphasised his words.

[I’d like to ask. Do you think you’ve been completely forgotten?]

“No.”

Lukas shook his head. He didn’t.

Diablo still existed in his home universe.

There was also the Great Medium who had taken a peek at the void records, and Peran and Torkunta, who, while not perfectly, had never forgotten him.

But it was at that moment that Michael burst into laughter once again.

[You seem to be misunderstanding something, Fallen Absolute, I am not talking about your home universe.]

Lukas didn’t immediately understand what Michael was trying to say.

[After becoming an Absolute, you must have saved numerous worlds. You would have inevitably changed the fates of countless universes, either as a saviour or as a judge. So I will ask you again, Trowman.]

A bright smile appeared on Michael’s face.

[The beings from other universes that you saved, killed, or interfered with in some way or the other. Do you think they all forgot about you?]

“...!”

At that moment, it was as if a bolt had struck the top of his head and penetrated his entire body.

Eyes wide, Lukas stiffened.

He had never thought about that. But Michael’s words were not wrong.

Instead, they were very sharp as they directly pointed to things he had not thought about before.

He was right.

The Absolute Lukas had saved countless universes.

To save humans, or to not forget that he himself was a human.

He had saved many and killed many more.

The traces left by that would not have disappeared.

Because all of them were traces left by the 'Absolute Lukas', not the 'Great Mage Lukas'.

[That is why Absolutes cannot come here. Absolutes, beings who exist by interfering with universes, and a world where only the forgotten can exist. From an existential point of view, they are like perfectly opposite poles.]

"..."

[—Of course, that doesn't mean that it is impossible for all Absolutes. In particular, the Rulers might be capable of tearing space and stepping into this place.]

Michael's voice suddenly became cold.

[But the result would not be good.]

At that moment, Lukas suddenly thought about the Seven Fanged Dragon God.

A being who had been pulled from the position of Ruler because of some kind of event. Compared to her power of the past, she became a being that could barely be called an Absolute.

Was it this place?

Had the Seven Fanged Dragon God ended up like that after stepping into this world?

"Is it because I've fallen?"

[Mm?]

"Is it possible that I entered this world because I'm no longer an Absolute?"

[That may or may not be the case.]

Probably because he felt that his response was a bit lacking, Michael added an explanation.

[Fallen Absolutes. While it is not a common occurrence, it has happened a surprising number of times in the long history of the multiverse. However, so far, I've never heard of a Fallen Absolute entering this place.]

"...so your first question was to confirm this."

Lukas was referring to when he was asked if he was a former Absolute or not.

Michael smiled gently instead of answering.

[Exploration and contemplation are my hobbies. I was intrigued to learn that you were a former Absolute and that we share a 'fundamental universe'. Your name as well.]

...He knew it wasn't Lord.

But when Lukas looked at this being with his face and voice acting so differently, he couldn't help but feel strange.

In the first place, they could not be called completely separate beings.

Lord and Michael were fundamentally the same person.

[At some point, this stopped being a question and answer exchange. Then I will ask you one last thing, Trowman.]

Michael spoke up.

[What is your relationship with that person who was accompanying you?]

“The person accompanying me?”

Was he talking about Pale?

Lukas shook his head as he answered.

“We have no relationship. When I first opened my eyes, she was already beside me. She seems to know this place well and she doesn’t seem hostile towards me, that’s why I chose to go with her for a while.”

[...I see.]

Michael spoke in a strange voice and his tone also changed slightly. It seemed that he had either already made a conclusion or had chosen to not think about it too deeply for now. Lukas couldn’t tell which it was.

[It’s your turn.]

“...”

Michael had asked his last question.

In other words, Lukas would also need to ask his last question.

A few of his questions had been answered, but even more questions had taken their place.

However, at that moment, there was one question that Lukas had to ask.

“How do I leave the Imaginary World?”

[...]

Michael didn’t answer immediately. Because he didn’t have any facial features, it was hard for him to guess what he was thinking. But Lukas did not rush him. After all, Michael had also waited patiently when he had hesitated to respond earlier.

[I consider myself a seeker of knowledge. It might be a bit silly to say it with my own mouth, but that is quite unusual in this place. While the original intelligence of those here is intact, very few of them care about the truth.]

“...”

[I’ve been here for a very long time. Most of that time was invested in research and experiments, which is why I can truthfully answer your question.]

The answer that eventually came was one that Lukas expected, but...

[It is impossible for you.]

It was also the answer he least wished to hear.

* * *

After the question and answer exchange ended, Lukas left the cathedral.

Although Michael hadn't explicitly kicked him out, he had still expressed his intention to be alone with his aura.

When he came out, Lukas could not see the dwarves anywhere. Instead, the only one he saw was Pale. She also waved at him from afar when she spotted him. When Lukas showed no reaction, she ran over to him in a heartbeat.

"What did you talk about?"

She asked abruptly.

Her eyes were filled with curiosity and excitement.

"I asked a few questions about this place."

"Heh. And he just answered your questions?"

"He also had questions he wanted the answers for. It was an exchange."

"I see—"

Pale drawled lazily as she dragged her feet on the ground.

And she didn't seem to intend on trying to pry any further.

However, when she saw Lukas' expression, she tilted her head to the side.

"By the way, why do you look like that? Did you hear something bad?"

"A bit."

"What was it?"

The reason he didn't answer right away was because of his cautious personality. But at that point, there wasn't any particular reason to hide it. Even if Pale was an unknown, it was clear that she bore no hostility. Besides, she seemed to have been in this world for a long time, so maybe she might know things Michael didn't.

"I asked if there was a way to get back to the original world."

"The original world?"

"Right. Do you know anything? It doesn't matter even if it's just a small bit of information."

Pray smiled.

"I do."

The surprise Lukas felt was greater since he had asked without any expectations.

But Lukas couldn't tell if her 'I do' was an affirmation that she 'knew how to return to the original world' or 'knew just a small bit of information' that he'd mentioned after.

"Don't you think this place is very unstable right now? It's like the world is lagging behind, like riding on the back of an out of control earthworm."

Pale's analogy was difficult to understand.

Lukas tried to picture himself on the back of an out of control earthworm, but he could not fathom what that would feel like.

"That's why the desert is now filled with treasures."

Pale smiled again.

"Uncle, let's go treasure hunting! If you go treasure hunting with me, we can be friends! Because we'll share a secret!"

"..."

"Hurry! Uncle! Come on! Together! We'll be secret friends!"

Ignoring the noisy chattering, Lukas pondered to himself.

Was it really the right choice to leave the city now? By the looks of it, this city seemed to be one of the few safe zones in the Imaginary World. There were many monsters lurking outside.

It was fortunate that the monster that had appeared before was on a level that the current Lukas could handle...

But this was the world that had caused the Seven Fanged Dragon God to lose her power.

No matter how confident he was, he did not intend to recklessly explore.

Firstly, he would turn her down and explore the underground city a bit more.

Just as he had this thought and began to open his mouth.

The dwarves in the city approached them.

"You came out?"

"Something, happen?"

They all fussed with their unique slurred voices.

Now that he thought about it, it was a bit strange. Were they called miglings? This was definitely Lukas' first time meeting them, but they had shown an unusual affection for him from their first meeting. In comparison, they treated Pale like something they'd picked up on the wayside.

Was it because they shared a fundamental universe?

However... Lukas could not recall any such creatures in his universe. They were similar to dwarves, but unlike their stout muscular bodies and thick beards, the miglings looked more like innocent children.

They were more like fairies or spirits... However, they were too big to be either.

“Trowman.”

“Trowman, good.”

“Hihi. Hehe.”

The miglings rubbed themselves on Lukas like puppies while calling out his last name.

Now that he thought about it, Lord had also called him by his last name. In fact, his attitude had only changed after hearing his last name. When he had heard the name ‘Lukas’, he had not shown much of a reaction at all.

Not his first name, his last.

...Was there a special reason?

Suddenly.

Rumble...

A vibration was heard above the city.

The ears of the miglings surrounding Lukas immediately perked up.

“Uhh?”

“Coming! Coming!”

They were so beside themselves with joy that they immediately ran out of the city.

Lukas and Pale exchanged glances before following them.

The miglings headed to the place where Lukas had first landed on the ground.

Then, they all formed a circle around and looked up with sparkling eyes.

Now that they were closer, they realised that the sound they’d heard before was closer to moving sand. It was a sound they’d heard before. To be precise, it was the sound they’d heard when they first entered the city.

‘Someone is entering the city.’

An enemy?

No, from the expressions on the miglings faces, that didn’t appear to be the case. They showed no apprehension or hostility. Instead, they looked extremely happy.

Then who the hell...

While Lukas was quietly contemplating, Pale decided to take a much more direct approach.

“Guys, who is coming?”

She asked directly. Lukas, who had been pondering on his own, admired her approach before belatedly realising that he was being ridiculous.

But when he heard the migling's answer, his expression became even more dazed.

"Trowman!"

"Huh?"

The miglings smiled brightly as they answered.

"Trowman coming!"

Pale slowly turned to look at Lukas.

Before tilting her head to the side.

"Huuuuh?"

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 379

The sand fell and someone appeared.

It was at that moment that the miglings excited expressions became those of disappointment instead. Lowering their outstretched hands, they muttered despondently.

"Not, Trowman."

"Yeah. Not."

"That, white one."

White one?

Lukas took a closer look at the person that had fallen from the sky.

"That's..."

It was a man.

He had flowing white hair, but he wasn't old. He didn't even look middle aged.

It was a man with a young face. In fact, it was a face that Lukas knew.

"Schweiser...?"

Without a doubt.

There were some subtle differences, but this man was definitely Lukas' friend, Schweiser Strow. But he didn't look very good at that moment. His entire body was a mess as if he'd fallen into a grinder, and blood dripped down like the rain.

He seemed to be unconscious, his limbs shaking violently like tree branches in a hurricane. This proved that there wasn't even the slightest bit of tension in his muscles.

It would be dangerous to fall in that state.

Lukas cast a spell.

In an instant, a gentle breeze seemed to blow over, and Schweiser's body, which was accelerating dangerously to the ground, lost most of its momentum in an instant. Soon after, he fell to the ground as lightly as a feather.

"Wow!"

"Magic! Magic! Magic!"

"Oh my! Magic! Magic! Magic!"

"Oh my! Oh my! Oh my!"

Ignoring the excited miglings, Lukas looked at Schweiser. And swallowed a mouthful of saliva without realising.

Up close, his condition looked much worse.

Heavy bleeding, fractures, bruising... If that was just the damage that was visible on the outside, he couldn't help but wonder how serious the situation would be on the inside. He thought about wrapping the wounds first, but several miglings surrounded Schweiser.

Unlike before, they all wore serious expressions. He looked at them carefully to see if they would seriously treat him, but one migling simply took something out of his pocket.

It was something that looked like jerky... no, not looked like, it was jerky.

The miglings then stuffed it roughly into Schweiser's mouth.

"What...!"

Startled, Lukas tried to stop them. In his current condition, Schweiser would have a hard time swallowing water, let alone food.

But Pale, who was beside him, stopped him.

"Let them."

"Why?"

"That is the best method."

"...is that jerky effective?"

"Maybe?"

Pale shrugged with an uncertain answer.

Swallowing his spit once more, Lukas turned to look at the miglings again. Those were all sitting and chatting amongst themselves.

“Serious wounds.”

“Yeah. Very serious.”

“And white one lost flesh.”

“Yeah. Lost a lot of flesh.”

“Why not, Trowman?”

“Don’t know.”

“Think, think something happened.”

At that moment, one of the miglings raised his head and spoke in a serious voice.

“Must report to Lord.”

Then the miglings picked Schweiser up and began running towards the city. Lukas could tell that they were going to Michael.

In the blink of an eye, there were only two of them left there, Lukas and Pale.

“Mmm.”

Pale hummed softly and seemed to be in a daze, but after a while, she turned to Lukas with an innocent expression.

“So, what’s your answer?”

It took Lukas a while to realise that she was continuing their conversation from before the miglings interrupted them.

The proposal for them to go treasure hunting.

It seemed that Pale really didn’t care about what was happening in the underground city.

It amazed him. He’d never met a woman like this before. Even right after they’d met, Iris hadn’t been this indecipherable to him.

Nevertheless, Iris and Pale were fundamentally different.

If it felt like Iris was intentionally hiding herself behind a false persona, for Pale, it was hard to understand the principles behind her thinking or her sincerity even when she revealed everything as it was.

“If we leave this place, can we come back?”

Lukas asked cautiously.

“We could request a guide and the Lord’s permission again. But why?”

“I’m wondering if there is any other place in this world as safe as here.”

“Ay. So that’s what you’re worried about. Of course, there is.”

Pale answered in a low voice.

“Besides, there is no absolutely safe place! This place is also quite dangerous. Looking at the condition of big brother white one, he must have taken part in a border war.”

“Border war?”

“The losing side loses everything.”

“...”

She was saying they were at war.

If that was the case, then Pale was right. It would be more dangerous in this place than in the grey desert.

...Of course, judging from Michael’s words, Schweiser was likely not the same Schweiser that Lukas knew. No. It was safe to say that it wasn’t just likely, it was almost certain.

He was probably a different possibility of Schweiser, from a parallel world.

‘If that was the case, then why?’

Why did he want to meet Schweiser?

Michael knew about Trowman. The miglings were the same.

Now he understood.

The reason the miglings were so kind to him since the beginning.

And the reason why Michael was only interested in the last name Trowman.

—In this city, there must be another Lukas Trowman.

Of course, that Lukas and him would be different. The same was probably true for Schweiser. He had a similar appearance to the Schweiser that Lukas knew, but he couldn’t guarantee that they would be the same on the inside.

He could tell that much after seeing Lord, no, Michael.

However, despite knowing that.

That Schweiser might still remember ‘a’ Lukas. He may not have been forgotten.

It wasn’t just Schweiser. There was a good chance that there were other people that remembered Lukas.

There might be many ‘beings with different possibilities’ that shared the same ‘fundamental universe’ as him.

Lukas felt a wave of emotion as he had that thought.

Disgust, anger, curiosity, and above all, jealousy.

It was a strange feeling.

There was no way he was jealous of his other self.

Shaking his head, Lukas spoke to Pale in a firm voice.

“I agree.”

“Huh?”

“The treasure hunt. Let’s do it together.”

This place.

It was not a place that Lukas should stay in. It was no longer a place that allowed Lukas to be here.

Because, in the end, there was only one reason why Lukas wanted to meet Schweiser.

He wanted to hear him call his name.

* * *

It wasn’t too difficult to return to the desert.

There were dozens of holes in the ceiling, and Lukas had memorised which one they had emerged from. All that was left was to go in the opposite direction, but the passage turned out much longer than he expected.

‘I didn’t realise at that time.’

Fortunately, they had no trouble breathing, so it wasn’t difficult to get through as long as they could bear the gritty texture of the sand.

“Huwa!”

As she stuck her head out of the ground, Pale took a deep breath.

“Ah. Sweet air~”

She spoke with a blissful expression on her face before pulling the rest of her body out of the hole and brushing the sand off of her body.

Lukas had been the first out of the hole.

The grey desert was still as empty as before. Just looking at it filled his heart with a lonely feeling and made him feel stuffy.

“What is a guide?”

Lukas asked.

When he'd asked if it was possible to return to the city, Pale had said it was possible with the Lord's permission and a guide.

The Lord in question was Michael, but he didn't seem to mind his presence.

So all that remained was a guide.

"A being who can find the way here."

Pale answered in her usual roundabout manner.

"...the way."

He looked around.

It was almost certain that there was no map of this world.

After all, if one looked up at the sky, all they would see were constantly shifting colours like mixing paint. There was no boundary between night and day, so it would also be impossible to use the night sky as a guide. There probably wouldn't be any stars in the first place.

"Are the migling also guides?"

"Huh?"

"Those guys came directly to us before."

"Yeah. I don't think so. It's possible that they smelled you. It's certainly possible if you are from the same universe."

"From the same universe..."

When Lukas mumbled those words as if he couldn't understand, Pale beckoned to him.

"Follow me."

Without waiting for a response, she turned her body around and began walking away. Lukas followed her.

After taking about ten steps, Pale turned around. And headed back to where they'd walked from.

Just ten steps.

She tapped her feet against the ground.

"It's not here."

Lukas understood what she was trying to say.

She was saying that while it might feel like they'd returned to the same place, they hadn't.

The place they were standing in now was completely different from where they had been standing just before.

What was the reason?

It wasn't because they were hallucinating or simply mistaken.

'...countless spaces are overlapping one another.'

The overlapping spaces constantly rippled and changed. The significance of one step in this desert was not light. One might think that they only moved a short distance, but the reality was that they could enter a completely different space with that simple step.

It was only at that moment that he understood why the dwarves, the miglings, moved perfectly behind each other in a straight line.

'However...'

He had a strange feeling.

Lukas squinted his eyes slightly and changed his point of view.

Then, the sight of countless intertwining coordinates appeared in front of him.

The number of threads easily exceeded tens of thousands.

They all intertwined, creating a skein that was thicker than a boulder.

Trying to interpret the overlapped coordinates was like trying to fully understand how each thread was weaved into the skein.

That was something beyond the realm of simple calculations, but...

"What are you doing?"

He ignored the question. He needed to use the full extent of his concentration.

Analysis was a specialty of Wizards. And Lukas' calculative ability was probably in the top five among all the beings in the Three Thousand Worlds.

Of course, these coordinates were so complicated that he was hesitant to even attempt to decipher them, but it was possible because nothing in the world was intertwined from the beginning.

'The miglings.'

They had come to Lukas first.

Even though they weren't guides, they knew his location, and they knew the way back to the underground city.

...Smell.

He felt like he could finally understand what Pale meant.

Lukas gestured to her slightly with his chin before walking first.

"Aht. Where are you going?"

Pale called out in a startled voice, but she seemed to be following him. Lukas couldn't afford to answer, so he just kept walking.

“Rather than smell.”

It might be more appropriate to call it a string.

In any case, he could not do this for too long. He wasn't sure how it would be with an Absolute body, but with his current body, if he were to maintain this state for too long, his brain would be unable to withstand the pressure and burn to ashes.

He naturally increased the speed of his steps.

Then Lukas finally reached the source of the thread.

“Huu...”

He couldn't help but let out a sigh. His head throbbed.

He felt like he wanted to take a seat more than anything, but he suppressed the feeling for now and regulated his breathing first.

After his condition improved a bit, Lukas raised his head. It was only then that he noticed how quiet his surroundings were.

What about Pale? Had she not followed him?

Lukas looked around. Fortunately, it didn't seem like she'd had any trouble keeping up with him.

She was standing a short distance away, staring directly at Lukas.

Her eyes were narrowed slightly, and there was a glint of interest in them as though she was looking at a toy that managed to surprise her.

The moment their eyes met, Lukas felt a chill down his spine.

Was that really pale?

Her aura had changed so drastically that he couldn't help but wonder. The cuddly feeling from before had disappeared entirely.

“Uncle can see the way.”

Her voice was still the same.

When Lukas looked at her again, Pale had returned to the same unbothered manner from before.

“Perhaps you are qualified to be a guide.”

“...no. I think I came to the wrong place.”

After saying that, he turned to look at the ground.

Lukas had tried to return to the migling city. Even if they didn't need to enter the underground city, he wanted the reassurance that he'd gone in the right direction.

But this wasn't the entrance to the underground city.

Turning his eyes, Lukas looked at the source of the string.

A woman lay in a crater on the ground. The string Lukas had been following was connected to her.

In other words.

This woman was also a being that shared a fundamental universe with Lukas.

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 380

“Huh. This person is also very injured.”

Lukas came to his senses at Pale’s sudden words. It was only then that he took a closer look at the woman’s condition. He’d thought that she was just unconscious, but as Pale mentioned, the woman’s brown robe was covered in blood.

This was not the time to remain idle.

Lukas went closer and knelt beside the woman who was lying on her face. It was then that he checked the severity of her wounds.

...It wasn’t good. Her wounds weren’t so serious that she wouldn’t be able to recover, but she had lost too much blood.

“Pale, do you have any of that jerky the miglings had used earlier?”

“Of course not.”

“Really?”

“Absolutely.”

It was surprising how a seemingly emotionless face somehow appeared shameless.

He asked one more time.

“Can I trust you?”

“Would I lie?”

“...”

“...”

Their eyes met.

Pale had a proud look on her face. He didn’t know what she was thinking on the inside, but her expression didn’t change. A forced body search was... Well. It would not be a polite thing to do.

In the first place, even if Pale did have the jerky on her, he couldn’t force her to give it to him if she didn’t want to.

In any case, if she pretended that she didn’t have it, there was nothing he could do about it.

'I should hunt a nearby monster.'

Just as he had this thought and was about to stop looking at Pale suspiciously.

She scratched her head before suddenly rummaging in one of her pockets and pulling something out. On her outstretched hand was a dusty piece of jerky.

"Here. But how did you know?"

"...thanks."

Lukas didn't say anything and instead, he simply thanked her. Then he carefully observed the jerky Pale had offered.

This jerky was a different colour from the one the miglings had. This meant it was probably made from different ingredients. In any case, it didn't matter to him as long as it was effective.

Lukas dusted the piece of jerky off before putting it in the woman's mouth.

By this point, he'd gained a rough understanding of what eating meant in this world.

It had been at least two days, or maybe even three or four years since he'd arrived in this place. But Lukas hadn't taken a single sip of water. In fact, he'd only barely noticed this a short while ago.

It hadn't been a long time, but he hadn't been thirsty at all.

When Pale had offered him her food, he'd hadn't been the slightest bit hungry either.

In other words, eating in this world wasn't to replenish nutrients or satisfy hunger.

'To maintain existence.'

Lukas remembered when his legs had started disappearing.

As soon as he'd eaten the mouse Pale gave to him, the phenomena had reversed.

Eating in this world was likely to supplement or maintain their own existence.

In the same vein, eating seemed to also be the way to treat injuries.

In many ways, it was a twisted world and a twisted rule, but since it was a rule of this place, they had to follow it.

As if she could barely hold herself back as she watched him feeding the jerky.

"She's eaten enough. What will you do when she fully recovers and wakes up?"

Lukas looked down at the woman's wounds.

There, he witnessed the unrealistic sight of her flesh returning to its original form. Rather than restoration or regeneration, it was more like watching time reverse.

The second thing he checked after the woman's wounds was her face.

They shared a fundamental universe. At first glance, her face was covered in scabs, so he could not see her appearance. Lukas silently peeled them away. Fortunately, she did not seem to be someone he knew.

Since she was not an acquaintance, it didn't really matter.

As he thought this, Lukas removed the dried blood from the woman's clothes and hair. Her dark coloured hair was finally visible.

Pale bent over and pretended to look around. Like a captain looking for land, she had one hand on her waist and the other hand above her eyes.

"What do we do now?"

"Wait for her to gain consciousness."

"And after that?"

"Take her to the underground city."

Perhaps Michael would know who this woman was.

He wasn't sure if it was the right expression, but maybe she was one of his companions.

"Wow. You're a good person."

Pale exclaimed. It wasn't sarcasm, but genuine admiration.

Good. A good person... It was only then that Lukas realised he was doing a good deed.

"Then shall we go right now? You have the talent to be a guide, so you wouldn't make the same mistake again. Right?"

"I have to cool my head down first. If I do it now, my brain will burn."

It had been a long time since he'd felt a brain overload which was what Wizards experienced when they tried to forcibly use spells beyond their capabilities. It was actually a little pleasant for him to experience the stiff sensation again. At the very least, it was something that he hadn't felt since pushing his calculative ability to the extreme in the abyss.

It was no joke, if he were to force himself in this state, it really would destroy his brain. He needed to cooldown for the time being.

"Then does that mean we won't be able to move right away?"

"Right."

"That might be a bit dangerous."

"Dangerous?"

Pale scratched her cheek when Lukas' gaze turned to her.

"It feels like there is a territory nearby."

Lukas didn't respond.

Because just as she brought it up, he felt his senses tingling.

It was a sign of imminent danger, an instinctive alarm. There was no time to think. He spread his hands out and released his magic.

A barrier formed around Lukas in an instant. Clang! And in almost the same instant, he felt a dull shockwave.

He narrowed his eyes. There hadn't been any trace of them, but in the blink of an eye, five people wielding swords surrounded the barrier.

Four men and one woman.

'These are not easy foes.'

All of them were highly skilled Swordsmen.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Sword attacks poured in one after the other. Heavy impacts gradually shook the barrier. The damage continued to accumulate, but it wasn't enough to destroy the barrier just yet.

"...!"

The Swordsmen all wore expressions of shock. It seemed that they were surprised by the durability of the barrier that was much harder than they ever would have expected.

Lukas didn't miss the opportunity and immediately took the offensive.

Bang!

A loud sound rang out as the barrier shattered. But this wasn't because of the Swordsmen's attacks, Lukas had deliberately broken it.

The pieces of the shattered barrier became like shards of glass and shot towards the Swordsmen. Fast, sharp. The sound of the air being cut showed just how much of a threat each shard was.

The Swordsmen responded in a swift manner. They all immediately gather in one place as though they had trained as a unit for a long time.

Clang clang clang clang!

Loud sounds rang out as their blades slapped away most of the shards.

They managed to stop most, not all. They managed to perfectly protect their vital points, but as a consequence, they had to pay relatively less attention to the areas that weren't vital points, like their forearms, thighs or cheeks.

There were two factors that made them incapable of perfectly defending the attack.

One was because the attacks were actually difficult to see due to the transparent nature of the barrier.

And the other was because Lukas attack didn't end there.

Lukas' body slowly rose into the air.

The eyes of the five Swordsmen filled with horror.

An apparent enemy had approached him with murderous intent. Naturally, Lukas would not show mercy.

Crackle-

After the brief sound of electricity, a flash of light erupted.

No, it wasn't light, it was lightning.

The 7 star spell, Gigantic Thunder, struck down on the desert as if it wanted to pierce through it.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The attack did not stop with just one. Without the slightest bit of error, a series of lightning bolts pierced the same spot one after the other.

Including the first attack, there were four strikes in total.

Nevertheless, he still had mana to spare. Since he couldn't recover it naturally, he couldn't use it all at once.

After his attack ended, Lukas looked down at the huge crater that had formed in the middle of the desert from the sky.

Squirm-

He detected movement in the crater. It seemed that they were still alive. As expected, they were not easy to deal with. Just as Lukas prepared to use another spell.

"Wa-, wait!"

An urgent shout sounded.

It was the voice of a young man.

"Wait, please wait a minute!"

There was a hint of fear in the voice, as though they were worried that another spell would fall.

Maybe they had lost some of their will to fight.

Lukas calmed his roiling mana and opened his mouth.

"What is it?"

The voice that came out of his mouth was freezing cold. Within the crater, there was a sign of flinching, but the voice shouted once again.

"We are not your enemies!"

“You attacked me first.”

“Th-, that... that was an accident. We beg your forgiveness. We’re sorry.”

“...”

He gave excuses and apologies in a heart-rending voice.

Lukas remained silent, unable to accurately guess the other’s intentions.

The owner of the voice probably thought this was an opportunity as, after coughing a few times, he quickly continued.

“Could you please give us a chance? We have no intention of fighting you. Please give us a chance to prove that.”

“...”

“Please.”

There was a sense of desperation in his voice. He could tell that much.

Lukas slowly descended to the ground. He wasn’t really accepting the man’s words. After all, he didn’t believe them, but he felt that he could still make a decision after hearing what the other had to say.

Tak.

When he landed, Pale, who had been squatting next to the unconscious woman and poking her face, stood up.

“Uncle, you really don’t hold back when you’re angry! Hihi. That’s my secret friend!”

Pale said in an excited voice.

She didn’t seem surprised by Lukas’ magic. Not to mention frightened. There was only admiration and excitement in her voice.

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Lukas liked that too.

“Take care of her.”

“Yes Sir!”

Chak, Pale answered loudly with a salute.

Walking past Pale, Lukas headed to the crater he’d created. There, he saw the five shabby Swordsmen breathing heavily.

To his surprise, they were all relatively unharmed.

Of course, their entire bodies were covered in soot, and their clothes had numerous cuts and tears. But with the strength of the attack that Lukas had used against them, he wouldn’t have been surprised if they had turned to ashes.

Or cut into 4 pieces.

The bolt of lightning had pierced the very centre of their formation. Nevertheless, all of their limbs were intact and in good condition. They were still capable of swinging their swords and fighting.

As he got closer, the Swordsmen cupped their hands to him.

“I thank you for your mercy. This one is Kwak Do-san.”

Fist cupping.

That was enough to give Lukas an idea of what their universe was like. It was knowledge he'd gained as an Absolute.

“May I ask what you are called?”

A cautious voice called out, it was the man who had been earnestly shouting to Lukas just before.

“Lukas.”

Kwak Do-san nodded at his brief introduction.

“Great Sir Lu, I believe there is a misunderstanding between us.”

Who was Great Sir Lu? He almost furrowed his brow at that.

He felt like pointing it out, but in the end, he decided to put up with it. In any case, he had no intention of prolonging this conversation.

“A misunderstanding?”

“Exactly. But before that, there is something I'd like to ask.”

Kwak Do-san's gaze went past Lukas' shoulder.

“Is that woman your acquaintance?”

Coincidentally, there were only women behind him.

When Lukas looked back, Pale waved at him. Pale was someone who usually had a consistently uncaring attitude about everything, but now her expression appeared a bit innocent. In other words, Kwak Do-san was probably not talking about Pale.

This left only one person, the unconscious woman covered in blood.

In truth, considering the timing, it could have only been her that they were referring to.

Given that he had been attacked shortly after finding her.

“No.”

He didn't think he knew her. She'd been unconscious since they'd encountered her.

Kwak Do-san's expression brightened when he denied it so firmly.

“Huu. As expected. That’s a relief.”

“A relief?”

“...I would like to explain the situation, would that be alright?”

When Lukas nodded his head, Kwak Do-san swallowed once before opening his mouth.

“Not long ago, we received confirmation that a witch, who had appeared unannounced in the vicinity of Origin Mountain, was harming innocent people.”

Witch.

It was probably a different concept from the Witch that Lukas knew. However, he was still able to understand it in the context of the story.

“That woman is the Witch?”

“That’s right. Origin Mountain gathered as much manpower as possible to stop the Witch, but her power was too strong. It was only after sacrificing 30 disciples that we were able to drive her into a corner, but we couldn’t finish her off in the end.”

Kwak Do-san spoke bitterly.

“She is a very dangerous being. If we don’t kill her now while she’s unconscious, there is no telling how great the bloodbath will be when she awakens.”

“...”

“Do you not believe me?”

Of course he didn’t.

For Lukas, he was unable to properly judge the situation. The experience and knowledge that he had about the Imaginary World was still too lacking.

In fact, he was still filled with a strange feeling.

The Imaginary World.

A world shrouded in mystery that no one had been able to enter before.

That was why, when he’d first learned of this place, he couldn’t help but feel a bit uneasy.

However, a few days after entering it for himself, he felt his unease waning. This world was not as threatening as he thought.

This situation was an example.

This man, Kwak Do-san, was a resident of the Imaginary World. He wasn’t sure how long he’d been here, but it was certainly longer than Lukas, who had only been here for less than a week. Kwak Do-san was intelligent. He could talk. On top of that, he had been frightened by the magic Lukas had used.

He asked himself. Could he be afraid of such a person? The answer came without him needing to think about it.

No. Not at all.

Even if Kwak Do-san was stronger than Lukas, at most he would have been surprised, not scared.

Because, at least, they could talk.

If the opponent was an intelligent being, and as long as their ability to understand each to some extent, then there would be no reason for him to be afraid, regardless of the power he possessed.

Of course, the secrets of the Imaginary World still took him by surprise. Especially when it came to parallel worlds.

However, was that really all?

Was that really all there was to this world that even Absolutes were afraid of and where Rulers could lose their status?

“...”

He couldn't be quick to judge.

As mentioned before, Lukas hadn't even been there for a week yet.

However, the impression of the Imaginary World that he'd been given so far was that it was dull and achromatic.

Lukas could easily name ten universes more dangerous than this one.

“Mm...”

Seeing as the other party hadn't spoken for a long time, Kwak Do-san probably thought that they were seriously contemplating his words. He pondered for a while before finally speaking.

“Then how about this? There are still traces of her bloodshed in our territory. You can check them for yourself, and if you think she's really a danger, you can hand her to us.”

“Your territory?”

“Exactly. It's not very far from here.”

The pride on the face of Kwak Do-san could not be hidden.

“Flower Mountain.”