

Great Mage 781

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

Season 2 Chapter 481

“There are three ways to get to the next stage. The first is Siberia.”

Dok Go-yun pointed at the map, saying that they could use a railway to cross.

Pale marvelled.

“Wow. That’s a long railway.”

Lukas’ gaze also turned to the map.

“I’m surprised there are still railways.”

“It’s said that it was rebuilt. Of course, it hasn’t been completely restored so it’s impossible to arrive in one go. It would take a long time, but it has the advantage of being cheap and relatively safe.”

But Lukas didn’t accept it so easily.

“Was there a reason to rebuild it? There should be countless high ranked Wizards in this world. It would be more efficient to use a warp system designed by them.”

At that, Dok Go-yun tilted his head to the side.

“I know that Wizards have the ability to leap across space in one breath, but they say that the current world is twisted which makes it impossible to travel across large distances. Moreover, it seems that even short distance travel requires a fairly complicated process...”

That’s right. He could accept that.

Even Lukas had never encountered a world where the spatial values were so complicated. Even Wizards who were fairly confident in their skills would not be able to muster up the courage to use Warp in this world.

‘Lightning God.’

[What is it?]

‘By chance, is it not just here, but the entire multiverse that experienced a similar situation to the Great Fusion?’

[That’s right.]

The Lightning God answered with surprising obedience. Lukas clicked his tongue. It seemed the entirety of the Three Thousand Worlds was experiencing this situation.

Was this situation caused by the death of God, or was the death of God caused by this situation?

And if that was the case, was this situation caused by those from the World of Void? Or was it the Rulers who still seemed relaxed.

Or.

Was it not the Rulers, nor the beings of the World of Void.

Someone else entirely...

'That's an excessive thought.'

Lukas dismissed his suspicions as a delusion.

The possibility that there was a being stronger than the Rulers, Four Knights, and Twelve Void Lords, who had been hiding themselves without revealing any hints until now...

...He couldn't say there was none. This was because Lukas had already experienced many things that surpassed his understanding.

'In any case, the boundary between universes is very unstable right now.'

To a certain extent, the possibility that a high ranking Wizard might get sucked into another universe if they recklessly interfered with space existed.

—In other words, even a being that wasn't an Absolute could move between universes. This was likely due to the absence of God. It was likely for a similar reason that the boundary between the Three Thousand Worlds and the World of Void, which had been on completely different courses before, had collapsed.

"The second way I was about to tell you was to use Warp. Luanoble also has a warp system, so it would be possible to travel bit by bit... But this way isn't too good. So what I'd recommend we use is the third way."

"The third?"

"Yes. Using personal skills."

"Personal skills?"

Pale muttered in a doubtful voice.

If it was personal skills...

"You mean using a plane?"

"Not an ordinary plane. Those are loud and high profile, and they don't have a means for combat, there would be no way to respond if we encountered an enemy in the sky. The sky outside the safe zones are filled with all kinds of dangers."

Dok Go-yun continued.

"The Demonic Cult is in possession of a fighter jet. It is a friendly gift the Heavenly Demon received from the Admiral of the Great Galactic Alliance, and it has several functions that I think are quite useful. We can ride in that."

"I don't know how to fly."

Of course, Yang In-hyun and Pale, who accompanied him, would be the same.

“Basically, it is equipped with an autopilot function, but I will operate it in case of an emergency.”

“You can fly a fighter jet?”

At that, Dok Go-yun let out a bitter laugh.

“No. Not even the basics. Literally, all I can do is grab the control stick in the event of an emergency.”

“...”

“When do you intend to leave?”

“Right away. The sooner the better.”

“Understood. I’ll check the equipment and carry out a simple handover. Please give me 30 minutes.”

“Go ahead.”

“Thank you. Please wait on the roof.”

Just before leaving, Dok Go-yun said.

“I’m not particularly fond of slaughter.”

It came out of nowhere. Dok Go-yun had already turned around so he couldn’t see his face.

Although Lukas didn’t understand why he chose to bring it up all of a sudden...

“I know.”

He gave an answer first.

“Huh?”

“Didn’t the Heavenly Demon capture you when you were very young because you were exceptionally talented? Then he forced you to act as his double. While teaching you his martial arts.”

“...how did you know?”

“In the first place, if you were a guy with a rotten mind, I wouldn’t have stopped Yang In-hyun when he tried to kill you.”

“...”

“From now on, just live as you please. As long as you don’t harm others.”

“It’s too late for that. I have already lived for half a century...”

“So? You’re still young.”

Lukas smiled as he continued.

“If you go astray, I will give you some advice. As long as you’re by my side.”

Dok Go-yun found it hard to open his mouth.

He'd thought that his life would never be understood by anyone. After all, it was an unfortunate life. Even if he managed to escape from the Heavenly Demon's influence, as the person who impersonated the Heavenly Demon, whether it was forced or not, Dok Go-yun was someone who had a lot of blood on his hands.

Dok Go-yun looked at Lukas and caught his side profile as he had a conversation with the blue haired woman. For him, his top priority had always been his own self preservation. Dok Go-yun's sole purpose in life was to live a long life.

That was why he had been overwhelmed by the Heavenly Demon's overwhelming dignity* and felt fear, but that was no longer the case.(*: Yes...)

For reference, he hadn't felt even the slightest hint of sorrow at the death of the Heavenly Demon.

It was the same now. Dok Go-yun was still grovelling at the feet of a strong person. He was in a situation where he had to follow Lukas' orders without a word.

But he felt something different compared to when he'd obeyed the Heavenly Demon.

When Lukas went up to the rooftop, he saw a familiar face.

It was Yang In-hyun. Looking around, he said.

"Who were you talking to?"

Only then did Yang In-hyun turn his gaze over to Lukas. Then, he threw something in his hand towards him.

"...this."

A black card. That looked exactly like the one he'd just seen, which had been taken from the Corpse Demon's corpse.

In other words, it was a card that proved someone was a member of VIP.

"Where did you get this?"

"Someone called Gentleman gave it to me."

"What did he tell you?"

"An offer to join VIP."

Lukas was silent for a moment. Then, looking at Yang In-hyun's face, he asked.

"What was your answer."

It was at that moment that Yang In-hyun's expression changed. A strange scent seemed to spread out in every direction as if the flow of the atmosphere had been reversed.

“They don’t know me.”

A cool voice.

“No one knows me. Not even you.”

And a cool gaze.

“Even if you know about my past, you know nothing about the man named Yang In-hyun.”

Lukas didn’t deny Yang In-hyun’s words.

“However, those guys talked as if they knew me. Isn’t that funny? I’ve only been in this world for a day. All they saw was me cleaning up the dregs of the Demonic Cult. And yet, based on that alone, they assumed that they were the same as me. From my perspective, that’s more disgusting than being covered in worms.”

Drawing his sword, Yang In-hyun looked up at the sky.

“Did you know, Lukas? A device was installed in the vacuum of space that exists beyond the sky. They seem to have peeped at our battle using it.”

Observing from the vacuum of space, he seemed to be talking about a satellite.

Then, Yang In-hyun swung his sword towards the sky. He didn’t even get into a proper stance. Rather than swordsmanship, it was a rough movement as if he was swinging a stick instead of a sword.

Papat-

It was miniscule.

A sound that was barely audible.

Then, Yang In-hyun sheathed his sword again.

“—I’m so displeased it’s giving me a headache.”

Lukas looked up at the sky. The sun had already risen up high so it was a bit hard to see, but he witnessed a brief flicker of light in the pitch black space beyond the sky.

“I roughly heard your conversation. You said you were going to the place where the VIPs are, I will go with you.”

“...”

It seemed that VIP might have accomplished a feat that even Lukas couldn’t easily achieve.

The feat of making the Everlasting Plum Sword Yang In-hyun a complete enemy.

* * *

A giant carved from gold.

That was Jiudad’s impression when he saw Neil Prand for the first time.

He felt unbelievably strong.

If the Heavenly Demon felt like a bottomless abyss, Neil was like a golden brilliance. It felt like he couldn't take his eyes off of him, but if he kept staring at him, he would go blind.

"So what the Archduke is saying..."

The grave voice woke Jiudad from his thoughts.

"Is that someone broke into New Luanoble, and single-handedly drove the Demonic Cult to the brink of destruction...?"

"That's right."

"What about the Heavenly Demon?"

"He is missing."

"..."

This was what Lukas had requested him to say.

And, as Jiudad himself had said, he was willing to do whatever Lukas wished.

For a moment, Neil looked at Jiudad with blank eyes. Cold sweat began to form on Jiudad's palms, but he didn't show it and instead pretended to hold his chin naturally.

"In other words, there is no reason for us Trowman Rings to come to Luanoble."

"I'm sorry you had to make this trip in vain."

"I welcome this kind of vain trip."

Neil grinned and said.

"That's not something you need to apologise for, in fact, it is a good thing. We were prepared to suffer heavy damages if we were to fight the Demonic Cult."

"Thank you for understanding. Then, how about this, since you came all the way to Luanoble, why don't you take a look around the country? There isn't any place that can be called a tourist attraction yet, but it will nonetheless be a feast for the eyes."

"Thank you for the offer, but our schedule is a bit tight. I can only accept your heartfelt thanks."

With that, Neil left the castle without hesitation.

A subordinate, who was following behind him, opened their mouth.

"Are the Archduke's words true?"

"True?"

"The fact that the Demonic Cult was destroyed. According to our information, it is safe to call Luanoble the Heavenly Demon's territory. In other words, it's possible that the Archduke succumbed to Heavenly Demon's threats and faked the destruction of the Demonic Cult..."

“To avoid conflict with us?”

“Yes.”

“It’s plausible. But no. That is too passive to be one of the Heavenly Demon’s tactics.”

Faking the destruction of the Demonic Cult out of fear of colliding with the Trowman Rings. That was a plan that the Heavenly Demon’s pride would never allow him to carry out.

“Of course, it seems the Archduke is hiding something besides that.”

But he didn’t intend to forcibly dig into that. The Trowman Rings didn’t come here for war. It didn’t seem like he was being threatened, so there was no need for them to bother.

“However, the Heavenly Demon being missing is not a good thing.”

“Mm.”

“What will we do now?”

“...that’s right.”

After thinking for a moment, Neil spoke.

“I had wanted to get the [card] in order to infiltrate [VIP], but things didn’t seem to work out easily. I have no choice but to move on like this.”

“Should we report to the Master?”

“Right. And...”

For a moment, Neil’s gaze shifted to the roof of a huge building, the Infernal Heaven.

“Should we report anything else?”

“No. That’s all for the report. You guys should head back first.”

“Huh? Then Honour Prand...”

For a moment, a lightning bolt seemed to flash across Neil’s blue eyes.

“I will go to the next stage.”

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Season 2 Chapter 482

The gift the Demonic Cult received from the Great Galactic Alliance was an eight seater fighter jet named ‘Omega’.

The Omega’s appearance was in many ways different from the normal fighter jets that Lukas was expecting. Firstly, it didn’t look like an aircraft at all.

Instead, it took the form of a giant disc. Overall, it was only a bit thicker than a dish*. Instead of something that you could ride, it looked more like a large ornament or statue. (*: I’m assuming satellite dish... but the word used also means dinner plate/saucer) (PR: Literally flying saucer lol)

“How do you ride this?”

It was Pale, who didn't really care about things, that asked this question, but this time, it was understandable. Even Lukas, who had experienced all kinds of hardships, had a hard time finding the part that served as an entrance.

First of all, the entire surface was too smooth.

Overall, even after looking it over, he could not guess where the door would be.

“It is opened with voice recognition. Please wait for a moment.”

Dok Go-yun stepped up to the Omega and spoke in a solemn voice.

“The Supreme Heavenly Demon(天魔至尊)! Greatest of the Demonic Cult(魔教天下)!”

“...”

A moment after that ridiculous shout rang out, something like a line appeared on the smooth surface. It was a very secretive appearance, like a snake emerging to the surface.

After a while, he realised that a very thin gap had appeared, so thin in fact that it might not be possible for even rainwater to get in.

Tsss-

With a sound similar to steam being discharged, the door swung open. The open door stuck to the ground and became a stairway.

“Let's go.”

Dok Go-yun took the lead, and the other three followed.

“Wow.”

Pale, who went in ahead of the others, let out an exclamation.

The interior of the cabin consisted of a clean and incredibly futuristic design with a white base. The walls, floor, cockpit, interior decor, seats, beds, and other amenities were either grey or white.

And the inside was much larger than it appeared on the outside.

“If we activate the stealth function, we should be able to reach our destination without getting caught up in any unnecessary trouble.”

“What is a stealth function?”

“It's a function for hiding. It makes it impossible to guess the location of the Omega by tracking our movement with the naked eye.”

“Oho.”

Dok Go-yun went to the cockpit. Then, he continued talking while manipulating the holographic screens.

“Even for a weapon made by the Great Galactic Alliance, its speed is quite slow for a fighter jet, but I heard that this model was optimised for combat and concealment. The fuel consumption isn’t too bad, so a round trip shouldn’t be a problem... Mm. By my calculations, it will take us about two days to reach our destination while taking the safest route.”

Today was October 1st.

And the general review meeting would be held in the next stage on October 10th.

So there wouldn’t be any problems with time.

“Then let’s do that.”

“Shall we leave immediately?”

“Right.”

“Understood.”

When Dok Go-yun pressed a button, the entrance closed.

Woowoong-

Then, they felt the fuselage begin to float. For a moment, they could feel a slight shaking, but it was very faint. The Omega rose so gently that it could hardly be taken as a fighter jet taking off. Surprisingly, there was hardly any noise.

‘The Great Galactic Alliance...?’

Lukas realised that their technology could be ranked in the top tier among all dimensions. Slowly looking around the aircraft, he suddenly said.

“Are there things to eat?”

“Over here.”

Dok Go-yun opened a door on the wall, revealing a space that was filled with food. Most of it was instant food and canned food that had a long shelf life and were easy to store.

He didn’t think they’d need to worry about food. That amount would be enough to last them a month.

‘Two days.’

...Now that he thought about it, His mind was a bit blank and his eyelids were heavy. This was a bit different from mental fatigue. For the first time in a long time, he felt sleepy.

Since there was no telling what would happen at the ‘next stage’, it was important for him to get some rest while he could.

Yang In-hyun, and Pale.

Since they were both in the same space as him now, he could relax a bit.

“I’m going to rest my eyes for a bit, tell me if you have anything to say.”

“Ah, yes.”

Heading towards one of the beds, Lukas leaned his back against the wall. Nevertheless, he had no intention of sleeping completely relaxedly. Instead, despite closing his eyes, he still maintained a certain level of caution so that he could respond to any unexpected situation at any time.

* * *

“...”

Dok Go-yun.

The man who led the Demonic Cult as the proxy of the Heavenly Demon was currently facing a great difficulty.

Of course, their trip hadn't suffered any setbacks. Although the Omega was slow—of course, when compared to other means— it was not that slow and was steadily moving toward their destination.

Occasionally, they would encounter flying beasts, demons or strange looking objects, but they never noticed the Omega's presence.

The problem was that things were going too smoothly.

The cabin was quiet, a space filled with science with not even the slightest hint of conversation.

‘...it's awkward.’

So awkward he could die.

What was this?

Weren't these three companions? That couldn't be true. If it was, then why hadn't they said a single word to each other?

The three monsters didn't seem to have the slightest interest in each other. Dok Go-yun decided to take a glance at them.

First of all, the blue haired woman, Pale, was the noisiest of the three. Of course, her noisiness didn't come from talking too much.

Pale was currently seated in front of the refrigerator, frantically digging into their food supply. Empty cans rolled aimlessly beside her.

As far as Dok Go-yun knew, the food in storage should have been enough to last them a month, but at this rate, it didn't seem impossible for it to be completely emptied within two days. It even made him want to dissect her to see what the hell her stomach looked like.

Of course, Dok Go-yun had neither the authority nor the courage to stop her.

Naturally, his gaze shifted to the other two men.

Yang In-hyun was looking at the passing scenery outside with his hands clasped behind his back. As he looked at the clouds filling the blue sky, he gave off a free and solemn feeling as if he was a taoist hermit. But Dok Go-yun couldn't shake off the fear he felt.

The Demonic Cult had been crushed by this man's sword, and even he himself had almost died.

Forcing his gaze away, he looked at the last man.

The man with dull blonde hair sitting on the bed with his eyes closed. He'd said that he was going to rest his eyes, but from Dok Go-yun's perspective, it looked as though he was meditating. Most importantly, he couldn't find even a single opening.

In any case.

In Dok Go-yun's eyes, out of the three, Lukas seemed to be the most rational and communicable. However, even he didn't seem to have a particularly social personality.

'Say something, anything...'

It felt like an entire day had passed, but in reality, it had only been about 30 minutes.

Didn't these guys feel awkward? Was he the one who was being weird?

...At this rate, Dok Go-yun felt that he might pass out. This wasn't a joke, it was serious. The intangible pressure that he was feeling from these guys was intense.

It had only been 30 minutes.

In other words, he had to experience this 96 more times before he would be free, but Dok Go-yun didn't think that his mental strength was that strong.

'Should I meditate too?'

He had this thought for a moment, but he didn't think he'd be able to concentrate at all because of Yang In-hyun's presence. So Dok Go-yun got up from his seat and began to rummage through some drawers for something.

Something to break this situation...

"Huh? Are you going to eat?"

The rattling sound drew Pale's interest. She was such a glutton that she filled her mouth so much her cheeks seemed to be on the verge of exploding.

Of course, hiding his true feelings, Dok Go-yun smiled and said.

"No. I was just looking for something to pass the time..."

"Mm. Do you want some of this? There's a lot to eat here."

"..."

Dok Go-yun looked at Pale with a strange expression.

She was a very strange woman. She seemed to have a huge appetite, but she also didn't seem to feel any reluctance towards sharing her food with others.

"No. I'm fine, thank you."

But Dok Go-yun shook his head. Then, after rummaging through the drawers for a while longer, he found something.

It was a pack of trump cards.

For a moment, Dok Go-yun imagined the four of them sitting down together and playing cards. Even the scene of the former Heavenly Demon tap dancing with a rose in his mouth would probably be more realistic than that.

"Oho."

At that time, Pale, who had come to his side without him realising it, showed some interest in trump.

"What is that?"

"Ah. This... it's called trump. It's a game from Earth."

"A game? How do you play it?"

"There are several ways. The representative way is..."

Dok Go-yun was very interested in Earth's culture.

In this world, before the appearance of the beings called demons and the Great Fusion, they had enjoyed a tremendous cultural level, and, accordingly, there were many diverse things for him to enjoy and draw his attention. Of course, as he was bound to the Heavenly Demon, he couldn't enjoy them openly, but Dok Go-yun had always secretly expressed his interest in things like that. Of course, he had already mastered all of the games that could be played with trump cards years ago.

He taught Pale how to play catch the thief*. And as he taught her, she was able to get the hang of it before he knew it. (*: Aka Joker Game, Old Maid, Pull the Joker, etc)

It was a game where managing your facial expression was very important, and it was incredibly difficult to read Pale's seemingly naive expression.

"This is fun. But it's a bit boring with just the two of us."

"Originally, the recommended number of players was 3-4."

As soon as he carelessly spat out that remark, Pale jumped up from her seat at almost the exact moment he said it.

"Hey! Do you want to play with us?"

At that, Lukas, who had been immersed in his meditation, slowly opened his eyes, and Yang In-hyun, who was looking at the scenery, turned around.

"What is that?"

"I think it was called Trump? It's pretty interesting."

"How do you play it?"

Yang In-hyun expressed curiosity. He couldn't tell if he really was or not. In the first place, it seemed that he was basically obedient to Pale.

Then the other one...

Dok Go-yun looked at Lukas. Although this man was basically expressionless, for some reason, his expression seemed a bit sour.

"Uncle, play with us."

His face didn't fit being called uncle, but Pale seemed to always call Lukas that. Despite the cheerful voice calling for him, Lukas shook his head without moving.

"I don't want to do stuff like that."

"Like what?"

"Like gambling."

"Huh? What part of this is gambling? This is just for fun."

"...still."

Lukas tried to close his eyes again, but Pale didn't let him. Grabbing him by the forearm, she forcibly dragged him over.

And so, a one of a kind game of catch the thief began.

2.

"Can we stop for a moment?"

At Yang In-hyun's voice, the hand of Dok Go-yun, which was about to pull a card, stopped.

"No, not you. Can we stop this lump of flying metal?"

"Ah, yes. Of course."

With an embarrassed expression, Dok Go-yun got to his feet and asked.

"But may I ask the reason...?"

"There are people screaming on the ground."

"Huh?"

"We should save them."

"Uhh..."

He said the ground.

Dok Go-yun's eyes blurred slightly as he looked down. Naturally, he could only see the floor of the aircraft. No, even if the floor had been made of glass, the Omega was currently flying thousands of metres in the sky. It would be impossible for him to see what was happening on the ground.

However, it was impossible for Yang In-hyun to say such a thing casually.

"It wouldn't be very hard to land, but we would need to check if there were any dangers in the area first..."

"It would be too late then."

"I'll go ahead."

Lukas stood up from his seat. His expression carried a hint of annoyance and displeasure. Dok Go-yun hoped that it wasn't because he'd lost 18 consecutive games of catch the thief.

"How fortunate. I wanted to get some fresh air."

"Me too! I'll go with you!"

Pale raised her hand and said.

Nodding, Lukas looked over to Yang In-hyun.

"Can you stay on standby here? I think it would be a mess if the Omega were to be broken while Pale and I are gone."

"Sure."

Yang In-hyun nodded his head candidly. The expression of Dok Go-yun, who was going to be left alone with the man he was most uncomfortable around, was slightly rotten.

'Then...'

Lukas looked down. When he used Clairvoyance, he was able to see the scene that had been noticed by Yang In-hyun.

'...'

But the scene he witnessed was different from what Lukas was expecting.

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Season 2 Chapter 483

There are people screaming on the ground.

That was what Yang In-hyun had said, but Lukas didn't hear any screams. Nevertheless, he noticed that there was a disturbing atmosphere in some areas on the ground.

At first, he was expecting to see people being attacked by demons, monsters, or some other kind of monstrous being.

But it was different.

The scene that Lukas saw was not one of an attack or slaughter.

It was a mine. A huge mine that was rarely seen.

The current time was 4:37. It was much too early for the sun to have set, but the entrance of the mine was exceptionally dark and shady. The reason for this was that the entire mining area was covered by a black fog. As if it was alive, the black fog surrounding the area seemed to be actively blocking the sunlight.

This proved that the dark atmosphere that Lukas had sensed was not a trick of the eye or a feeling.

The role of the black fog wasn't simply to block out the sunlight. It also served to hide the signs of the mine to an extreme level. The size of the entire mining area was comparable to that of a small city, but it would have been impossible even for people with extremely keen senses to notice the signs of life within the black fog.

Yang In-hyun was probably the only one who could have sensed this incongruity from thousands of metres in the air.

"It's a formidable being."

Yang In-hyun leaned on the wall of the aircraft as he said this.

"I know."

Others might not realise, but the being that had spread the black fog was not easy to see. This was made clearer by the fact that even Lukas and Yang In-hyun had not yet figured out their identity.

"This probably has something to do with that [VIP] group."

"..."

He thought that this was somewhat of a guess. After all, there were definitely many strong beings in this universe aside from those in VIP.

As Yang In-hyun's words flowed into one ear and out the other, Lukas carried out spatial movement with Pale.

And in an instant, they arrived at the entrance of the mine. There were no guards at the entrance. He knew this from the beginning, and that was why he boldly used spatial movement.

Sss...

He could feel the black fog wriggling and trying to wrap around his body. Lukas stood still and didn't refuse the unpleasant contact.

"Ugh."

On the other hand, Pale spat to the side with an expression of disgust.

"Something in this place is not right."

Although he agreed.

“Hold it in...”

After saying that, the first thing he did was analyse the fog that was touching him.

Naturally, it wasn't a natural phenomenon. It wasn't magic. If he had to classify it, he would say that it was some kind of evil technique, but it was at such a high level, it could be called an authority*. (*: The same level as demigod abilities.)

However.

“...”

It was at this moment that Lukas' eyes turned black for an instant. The wriggling movement of the black fog around his body stopped for a moment.

Then, it flowed straight past Lukas and Pale and continued as it was. After that, the black fog no longer tried to wrap around their bodies.

Looking down at her body, Pale said.

“What did you do?”

“After analysing it, I tricked it into no longer being able to perceive us.”

“Versatile!”

“...please lower your voice from now on.”

“Yees.”

“...”

Lukas' face was a bit tense.

This was because when he analysed the black fog, he had sensed a fragment of a familiar power within it.

[Kukuku...]

Perhaps the Lightning God also sensed it because he began to let out his uniquely unpleasant laugh.

...The one who was controlling this mine might end up being more troublesome than he initially expected.

* * *

The inside of the mine was dark. It wasn't that there was no light, but it was so faint that it was difficult to see the path.

Moreover, the air was very murky. Of course, considering that it was a mine, the air couldn't be that clean, but this was a bit different.

Lukas felt that even a healthy person would not be able to survive a year in this place.

The fact that his body clearly existed at that moment made him uncomfortable. Lukas roughly blocked his nostrils with his robes.

Then, he decided to head a bit deeper.

Clang... clang...

As the earthy smell intensified, a metallic sound resounded in the distance.

'The sounds of pickaxes?'

Lukas' steps gradually slowed. Eventually, the passage came to an end and unfolded into the form of a large open workspace.

"..."

It was at that moment that Lukas realised what the 'screams' Yang In-hyun had heard were.

With a glance, he could see hundreds of people doing their best to mine minerals. But it was clear that they weren't working of their free will.

Their appearances were worse than beasts.

They wore pieces of cloth that were hardly better than rags and couldn't be called clothes on their too skinny bodies. Their hair and faces were so soiled by dirt that he could tell how bad they smelt from a distance.

They didn't seem... lethargic.

Instead, their expressions were filled with desperation and anxiety. The reason for that was easy to find.

There weren't just humans in the workspace.

Standing in the centre like a statue was a 12 armed monster. It was enormous. Its head was so high that it reached the high ceiling of the workspace.

In addition, dozens of eyes were embedded into its face seemingly at random and Lukas realised that its pupils were constantly moving around and keeping a close eye on the workers.

'Forced labour.'

It seemed they had captured humans and were forcing them to work.

For what reason? And why?

First, he decided to continue analysing the situation.

People were vigorously swinging pickaxes, shovelling the ground, or pushing minecarts.

'What are they mining?'

From Lukas' perspective, there didn't seem to be any useful minerals in this mine. In other words, their work was completely useless.

Or was there something hidden that couldn't be determined through Lukas's analysis?

Suddenly.

Smack!

The monster clapped its hands forcefully. The wind pressure from the clap spread out in all directions, causing dust to scatter.

It was just a clap, but it was quite fearsome.

The degree of sheer strength

[I t's fo od dis tribu tion ti me.]

The monster spoke bluntly in a broken voice.

At that, the emotion of 'living' appeared on the faces of the people who were working frantically.

"Kilkilki."

"Kkikki..."

Small fat monsters waddled in from another passage. Each of them clutched a dirty leather pouch in their fat fingers.

The people staggered to the front of the little monsters. Then, they cupped their hands together like bowls and pushed them forward.

"Kilkilki."

With ghastly laughs, the monsters opened their leather pouches. Then, they grabbed something from within them and gave it to the people.

It was boiled beans.

'It's feeding time.'

If that was the case, then was what they were doing distributing food?

It was absurdly lacking. It was so little that even a newborn baby wouldn't feel full after eating it.

Each person was only given at most a clump of worthless beans.

"A, a bit more..."

At that moment, a little boy uttered in a pitiful voice. One of the fat monsters looked at the boy with pale eyes before kicking him in the stomach.

"Kuek."

Retching, the boy collapsed to the ground. The monster didn't stop there and instead proceeded to mercilessly stomp on the boy with its wide feet.

The boy's fragile body was soon covered in wounds. In the meantime, the beans that the boy had been given, scattered on the ground.

“N-, no.”

Even while barely holding on to consciousness because of the pain, the boy scrambled to pick them up. Then, he shoved the beans into his mouth, not caring about the sand and stones that accompanied them.

“...”

Lukas narrowed his eyes.

He wondered if he should put his analysis aside for later and kill them all first.

That impulsive but undoubtedly human thought resounded strongly in his mind.

‘...a bit more.’

He forced himself to bear it and continued observing the situation.

The food distribution time was very short. Probably less than 10 minutes. Since they were only given a clump of beans, it was inevitable that the time given for them to eat was also short. They weren’t even given time to take a break for a while.

Without even bothering to converse with each other, people lay scattered all over as they tried to get some rest.

Smack!

[I t’s wo rk ti me.]

The monster’s clap caused them to stagger to their feet once more.

Despair bloomed on their faces once more, but their bodies looked for their tools as though they were used to it.

It was then.

“Urk, huk...”

A boy in the corner couldn’t stand up. It was the boy who’d been beaten almost to death by one of the fat monsters.

He tried to stand several times, only to fall back to the ground every time.

Lukas realised that the boy had an injury that wouldn’t allow him to get up through grit or spite alone. A fracture.

“Move, move...!”

He shouted while crying his eyes out, but even as his thighs shook heavily, he couldn’t even pretend to stand.

This scene was captured by the giant monster.

[Ca nnot mo ve.]

The monster's broken voice sounded once more.

"Hi-, hiik! N-, no! That's not true! I can still move!"

The boy struggled even harder. It was quite pitiful to see only his upper body struggling.

"Wa-, wait. Someone, please, just help me stand up for a while. Please...!"

He hurriedly looked around while shouting, but the people around him just pretended they couldn't hear with terrified faces.

[Ca nnot mo ve.]

At the same time, one of the monster's arms began to stretch towards the boy. Then, it picked the boy up like he was catching a bug.

"Urk."

In the monster's huge palms, the boy was held like a small mouse.

"A-, ah. Mom..."

[Th en w ill ea t.]

The monster's chest cracked open, and within it, a purple tongue writhed. All of the people turned their heads away at the bizarre and terrifying sight.

When this happened, Lukas could no longer keep watching.

He would use magic to kill the monster. Stealthily, but not destructively. At that moment, in a place like this...

...The time it took Lukas to go through that series of thoughts was less than an instant.

Even if he were to cast a spell after considering it, he wouldn't have had any issue saving the boy.

That was why what happened next took even him by surprise.

Without a sound.

The monster that was about to devour the boy, split in two.

"...!"

It was cut.

He hadn't even noticed.

Even in his surprise, Lukas was able to wrap the boy, who had fallen free, in wind so that he could land gently.

Thud!

At the same time, the two halves of the monster collapsed, creating a large dust storm. The lights hanging from the ceiling swayed heavily, causing the lighting in the entire workspace to flicker. As soil and small pieces of stone fell, the people crouched and covered their heads.

Lukas ensured that the young boy landed gently.

Then, he looked towards the person who had shown themselves without even bothering to hide and killed the monster.

“...”

Pale was standing there blankly.

The scene of her standing there as small bits of stone fell on her made it seem as if she was just standing in the rain.

“Ah, uhh...?”

“Wh-, what just happened?”

“Bullseye is dead...?”

The people who had been crouching straightened their backs once more.

Lukas had no choice but to also step out of the passage.

“Pale.”

“...”

He didn't receive an answer.

Now that he thought about it, she'd been very quiet for a while. How long had it been? Since Pale's attitude became strange.

“Pale.”

It was only after he called her name again did Pale turn her head. Her face was surprisingly expressionless. It didn't suit her.

When she smiled, she was Pale, when she showed little emotion, she was the Blue Knight.

But it felt like he'd found another side other than those two.

Pale looked at Lukas for a moment before her gaze turned away. Although her gaze was on the boy, she wasn't looking at the boy. Pale's pupils were focused on the boy, but there was a completely different scene in her mind.

“...hungry.”

The light in Pale's eyes slowly began to dim.

She thought.

This place was really unpleasant.

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Season 2 Chapter 484

Kiiing

The Omega prepared to land. This fruit of cutting edge technology made an almost soundless landing. There were no changes to the surroundings apart from the slight shifting of the sparse weeds sprouting in the area.

Tsss, as long as you ignored the distinct sound of leaking steam.

“Huu...”

After getting off of the Omega, Dok Go-yun let out a soft sigh.

This was because it felt like the pressure he had been feeling within the enclosed space of the aircraft was reduced slightly. He never would have dreamt that he would be left alone with Yang In-hyun.

“There is no need to be on edge.”

It was a gentle voice, but it needlessly sent chills down Dok Go-yun’s spine.

“Since I have no intention of killing you.”

No. It wasn’t needless.

First of all, he knew that Yang In-hyun was someone that killed people while maintaining that same calm attitude. And second of all, even at that very moment when they were facing each other, he could not grasp his presence.

It was the same on board the aircraft.

Yang In-hyun was clearly in front of him, and there weren’t any signs of him trying to hide himself, but Dok Go-yun still felt that his presence was faint like a ghost.

It was as if the sensory organs in his body were refusing to sense him.

“Besides, even if you do that, you’ll still lose.”

“Huh...?”

“It doesn’t matter if you’re on edge or not. In any case, you will die with a single sword strike, so there’s no need for you to waste your energy like that.”

“...”

Those words instantly made Dok Go-yun’s pride as a martial artist rage.

The words, ‘Then try to swing’, rose up his throat.

However, he held it in. This was because Dok Go-yun had something that was more important than his pride. The desire to survive. He didn’t want to lose his life because his pride took a brief hit. He readily admitted it.

To the man in front of him, he was no different from a bug.

“...”

Yang In-hyun was looking at him with a calm gaze. The moment their eyes met, his scalp became numb once again.

Was this man deliberately provoking him all this while...?

“That, wouldn’t it be too conspicuous if you left it like that?”

He was talking about the Omega.

While it certainly was a poorly lit place, the pure white aircraft stood out so much that it was noticeable even from hundreds of metres away.

Dok Go-yun, who finally came to his senses, agreed.

“Ah, Of course. It’s possible for it to standby in stealth mode, so there should be an external control device somewhere here...”

While Dok Go-yun fiddled with the Omega, Yang In-hyun slowly looked around.

Even though there wasn’t a cloud in the sky, this was a land where the sunlight could barely be felt. With a dark and damp atmosphere and unpleasant wind.

“Something is coming.”

“...agreed.”

Dok Go-yun, who had just managed to successfully hide the fuselage, narrowed his eyes as he agreed. Then, with his narrowed eyes, he looked into the distance.

Thud, thud. The sound of the ground shaking steadily grew louder. As they looked, a monster with two legs and a deformed neck came into view. It didn’t seem to be a monster capable of reason.

He didn’t think it had seen the Omega land.

“Go save them.”

“Huh? Ah.”

It was only then that Dok Go-yun realised the monster was chasing people.

After all, since most of his attention was focused on Yang In-hyun, it took him a while to notice.

“Understood.”

Dok Go-yun nodded, then, with a single step, reached the monster. Something like a black air current followed him like a shadow.

“Gerk?”

The monster finally noticed the presence of Dok Go-yun and let out a strange sound. With an expressionless face, Dok Go-yun stretched out his fist. Boom, the monster's face exploded like a firework and its long neck swayed like a highrise building on the brink of collapse.

Thud!

The body, which had now become a blood spewing corpse, collapsed.

"Ah, ahhh..."

Only then did the fleeing people sink to the ground. It seemed that as soon as they confirmed the monster's death, their tension was lifted.

Their bodies had probably long since exceeded their limits and had been moving purely off of willpower and the desire to survive.

For Dok Go-yun, their desperate expressions were things he'd never seen before.

"Th-, thank you for saving us."

"Thank you, thank you..."

"..."

With tears in their eyes, the people expressed their gratitude.

He felt strange. His facial expression was probably showing that as well. Now that he thought about it when was the last time he'd heard someone say thank you?

Dok Go-yun turned his head to look at Yang In-hyun. He was still looking over at him with his hands behind his back.

No way, was this what Yang In-hyun intended...

'No.'

That would be overthinking.

Dok Go-yun turned to look at the people once more. Upon closer inspection, they looked like beggars. They had no shoes, the clothes they were wearing were no more than rags, and they were so thin that their ribs were visible.

Above all, the gloomy aura that he could feel on their faces was so rotten that it amazed even Dok Go-yun, who had experienced many things because of his occupation(?).

They didn't become like this while being chased by the monster.

They must have been looking that shabby from the start.

"What is this monster?"

Looking at the monster's corpse which was still twitching intermittently, Dok Go-yun asked.

At that, the man at the very front of the group responded.

“D-, demon.”

“Demon?”

The man gulped and said.

“Th-, the Demon of the Mine...”

* * *

Lukas was witnessing a spectacle of mass panic.

“For, for something like this...”

“Bullseye is really dead.”

“No, no!”

It was at that moment when the people fully realised Bullseye’s death.

Subsequently, their eyes turned to Pale.

“I-, it was you wasn’t it? You killed Bullseye!”

“What the hell have you done?”

“You don’t know anything! Something like this...”

It seemed the one who could be considered their benefactor was not in the position to receive any gratitude.

Pale stepped back with a slightly surprised face.

“Uh, um. What are you talking about?”

“We’re asking why you killed Bullseye...!”

“This is the end. We’re all gonna die.”

“Th-, the Demon of the Mine will come. To kill us all. Huhhh.”

Surprisingly, kindness was rarely rewarded honestly. Also, Lukas was well aware that there were humans who spat on the kindness of others.

But Pale was different. She didn’t seem able to easily accept what was happening.

Narrowing his eyes, Lukas appeared as if he was covering Pale.

“What is the Demon of the Mine?”

Upon seeing Lukas’ sudden arrival, the people flinched.

“Wh-, who are you again?”

“I’m this one’s companion. If you have any complaints, you can tell them to me.”

At first glance, it might seem that he was acting that way to protect Pale, but, in truth, it was for the sake of these people. If they were to make a mistake and cause Pale to go out of control and eat them all, everything would become a mess.

Suddenly, he felt a strange sensation. Just as he realised that Pale, who was behind him, had grabbed his sleeve, the people spoke.

“We... we were content with this life.”

“We don’t want to go down any further. This place is the closest to the light.”

“Hnnng.”

Some of them even began to burst into tears.

Lukas frowned.

If it was like this, the conversation wouldn’t be able to progress. If he were to use a more coercive method, then he would be able to extract an endless amount of information from them, but it would create an incredibly inhumane scene.

While looking around for someone who was still in their right mind, he spotted the boy who had been saved by Pale.

Compared to the others, there was still some vitality in his eyes. He didn’t seem to be too aware of the rules of this place, which was proven by the fact that he had whined for more when food had been served.

In other words.

The boy hadn’t been in this place for long.

Ttak-

Lukas snapped his fingers. At the same time, the people who had been complaining loudly, simultaneously fell asleep and collapsed.

It wasn’t a grandiose spell. It simply induced them to sleep naturally by making their consciousness relax.

Their exhausted bodies made it surprisingly easy.

“Uh...?”

The boy, who was the only one left awake, looked around with a frightened expression.

Lukas walked over to him.

“Hey, boy.”

“Ye-, yes?”

“Your name?”

"I, Ivan..."

"..."

It was another name he missed.

"Right, Ivan. I'm Lukas. How is your leg?"

"I, I think it's sprained."

"Let me take a look."

Lukas looked at Ivan's ankle. It was swollen as if air had been pumped into it. This was only natural when he forced himself to remain standing when the bone was broken. Lukas couldn't heal that.

He used ice to reduce the swelling, then he broke a nearby pickaxe and used the wood fragments to make a splint.

It shouldn't be too much to stand with that.

Ivan hurriedly lowered his head as he witnessed the magical scene that suddenly unfolded.

"Th-. thank you."

"If it's fine with you, I'd like to talk."

"Talk...?"

"About where this place is. Why people are mining minerals here. And what those monsters are."

"Ahh..."

Still with a dazed expression on his face, Ivan nodded and spoke.

"Th-, that. I'm not sure about the details either. Originally, I was living in Omsk(Омск), but when I woke up like usual, I found myself in this mine. The clothes I was wearing were taken away... Th-, the adults around me said that if I didn't work, I would either die or be sent underground."

"Underground?"

"Yes. The lower you go, the more terrible the work is, and Uncle Boba, who had miraculously come up from a lower floor, said that he would rather die than go down again.'

"..."

Below this place.

Lukas knew that the mine was much larger than it looked. But perhaps the underground area was much larger than he expected.

'Then what should I do?'

Should he kill the one called 'the Demon of the Mine', or...

"Aren't you hungry?"

Pale suddenly spoke to Ivan.

“H-, huh?”

“You’re hungry. To the point of falling unconscious.”

“Ah, yes.”

“It’s fine now. There is a lot to eat.”

With a smile, Pale put her hand on the corpse of Bullseye, the monster beside her. Then, with a sharp cracking sound, one of Bullseye’s legs was torn off.

“Hi-, hiik...”

Ivan shuddered as he was splattered with blood. Pale probably didn’t see it as she naturally held out the monster meat that was dripping blood.

“Here.”

“Wh-, what...?”

“Eat it.”

“...”

Seemingly taking Ivan’s speechlessness in a different way, Pale took a big bite of Bullseye’s leg Munch, swallow, smile.

“See. There’s nothing wrong with it. You can eat it. It’s still warm, so it’s even more delicious.”

“...”

It was an act without the slightest hint of malice. Lukas could see that. But she seemed to have not thought about how it would look to a boy with normal thoughts.

“M-, monster...”

“Huh?”

Ivan’s face became one of utter terror.

“Monster...!”

Then, he turned and ran away without looking back. He hobbled as he ran because of his injured leg, and he even tripped over a stone and fell to the ground. Nevertheless, his fear far surpassed the pain, so he shot to his feet like a roly poly toy.

“...”

Pale froze where she stood. She didn’t try to speak in a bubbly voice like usual, and instead just stayed still. Her expression wasn’t visible. But, unlike usual, her shoulders were slightly droopy.

Lukas didn’t look at Pale’s face. He didn’t even say anything.

Instead, he carried out a fairly impulsive act.

He snatched a chunk of meat out of Pale's hand.

"Huh?"

He looked down at the red meat for a moment.

He felt a bit of resistance.

Lukas had eaten a lot of meat that was so rotten it wouldn't be strange for them to have been infested with maggots. But he wasn't sure if that experience would be helpful.

He opened his mouth wide.

Crunch.

He bit and chewed. The fishy scent of blood overpowered his nostrils and made him feel a bit dizzy. It was strange since this was his first time eating a freshly killed corpse.

Indeed, as Pale said, the flesh was still warm. He felt blood dripping down his chin, but he didn't care and continued to eat it all.

Then, wiping his lips, he said.

"It's a bit tough."

Pale looked at Lukas with a blank gaze for a moment before bursting into laughter.

"Legs are usually like that!"

Then she started the chew on the meat once more. It was a sight that no one should have to see. The sight of a young man and woman chewing on monster meat.

"Uncle."

"What is it?"

"Would you like to eat the skull too?"

"No."

"Ay. It's a delicacy."

"It's fine."

"Kikiki."

Pale giggled with a pleasant expression.

After seeing the numerous faces of Pale until now, Lukas felt that he couldn't tell which one was really her.

However, this time.

“—Lukas.”

He got goosebumps.

Lukas looked at Pale with a startled expression.

“...uh.”

He inadvertently let out a timid sound that wasn't like him. With a face as if she had no cares, Pale had the widest smile he'd ever seen.

“Thanks.”

It wasn't strange for Ivan to run away. After all, if you didn't feel fear as a woman with a bloody face smiled at you, then you would be a strange person.

Therefore.

Lukas was probably the strangest of them all

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Season 2 Chapter 485

They went down a bit more.

The first thing he felt was the fact that the sparse lights gradually disappeared. As a result, the surroundings gradually grew darker. The sun was probably still high in the sky, but the inside of the mine was completely surrounded by black fog which completely blocked any kind of external light.

Because of this, Lukas couldn't help but compare this place to the depths of the ocean.

This was because the deeper they went, the more the light faded.

...Clang-... clang-...

The helpless image of living beings mining for minerals also reminded him of fish swimming in the black sea.

Lukas couldn't help but wonder if he could still refer to them as humans.

‘Mutated beings.’

They looked like a mixture between humans and monsters.

Their limbs were swollen as if there were tumours attached to them, and even if they didn't have them, the sounds they made while moving with an incomprehensible, bizarre gait were terrifying, as if they had huge mental abnormalities.

The deeper they went, the more their appearance seemed to lean towards monsters rather than humans. And at some point, he could no longer see any beings among the workers who had figures resembling humans.

This also made his initial thought, about this place feeling like the depths of the sea, even stronger.

They were like deep sea fish, who had more and more bizarre appearances the deeper you went.

“They don’t look tasty.”

Pale whispered in a soft voice.

The fact that it could elicit such a sentiment from someone like her, who could even eat rebar without any difficulty, was clear proof of how repulsive the mutated humans were.

Instead of responding or looking at the mutated humans any further, Lukas turned instead to the monster standing in the middle who seemed to be playing the role of supervisor.

This one didn’t have an appearance as bizarre as ‘Bullseye’ that he’d seen above.

On the contrary, it had an appearance that was close to that of a human.

It had two arms, two legs, one face, and a height of less than two metres.

Looking at it again, it was truly a bizarre sight.

Humans had the forms of monsters, and monsters had the forms of humans.

But the way the workspace was run didn’t change at all from the workspace above, as both sides still kept the same roles.

Lukas looked at the small monster once more.

It was strong.

Almost to the same extent as Dok Go-yun.

In other words, it meant that this monster, who was only playing the role of supervisor, was a formidable being that had reached the peak of what a human could accomplish.

‘...without a doubt.’

At the very least, there were a few monsters like this who played the role of supervisor in this workspace. And it was clear that most humans couldn’t even dream of escaping.

“Wait here for a minute.”

“Yes.”

“...”

Lukas couldn’t help but stare at Pale for a moment when she answered in that strangely obedient manner. But she just smiled at him with a nonchalant expression. She seemed to be asking ‘What is it?’ with her expression. After thinking that to himself, Lukas shook his head.

Maybe it was just him.

And in the next moment, Lukas’ body suddenly appeared in front of the monster.

“Uht?”

The monster let out a dumb sound as it flinched, but it was able to grasp the situation in the blink of an eye. In an instant, its bright yellow eyes narrowed. It judged Lukas as an enemy, a target to be killed.

Crack, both of its hands took on vicious shapes like hooks. At the tips of its fingers, something similar to poison seemed to form.

But from Lukas' perspective, it was slow.

It was slow enough to make him yawn. By that point, Lukas could have already taken the monster's life 20 times without even using the power of void.

Clang!

The monster's body flew backward as if it had been struck by something and slammed into the wall. Soon after, the wall wriggled as if it was alive, and firmly restrained its entire body.

“Kiuk...!”

Subsequently, the monster spat out a mouthful of blood. Seemingly realising that its movements were being restrained, it began to struggle and twist its entire body, but its resistance was futile. Looking around, Lukas walked over to its body.

The mutated humans seemed to have no interest in the series of commotions. Like machines, they devoted themselves to mining.

“Your name?”

“Wh-, who the hell are you?”

Lukas didn't like answering questions like that. He drew a line with his finger. He did it slowly so that the monster would see it clearly.

Shuk. With a chilling sound, the monster's right arm fell to the ground.

“Uhh...”

The monster let out a blank sound for a moment before letting out a heartrending scream. Dark blue blood flowed like candle wax from the cross section of the cut.

It seemed quite painful, but it wasn't enough.

Lukas put his hand on the monster's head.

“Kuh, ahhh... what are you going to do?”

The monster looked up at Lukas with a difficult to understand expression. Its expression seemed to be a mixture of anger, hatred, and murderous intent.

“From now on, I'm going to pour mana directly into your head. It will be like an electric current. Of course, the pain you'll feel will be incomparable to electric torture. But don't worry. I can roughly guess the level of your mental strength.”

“What do you mean...”

“I mean. I can control it.”

The monster wasn't able to say any more than that. This was because those words were followed by a wave of pain, unlike anything it had ever experienced.

Its eyeballs popped out and a scream so desperate it sounded like its uvula would tear, resounded.

Lukas stared at it blankly for a moment before pausing the mana injection.

“How was it? Was that the longest 5 seconds of your life?”

“Huff! Huff...! You motherfucker...! Even if you do this...”

The poison in the monster's eyes hadn't faded in the slightest.

It would be difficult to get what he wanted if that continued to be the case.

Lukas put his hand on the monster's head again, then he raised the index finger of his other hand.

“1 second. I'll continue to increase the duration by just 1 second, no more, no less. I don't have much time to waste, but I'm not in a hurry. Naturally, I have no intention of rushing you. So when you feel like answering my questions, just tell me. I'll be waiting.”

There was no need to wait for an answer.

Once more, Lukas violently pumped mana into its head.

And once again, screams resounded in every direction.

* * *

The monster's name turned out to be 'Twohands'.

It was the name that it had screamingly uttered as soon as the duration of the torture reached exactly 11 seconds.

Things went smoothly after that.

“What was the reason for creating this circus? It doesn't seem to be for mining minerals.”

“U-, uhh, e-, emotion...”

Twohands mind was almost broken. He slurred out indistinct words with dazed eyes and a drooling expression.

“Emotion?”

“Ne-, need negative emotions...”

“Where is it needed?”

“Don't know...”

“...”

Negative emotion.

Certainly, if that was the goal, then he could fully understand why they were being made to use pickaxes so meaninglessly, but it was absurd.

“So collecting them is the purpose of the ‘Demon of the Mine’?”

“Yeess...”

It was not an insignificant identity.

Lukas curiosity disappeared, and it was instead replaced with rage.

In that case.

Did that mean that the reason they were kidnapping humans, setting up mines, and making them carry out meaningless labour was simply to collect negative feelings?

‘So trivial.’

And more than that, it was disgusting and cruel.

The worst thing that one could do in the world was force another person to feel unwanted emotions.

And this facility was specifically built for that purpose. It was, essentially, the largest torture chamber in the world.

Twohands’ head exploded.

Its brain matter splattered all over the place. The colour of its blood was dark blue, but the colour of its brain matter was no different from that of a human.

Even though the monster who had been playing the role of supervisor died, the humans in that place didn’t act like they’d just been liberated. Instead, they continued to mine minerals with erratic movements.

After reaching this point, it was already over.

Their mental structures had already deteriorated to the point that they were no different from insects.

“What will we do now?”

“If I kill the Demon of the Mine, they won’t be victims anymore. But they won’t be able to regain their original bodies.”

Lukas sighed impatiently.

“That’s all we can do.”

Even if it was Lukas, he couldn’t return living beings that had already changed to such an extent to their original forms. The Humans whose bodies had mutated had already become completely different creatures.

...The Demon of the Mine.

Now that he knew its goal, there was no need to waste any more time.

Lukas rested his hands on the ground and closed his eyes for a moment. In his mind, the figure of the entire mine unfolded like a blueprint.

Their current location was about halfway through the mine. They'd been going down for a while, but they were still in the middle. That was when he realised that the mine was very unstable.

The area had not been expanded gradually, and the underground facilities hadn't been constructed carefully. Instead, it was as if they had simply dug large holes.

To put it simply, the mine wasn't strong enough to withstand either internal or external shocks. It wouldn't be strange if this heap of earth were to collapse at any moment due to a sudden jolt*. (*: In this sense, shock and jolt are the same word)

The monsters in this place, and the 'Demon of the Mine', couldn't be unaware of this fact either.

They probably wouldn't die even if the mine was to collapse. It was highly likely that they had already secured a means to escape. In other words, they didn't really have anything they could do about the life and death of the humans working in this place.

'...I figured it out.'

Interpreting the coordinate values.

Long distance teleportation was still impossible, but it was possible for him to travel to the lowest floor of the mine. This was because he'd managed to make some sense of this ridiculously twisted universe.

Without delay, the figures of Pale and Lukas disappeared.

* * *

The deepest underground space.

The abode of the Demon of the Mine was not dark. Instead, it was brighter than any other place in the mine that he'd seen.

The surroundings were only illuminated by soft light, but despite the illuminated surroundings having a clear momentum, there were no signs of danger

There were no signs of life in this place, and the sounds of pickaxes that seemed to follow them everywhere couldn't be heard. In fact, it was strangely quiet.

Of course, that wasn't the reason for Lukas' firm expression.

"...this place."

It didn't look like a place where a demon stayed.

The surroundings were filled with all manners of reagents, research tools, and parts of unknown living organisms like skin tissues or cell fragments. Among them, something large enough to be called a

complete corpse was stored in a glass tube with what appeared to be culture fluid*. (*:the fluid used as a medium for growing microorganisms.)

Lukas realised that the appearance of the living being in the glass tube was similar to that of the mutated humans or the humans* who performed the roles of supervisors. (*: Assuming this should be monsters, or even 'human-like monsters')

The wall on the other side was filled with countless books. After approaching it, he picked out a book and opened it.

[...therefore, it can be derived that the basis of magicology stems from the mind. There are many types who can only accept mana into their bodies but release it over time.

However, we are the only ones capable of reinterpreting it and controlling it as we—]

“...”

He closed the book without finishing.

Then he had a thought.

This place seemed more like a Wizard's workshop than a demon's lair.

“—never thought you'd show up so easily.”

A calm voice resounded in his ear. He wasn't surprised by this fact. He'd noticed that someone was secretly observing him from the shadows from the moment they'd arrived.

But Lukas' expression couldn't help but harden when he visually confirmed the 'Demon of the Mine's face.

It was a familiar face.

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

Season 2 Chapter 486

Survivors.

Although it might be a bit of a stretch to call them that, in any case, the people who had been chased by the long necked monster began to earnestly speak about where they had been imprisoned.

“Th-, the mine is a place that shouldn't exist.”

“It can't be compared to a prison or concentration camp. W-, we were in hell.”

“Uhuk, huk...”

One of the women sobbed through the entire conversation. Even if they didn't, instead of being relieved that they had escaped, most of the others still seemed unable to get over the fear they had experienced in the mine.

But Dok Go-yun's expression as he listened to these people's stories was indifferent. Of course, this wasn't because he was taking their words lightly or thought they were lying.

It was simply because he couldn't get rid of the thought that it was boring.

These people probably didn't doubt that what they had experienced was the most terrible thing in the world, but sadly, that wasn't true.

This tragedy, which they thought was one of a kind, was just one of the events that happened all of the time in this messed up world.

Having no power in this world was, in itself, a sin. It was a cruel thing to say, but it was the reality.

And those who had been captured and placed into the mine were the lowest of the lowest class who had no means to protect themselves.

...He felt nauseous.

These people had no plans, no vision.

Dok Go-yun couldn't understand that. His every move had been under the control of the Heavenly Demon. There wasn't any part of his life that he could call his own. All he could do was hide the part called 'me' in the deepest corner of his thoughts, hiding even his true nature.

But these people were different.

"Ahhh..."

"Why, why did this happen?"

"A few days ago, something like this... uhukhuk."

Before they had been kidnapped,

These must have seen enough to realise the world was going crazy. Stories circulated on the TV, in the newspapers, and on the streets. No matter what form it was, there was no way for them to not encounter the media.

And yet, they had no feeling of danger.

They dismissed the disasters occurring in the other parts of the world as things that had nothing to do with them.

That was the part that truly made Dok Go-yun feel disgusted.

'Why didn't you all develop the power to protect yourselves while living in a world like this?'

He forcibly stopped himself from asking such a question. Apart from having strange feelings because of their gratitude, it seemed that if he continued to ponder this fact, his mind would be filled with dark and shady thoughts that could not be calmed.

"...what are you going to do?"

So he turned towards Yang In-hyun and asked.

After all, it was Yang In-hyun who had sensed the tragedy occurring in this mine. And he was also the one who immediately decided that these people needed to be saved, so Dok Go-yun knew that this man was actually a kind hearted man.

“Will you kill that ‘Demon of the Mine?’?”

He didn’t know who the Demon of the Mine was or how powerful they were. However, Dok Go-yun could not imagine Yang In-hyun losing. In the first place, if he hadn’t had this thought, he would not have accompanied them on a dangerous journey to the [VIP’s General Review Meeting].

Yang In-hyun looked at the people with calm eyes before turning his head in another direction.

It was a completely different direction, neither where the Omega was nor where the people came running from.

“Someone else is coming.”

“Huh?”

“You can’t be so careless this time.”

“...!”

Dok Go-yun suddenly felt a surge of energy covering his entire body in an instant.

Before he even had time to continue his thoughts, he had already prepared himself to use his signature Dark Cloud Fog.

Then he stretched out his hand.

Boom boom boom!

The ground shook and the sound of multiple explosions resounded.

Surprisingly, Dok Go-yun felt a throbbing pain in his palm.

Although it wasn’t perfect, how had it managed to do so much damage despite him using his Dark Fog Palm(黑霧掌).

“...”

At that moment, it seemed that Dok Go-yun wasn’t the only one that was surprised. For a moment, a look of surprise flashed across the expressionless face of his opponent. The enemy, who had slammed his foot down midair, used the force of the collision with Dok Go-yun to create some distance. Then, after gracefully somersaulting a few times, they finished with a smooth landing.

‘Strong.’

Just now,

Even though it was a surprise attack, Dok Go-yun was the one who had lost in that exchange. He’d felt it at the same time. That the opponent had extremely domineering internal energy.

In other words.

'The opponent is a martial artist.'

At the very least, they are a person with martial prowess on a similar level to Dok Go-yun.

Dok Go-yun turned his eyes towards the opponent. Rather than a figure that could never be thought of as a demon, it would make more sense to call them an angel.

It was a man who was so handsome that he made Dok Go-yun feel that every other man he'd seen in his life looked shabby. But rather than the young man's unconventional appearance, Dok Go-yun paid more attention to the internal energy that he could sense from him.

"...strong."

The young man reiterated his thought with an indifferent voice.

Naturally, the corner of Dok Go-yun's lip curled up into a sneer.

"Who the hell are you?"

"There's no need for trash like you to know my name."

"That's smart. Right. Clearly, even if I knew who you were, it wouldn't change the fact that you attacked me."

In any case, this man had come at him first. Dok Go-yun had no intention of letting go of this fact.

Although the cruel disposition that he'd displayed while acting as a puppet for the Heavenly Demon was not his true self, he was not a nice enough person to laugh even after being slapped on the cheek.

At the very least, he had to return as good as he got.

If the other person's goal was his life, then it was only fair for him to respond in kind.

"If your wish is to die then I'll gladly help you!"

The young man kicked off from the ground without bothering to wait for a reply, and the engagement between the two powerful martial artists began.

And.

"..."

Yang In-hyun watched on from a distance with his deep gaze.

* * *

"I didn't think you'd recognise me with a glance."

It was a calm voice.

The man didn't try to hide his joy, but he continued to narrow the distance to Lukas with quiet steps.

"I'm sorry I don't have anything to treat you with. However, I'm sure you understand, right? After all, tea in a Wizard's workshop would be as fitting as a dress in a smithy."

“You know me.”

At that, the man made a slightly disappointed expression. It seemed he thought the joke he'd just said was quite good.

It was only for a moment. Soon, he had a smile on his face once again as he said.

“I know you. You're Lukas Trowman.”

Lukas didn't react.

This was because he couldn't jump to any conclusions even if this man talked as if he really knew him. After all, there was another 'Lukas Trowman' in this world. It was possible that he was the Lukas he was thinking about.

But the words that followed denied the possibility Lukas was thinking about.

“Of course, I'm not talking about the 'Lukas Trowman', that's currently world renowned. I'm talking about the Hero of the Era of Light who fought the Demigods in the past, the only Great Mage and Great Teacher, who could never be left out when discussing the history of magicology...”

“...”

“Now. Is this enough of an explanation for the Human Lukas?”

Lukas narrowed his eyes at those words and the atmosphere gradually cooled. There was no way the man wouldn't notice this fact, but he didn't let go of his relaxed attitude.

“I'm sorry, but I don't know anything about your life after that. Perhaps the concept of Absolutes is still impossible for me to comprehend.”

“...Cairo Wilsemann.”

At that moment, Lukas finally called the man's name.

“You have been completely corrupted.”

Cairo let out a quiet laugh instead of responding. He plopped himself down onto an old sofa that sat in the corner of the workshop and crossed his fingers before speaking.

“It's not corruption. However, I will admit that there have been some changes of thought. I don't know what time frame of Cairo you knew as 'Cairo Wilsemann' but, ah, by the way, I didn't actually remember you. Those were all things I heard about Lukas Trowman from Diablo.”

Then he smiled lightly.

“By chance, are you disappointed?”

“Refrain from asking questions like that. I don't have enough patience at the moment.”

For Lukas, that was probably the most polite warning that he could give.

But Cairo didn't let go of his beaming expression.

“Then what will you do? Kill me?”

“That depends on your answer.”

“Hahaha. That’s a good one.”

He burst into laughter before gesturing with his chin.

“Ask whatever you want. I’ll answer truthfully.”

“Are you the Demon of the Mine?”

As he asked the question, he already knew the answer. So what Lukas wanted to see was Cairo’s response.

“That’s right.”

Cairo affirmed. He still had an attitude where he couldn’t seem to let go of his smile.

He had a sense of composure that was impossible to hide, and Lukas found himself unable to understand it.

A relaxed attitude was something that was only afforded to the strong. And in this situation, Cairo could never be said to be in a strong position.

Did he not even know that? Could he not tell the capabilities of the person standing in front of him?

“Cairo Wilsemann, do you want to die?”

Lukas wasn’t threatening him, he was genuinely curious so he asked.

“Do you think I can’t kill you? Do you think I don’t even have that much power?”

“Not at all. I watched you kill Twohands. Although I created it, it was a complete entity that even I wouldn’t be able to deal with. If you were to try to decide to kill me now, I probably wouldn’t even be able to respond.”

“Then why do you continue to provoke me?”

“Because you are unable to kill me.”

It was at that point that Lukas began to suspect Cairo’s mental state. However, this man’s eyes were freezingly cold.

His cold gaze contrasted sharply with his smiling mouth. But it also served as proof that this man was perfectly sane.

In that case...

“Whether you completely stop my body’s vital activities using your vaunted magic to burn me, freeze me, crush me or even some method that surpasses my understanding. If that is what you mean by death, then even hundreds of lives wouldn’t be enough.”

“Then what do you think death is?”

“Being forgotten.”

Pale, who had been standing next to him, burst out laughing. Cairo wouldn't be able to understand, but she certainly deserved to let out a laugh. After all, she was one of the oldest inhabitants of a forgotten world.

And in the same sense, Lukas would also have the right to laugh.

However, he didn't.

This was because he could see the rising emotion within Cairo's eyes.

“Even if I kill you, as long as others remember you, then you won't truly die, isn't that true?”

“That's a very philosophical perspective. It is interesting, but it's also a bit wrong.”

Lukas let out a sigh.

“...I'm not here to discuss death with you. Tell me, why are you doing this? What do you have to gain from torturing, mutating, and extractive negative emotions from your fellow humans? Isn't your goal just to spread death?”

“You're mistaken. The things happening here have nothing to do with Diablo's plan.”

Cairo smiled with a relaxed expression.

“This is just for my personal desire to learn. In other words, this entire area is just a large testing site.”

“...”

The man named Cairo Wilsemann that Lukas had known.

He was someone who had recognised the corruption in the circle faster than anyone else, because of which he lost his only brother, and without caring about the fact that he was on his own, created a new force with his bare hands.

Paragon.

In preparation for the battle with the Demigods that would happen someday, Cairo chose to bleed on his own without hesitation.

Lukas felt that for him, the word belief could be replaced with aspiration.

He was completely different from his brother Rezil Wilsemann, who was tired of Lord's pressure and chose to compromise with reality.

He was a man worthy of the last name 'Wilsemann'.

...Was a man.

“Cairo Wilsemann.”

That's why it was a shame.

“Why did you change so much?”

“...”

Cairo couldn't answer. Just as he opened his mouth to say something with a smile.

“Urp.”

His eyes suddenly flew wide open.

“Uur, urp. Uwek...”

Then, he vomited up a mouthful of dark blood. Pieces of his internal organs could be seen in it. Surprisingly, Cairo's blood was also dark blue. Just like Twohands above, Cairo's blood could no longer be called the blood of a human.

It seemed that he had also carried out his 'experiment' on his own body.

“Hu, hahaha...”

Chuckling, Cairo glared at Lukas with bright red eyes. He must have realised that he was about to die. However, he didn't seem scared at all.

In a way, it seemed like he was feeling joyful.

“Now, I can finally...”

Cairo fell forward, unable to finish his words. Like water leaking from a broken glass bottle, blood spread across the ground.

Just as Lukas was about to walk to him.

Pale grabbed Lukas by the collar. Then, after he stopped, an unexpected event occurred before he could ask why.

Cairo's body, which had collapsed, rose up like a puppet being controlled by strings.

[I've been waiting.]

The toneless voice still belonged to Cairo, but Lukas knew that his body was being controlled by a completely different being.

“Diablo.”

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

Season 2 Chapter 487

[I never thought I'd see you outside.]

Outside.

This wasn't just referring to a place. The bottom of the mine where he was facing Diablo now was not the place he was calling 'outside'.

The outside that he was referring to meant the entire multiverse, the Three Thousand Worlds.

[And I never thought you would kill Cairo without hesitation. Hahaha.]

Diablo's voice was toneless, but Lukas could read the pleasure in his laughter.

He couldn't understand that.

"Why are you laughing?"

[Mm?]

"Cairo Wilsemann was your comrade, wasn't he?"

[Did Cairo say that? Or is that just your personal opinion?]

"..."

[Huhu. I guess you won't pick at my words. Right. You asked why I laughed. That-]

Just before Diablo finished speaking, something shot past Lukas from behind. He could see blue hair fluttering like a wave.

There was a cracking sound, like old fruits being squashed. Pale who had narrowed the distance in an instant and covered Cairo's face with her small palm before crushing it with just her grip.

"Noisy, if you have something to say, come here and say it."

Pale spat in an annoyed voice before licking the blood from her hand.

Just as Lukas was considering whether to praise or scold her for her actions.

Black smoke flowed like a mist out of Cairo's body and soon took on a translucent shape.

[Let's do that, then.]

The top of the shape soon became Diablo's face.

"You didn't come here yourself."

Pale grumbled, but it seemed that she had no intention of getting rid of the fog as she crouched down on the ground and began licking Cairo's blood.

The flickering green lights in the two eye sockets looked at her figure.

[Blue Knight of Famine, why did you appear in the Three Thousand Worlds? This place is not a world that can accept you.]

"I don't know either."

[You don't know... Indeed, in other words, that means you didn't come here of your own volition. Let me guess...]

Diablo's eyes turned to Lukas.

[One of the Twelve Void Lords, the Exile from the Entire Multiverse. Was he the one who sent you to the Three Thousand Worlds?]

"..."

[Silence. In that case, that's really the answer.]

Lukas returned to the subject.

"...I asked you why you laughed."

[I can't help but laugh. Of course, I'm not happy about Cairo's death in itself. What is important is that you, Lukas Trowman, killed Cairo Wilsemann.]

He was gradually becoming unable to understand what Diablo was talking about.

[Didn't you kill Cairo because he was conducting inhumane experiments in this mine?]

"And if that was the case?"

[In other words, it would mean that you vented your anger at Cairo's behaviour. And you killed him half impulsively. Hahaha...]

He burst into laughter again. Although it was obvious, the sight of a fleshless skeleton laughing was horrifying.

A smile was an emotional expression that one made using the flesh attached to the cheeks. Naturally, as a skeleton, Diablo shouldn't be able to smile.

That was why it was a strange sight. Perhaps Diablo, who was laughing in front of him, was more bizarre than someone who could laugh while maintaining a perfectly expressionless face.

[It was a very human reaction. I... am moved. I don't have a heart, but my blood vessels pulsed, and I don't have skin, but I got goosebumps.]

He couldn't listen anymore.

There was something wrong with Cairo and Diablo. To put it bluntly, he thought they'd lost their minds.

Perhaps feeling something from Lukas' attitude, the white skeleton's head tilted to the side.

[It seems Cairo didn't tell you anything. What should I say? I want to tell you so many things that I can't even summarise it. Because now you can empathise with my thoughts.]

There was a deep conviction mixed into that unwavering voice, but Lukas' discomfort and displeasure surpassed the peak that it had reached with Cairo.

Empathise?

Him? To Diablo's thoughts?

"You think you can change my ideologies?"

Lukas' sense of identity was something that even a Ruler couldn't influence. Then what about Diablo? Did he think he could exert more influence than a Ruler?

If that was really the case, then either his sense of identity was out of control, or he was looking down on Lukas.

Either way, Lukas' cynicism wouldn't be erased.

[There is no longer anything like 'sealed truth' in the world. The knowledge in the void is now accessible to all humans. When you become an Absolute, you will be forgotten in your home universe, and it is impossible to even tell the truth to the mortals... That ridiculous law has also disappeared. That's why Cairo could become aware of you.]

"..."

[The Absolutes who kept the balance of the universe, the Three Thousand Worlds, the Rulers that rule over them, the existence of God, the World of Void, the Void Records... All of these thoughts can even be passed down to a small child. So I spread it. The truths that I learned, and the approaching terror that we would soon face.]

[Kuhaha...]

At that moment, Lukas heard the laughter of someone else.

[I see, so this was also the Demon God's insurance. As expected, that guy is not easy to see through.]

The distinctive sound of roaring thunder that was the voice of the Thunderous Lightning God who was still in a corner of Lukas' consciousness.

Diablo spoke.

[I wasn't able to completely control Lucid's mind. However, he chose to be my hands and feet and move as I wished. You must have been puzzled by that fact, weren't you?]

"..."

[The answer to that is simple. It's because Lucid was my first understanding.]

"What the hell kind of enlightenment did you give him?"

[I can't talk about that here.]

Diablo spoke nonchalantly before adding.

[No. To be precise, I can't talk about it in front of her.]

And his gaze was directed at Pale as he said that.

With her blood stained face, she glanced over at the fog that shimmered like a demonic figure before straightening her bent back and smiling.

"Why? I heard you told the Black Knight."

[It seems you don't know. The White Knight and the Red Knight already know this truth. You're the only one who doesn't seem to know. Blue Knight Pale.]

The smile disappeared from Pale's face.

[Didn't you notice the difference between yourself and them? It's not that they couldn't find a being they wanted to follow as 'King'. You're really unstable, that's why it's too dangerous. Even if a wild dog with the power to destroy a universe was to roam around freely, I wouldn't feel as anxious.]

"The only reason you can say that to my face."

Pale smiled brightly.

"Is it because of the Demon God backing you?"

[No one is backing me. My relationship with the Demon God is purely contractual. For instance, if you tried to kill me here, the Demon God wouldn't try to stop you.]

"Indeed. So you want to die. You know what? I didn't like you from the beginning. The only reason I left you alive was because I don't like eating bones."

Diablo wasn't there. But Pale released a momentum as if she was on the verge of killing him.

She reached out as if she didn't care about the constraints of space. This movement was familiar. It was the way she summoned her sword.

"Stop."

Lukas stopped her. Naturally, this wasn't to protect Diablo. There were still things he still needed to talk to him about, and more importantly, Pale wasn't the one that would end him.

"Hmph."

Pale snorted and let go of her murderous intent. Although he didn't voice it, Diablo was surprised by this fact.

[When I entered the World of Void and could see the Castle, I was elated. Because it meant that I'd gained the qualification I so badly wanted. Do you know what I'm talking about? It meant I was qualified to become the Void King. In the end, sitting on the throne would be a new beginning.]

"..."

[I'm certain. After you hear my story, you will make one of two choices. Either you will support me to become the Void King, or you yourself will become the Void King.]

He had thought of the latter several times. He felt that he would eventually end up sitting in the seat of the Void King. Even if it would be a hassle.

However, he'd never thought of the former. It was so absurd to the point that it even made him angry.

Lukas would support Diablo to be the Void King? That would be almost impossible even if the sky was to flip over hundreds of times. Diablo's eyes curled like crescent moons.

[And I will support you regardless of whichever choice you make. In the first place, I'm not the only one who can achieve my goal. Perhaps you will be the real master of this mission.]

"What is your goal?"

[To spread death. If possible, not just to this universe, but to all of the Three Thousand Worlds.]

Lukas let out a sigh. It was an expression of exhaustion at the story that continued to go around in circles.

But Diablo continued with the same attitude.

[You have the mindset of a human again. You can see things from the eyes of a mortal. That's why I'm certain. That you will understand my choice, and empathise with my plan.]

At that moment, a crack appeared beside Diablo's image. Lukas realised it was both an entrance and exit to another space.

[It's not like a trap or anything.]

"..."

[Go in. Then you will be able to draw your own conclusions. Maybe you won't have to wander anymore. In my opinion, it would be nice if you could regain your original goal and mission.]

He had no intention of going in. Even if everything Diablo said was true, sometimes knowing the truth only lead to responsibilities. And at that moment, Lukas didn't want to increase his responsibilities even more.

The reason he'd come to the Three Thousand Worlds was to kill Diablo and the Demon King.

That should be enough for now.

But.

"..."

The next moment, Lukas stepped into the crack.

* * *

Right after that, Lukas felt like he'd been trapped in a small room. It wasn't a trap. The meaning of that sensation was simple.

It was just that the size of the crack in space was very small.

It was dark.

It was a place where there was almost no light. Nevertheless, his eyes gradually grew accustomed to the dark.

"...!"

Instantly, his heart sank. The moment he had instinctively stretched out his hand, he felt the touch of something resembling a soft skein* of thread. (*: Fun fact, these are also called 'hanks')

It only took Lukas a moment to realise it was someone's hair.

And the fact that the owner was so close he could feel their breath.

“...ah.”

It was immediately clear to him who the woman was.

A woman with ebony hair and unfathomable eyes.

Iris Peacefinder was staring at Lukas in surprise.

Here's Sedi ^-^

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

Season 2 Chapter 488

A shabby wooden chair.

A skeleton wrapped in black cloth sat cross legged in a place completely engulfed in darkness. At first glance, it was so still that it looked like a corpse, but the eye sockets of the skeleton carried proof that this skeleton couldn't be considered a corpse.

The green ghostly fire flickered like will o' wisps, but from a different perspective, they looked like people burning in the dark.

What was clear, was that there was clearly magical power contained within those will o' wisps.

[What is the difference between a god and a man?]

It was a low but loud voice that was unpleasant to listen to, like the condensed screams of evil spirits.

[The god I'm referring to isn't the unique and omnipotent being. Every Absolute that is capable of travelling between universes can be classified as gods. Of course, that is just my personal classification, but... what is the reason? It's nothing much. It's simply because they all have the power to destroy a large number of universes.]

Diablo waved his hand, causing pitch black fog to billow out and begin taking a shape. At that, most of those in the audience breathed heavily.

[The Demigod Lord, a being that could easily destroy our universe. I'm not sure anyone here has forgotten the despair that man caused you to feel. However, even the weakest Absolute is more powerful than Lord. How about it? Don't you think beings like that it's accurate to call such beings gods?]

There was no answer.

Without paying any attention to his audience's unresponsiveness, Diablo continued.

[Then what's the difference between them and humans?]

And once again, he returned to the original question.

[It is easy to understand when they're called humans and gods, but if you classify them a bit more clearly, it would be more appropriate to refer to them as mortals and Absolutes. Then does that mean that it is simply the difference in power that divides them? That's not it. Although it's extremely rare, there are some people who, while still being mortal, have the power to stand against an Absolute.]

After saying that, Diablo turned his gaze to the Black Knight standing on his right.

[Here's what I think. I'll share the mission with them.]

After saying that, he paused for a while, but there was still no response.

[Every being possesses a mission... even if they themselves might not realise it, our destiny is surrounded by countless missions. And Absolutes are beings who are bound by those missions. They can never turn away from their mission. Instead, they continue to complete their missions precisely and perfectly like machines. In that case, then what about humans, what about mortals?]

Diablo spread his boney hands then clenched them passionately.

[Of course, we are also beings who have missions. However, our missions are never permanent. Is there any human who could take on a mission from the moment they are born and adhere to it till the moment they die? No!"

The voice gradually grew louder.

[There is none. Without a doubt.]

After saying that, Diablo rose from his seat.

[Our missions change constantly! It might even be better to call them desires! Standing on two feet for the first time, proving your worth, making money, finding a good spouse, supporting your parents, caring for your children until they grow up... because life is continuous, the missions are also continuous. Isn't it wonderful? Isn't it beautiful?]

The sight of an undead with a skeletal body clamouring about the beauty of life was strange in its own right. However, as had been the case until now, no one in the audience found fault with it.

[And each mission must have a full stop at the end. Otherwise, if they couldn't be accomplished in the end, how would the missions be any different from curses? However, they, the Absolutes, seem to not know such a simple thing. As if they had been brainwashed, they continue to repeat their actions, as if they were bound by missions that can never be completed... It's quite tragic. How is it that they haven't yet realised that they are stuck in an inescapable trap despite the fact that there hasn't yet been an Absolute who managed to accomplish their mission?]

One thing was clear.

The lack of response didn't mean the audience weren't paying to Diablo's words. While not everyone there were enchanted by Diablo's words, it was clear that they were all at least paying attention to his speech.

[...And the Absolute born from this universe is no exception to this. I'm talking about the Wizard who became an Absolute even though he was a human.]

When he said those words, the vigour in Diablo's voice was clearly disturbed.

[Whether only those who can complete unachievable missions can become Absolutes, or whether Absolutes are contradictory beings who struggle to complete unachievable missions. I don't know that

much. However, it is clear that their actions are as meaningless as pouring water into the sea. Isn't it natural? Even after one task is completed, there are thousands of things occurring in other universes that need to be resolved.]

Diablo's voice gradually became filled with emotion. It felt like he genuinely felt sympathy for the Absolutes.

[What they need is an end* and rest. The same could be said for the 'entire multiverse'. And I will be the agent of Death...](*: In this case referring to a 'true end' e.g. death)

That was the end of the speech.

The people that filled the hall could all be called some of the strongest on the entire continent, and all of them were also those who had successfully passed Diablo's 'strict screening'.

[getid]

Those who had the right to know the truth about the 'world outside'.

Those who had enough power.

Among them was Snow, whose life Diablo himself had tried to take. She had lost both eyes, but there were no issues with her ears. In other words, this meant that she was able to remain calm even while listening to Diablo's voice.

What was the reason for this?

Was it because she felt that what he was saying was worth listening to? Was it simply because she couldn't defeat him with a body that was unable to see? Or...

...She couldn't tell.

Iris wasn't close enough to be able to guess Snow's inner thoughts. However, she could tell that her hostility towards Diablo, which could be clearly felt, had faded noticeably.

Diablo's speech that day wasn't his first. As far as Iris knew, there were ten of them that she had been present to, not to mention the ones that she hadn't attended or didn't know about.

At first, it was certainly semi-forced. But as the number increased, more and more people began to listen to the speeches voluntarily, and naturally, more and more people began to empathise with Diablo's opinion.

And Diablo's speech that day was the last.

This was because he probably believed that everyone who could be convinced had already been convinced. This judgement was accurate.

In the end, there were only three people who hadn't been influenced by Diablo.

* * *

Lukas realised that he was visibly agitated. It must have been clearly displayed on his face.

“...”

On the other hand, Iris raised her eyes for a moment at Lukas' appearance, but that was it. Her face soon became expressionless once more. She then took a few steps back to create some distance from Lukas before snapping her fingers.

Ttak. A beam of light fell upon the dark space. Only then did the outline of their surroundings become clear.

It was a library.

There were several rows of bookshelves that were high enough to reach the sky, and every inch of space was filled with books.

The extremely large library gave off a feeling of a 'mysterious world that had been naturally formed like this', but instead of being overwhelmed by the scenery, Lukas had a different opinion.

The first impression that he'd had when he first entered about this being small was not wrong.

This place was an incredibly small universe. At first glance, the library seemed huge, but it was still not enough to be considered a world. Of course, it was probably still bigger than most planets.

“...why are you here?”

It was only then that Lukas finally spoke. Iris didn't immediately respond. Instead, she picked up a few books nearby that had fallen and returned all but one to the bookshelves.

Then, opening the book in her hands, she said.

“That's a strange thing to say.”

Iris' voice was emotionless.

“A strange thing to say...?”

“Why I'm here. That's what you said. As if you know who I am, and where I am.”

“...I.”

“You. You seem to know me. I know about who you are too.”

Her black eyes turned to look at Lukas once more.

“Lukas Trowman.”

“_”

She was just saying his name, but Lukas felt as though cold fingers were touching his neck.

“However, I still don't know you. I merely learned about you after coming to this place.”

“This place?”

“Do you not know where this is despite being an Absolute? This place is the Void Records.”

Lukas' expression changed at those words.

The Void Records, the Akashic Records.

Wasn't this God's library where all the information in the universe was recorded? IT seemed that it was more stereotypical than he'd expected.

"The scenery seems to change depending on the ideas of the visitor. The appearance of the Void Records that I envisioned was a place filled with an endless line of bookshelves that reached the sky."

"..."

"I also saw your life story here."

Tak. Iris closed the book she was holding and showed him the cover.

Lukas remained silent.

"To summarise what I heard from Diablo and the Great Medium, the memories that I had before were all overwritten and falsified, and that the things that were written in this were real, that is to say, the real history."

"..."

"And that you are the hero who saved our world, and yet you are the tragic figure who was forgotten by everyone. That your life afterward was all about sacrifice. That you threw yourself into an endless battle to save humans in order to return to your home world."

...When he'd returned to his home universe.

He had realised that he'd become a forgotten being that had disappeared even from the memories of his closest acquaintances. At that time, he had a thought. He'd hoped that they would one day remember him once more. He'd hoped that the memory of the man named 'Lukas Trowman' would return.

That had now been achieved. With none other than the woman he'd promised to return to. The woman who had sacrificed 4,000 years for Lukas had learned about him.

And yet, he wasn't happy. He couldn't be happy.

Instead, he felt a throbbing pain in his chest.

"I will admit it now, when I first saw you, I didn't have a strange feeling that it didn't feel like our first meeting. Yes. I was strangely concerned about you and my attention stayed on you. It was an unfamiliar feeling that I'd never felt before."

"..."

"—but isn't it amazing? Despite coming here and reading all the stories about you, my head amazingly grew cold."

Iris continued with an expressionless face.

“I respect you. I commend your amazing achievements. And I thank you. For protecting our universe. However...”

She hesitated for a moment.

But soon afterward, she opened her mouth with a determined expression.

“However, I can not think of you as an acquaintance at all. To me, you are simply ‘Lukas Trowman’, a character from a myth, or a historic hero.”

“...”

“I can understand the feelings of the ‘Iris’ written here, but I cannot recognise her as ‘me’.”

After saying that, Iris Peacefinder lowered her head.

“I just wanted to make this clear before we started talking. I’m sorry.”

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Season 2 Chapter 489

There was no immediate response.

But it felt like something was lodged in his throat. Lukas suddenly wondered what he would say even if he opened his mouth at that moment.

While he was immersed in that feeling, Iris raised her lowered head once more. Then, she blinked her eyes once before speaking.

“Would you like to have a seat?”

Where?

Before he could even say this out loud, a table and a pair of chairs fell from the sky. He wasn’t exactly sure how high they had fallen from, but it was definitely high enough for furniture made of wood to be smashed upon landing.

Nevertheless, the furniture completed the landing with surprising grace.

There wasn’t a single sound, not even a rattle. It was as if they were stuck to a wall made of glue.

The table was a dining table. This was because there was food on the table*. Although the menu wasn’t amazing. (*: The word for dining table is basically ‘food table’)

It was just freshly baked bread, soup, bacon, and a glass of milk each.

Iris sat down first. Then, she repeated her words, except this time, it was with her gaze. He had no choice but to sit in front of her.

Of course, that was all.

He didn’t think he could eat carefreely in this place, moreover, in front of Iris.

Iris, who was staring blankly at Lukas, snapped her finger once more. This time, a cup of coffee fell from the sky.

“...”

He looked down at the steaming cup.

Coffee.

It was Lukas' favourite drink.

But, of course, Iris didn't know that... She shouldn't have known that.

She knew a fact she shouldn't have known. In that case, how did she find out?

It was obvious. She'd read it in the Void Records.

“...”

It suddenly felt like all of his memories lost their colour.

What she'd just said made sense to him now. She had learned everything about Lukas through 'information' rather than 'memory'. That gap that they could feel between them would not be filled even if they were to make countless memories in the future.

He knew.

Serving coffee for him was her way of showing consideration for Lukas. However, that consideration had now become poison.

There was only a table between them, but it felt as if there was a thousand foot precipice between Lukas and her.

He took a sip of the coffee to get rid of that feeling. To his surprise, it worked. The aching in his chest subsided a little.

Now that he thought about it, Lukas realised that he shouldn't have been so affected by this.

He had already been given a solution for their relationship. Of course, it was just a simple conclusion and couldn't be called the correct answer, but at least it was something he could understand since he himself had deliberated and put forward. He just had to accept it.

Nevertheless, the reason he'd been so affected was simply because Lukas could not have predicted this development.

Iris had learned about 'Lukas'. And yet, she didn't seem interested.

Those two facts combined were the causes of Lukas' confusion.

'However, it's over now.'

He took another sip of coffee.

As soon as the mellow flavour flowed over the tip of his tongue and went down his oesophagus, the pain in his chest could no longer be felt. That was a change that surprised even him.

Lukas was now able to look at the situation with calm eyes.

“Was this your doing?”

“Huh?”

“This furniture, it doesn’t seem like they were simply summoned.”

“...indeed. You are level headed and capable of quickly judging the situation. Just like in the book.”

“...”

“You must have been very fond of the being called ‘Iris Peacefinder’. However, there isn’t even the slightest hint of agitation in your eyes as you look at my face now. It seems you were able to calm down and sort your emotions in a short time, just like it said.”

“...”

“I went off tangent. You asked about my power, didn’t you?”

Iris brushed her fingertips across the tabletop.

“That’s right. It’s not like summoning. I didn’t move them from somewhere.”

“Did you create them?”

Although Lukas’ assumption was unrealistic, it was highly probable. Although creation was by no means a power granted to mortals, Iris was an exception.

After all, she was the Apostle who had been given the authority of none other than Lord himself. She had trained that power for at least thousands of years to help Lukas escape, and even after Lord’s death, she hadn’t lost her authority over space.

Of course, her ability to create wasn’t on the same level as Lord in his prime, who could create a variety of things from nothing. In fact, Lukas didn’t think that Iris, whom he’d simply shared his power with, would be able to reach that level.

However, perhaps...

“It’s a bit different.”

A whispered voice tickled his ears.

“It is simply a copy of something that was recorded in this place. Perhaps it would be more accurate to call it materialisation.”

“Materialisation?”

“The table that was called here now is the breakfast that a man named ‘Dumar Chester’ had on the eighth day of July when he was 47. Ah, the man named Dumar was not my acquaintance.”

Lukas hesitated.

“...you have the power to materialise what is written in the void?”

“To an extremely limited extent.”

Iris didn't seem to think it was a big deal, but it wasn't something that should be said so calmly.

It seemed that something unreasonable and extremely unrealistic was taking place.

In other words, Iris... had successfully connected to the void?

'How was that possible...'

It shouldn't have been possible for the vessel of a mortal to contain even a fraction of the information held within the Void Records, the Akashic Records.

It was quite natural.

The trick that Iris had displayed was only beginning to enter the entrance of the transcendent stage. If she became able to use that power as she pleased, she would be able to take out any creation in the universe whenever she desired.

She would be able to obtain an authority that was very close to God's, no, that —it was safe to say— belonged to God.

“Are you not eating?”

Iris spoke again.

“I don't have an appetite.”

It hadn't been there in the first place, but it had fallen even more after the conversation just now.

“Wouldn't it be better to eat? You seem hungry.”

“...”

It was an accurate analysis.

It had been quite a while since they had entered the mine, and all he'd eaten until then was the piece of flesh that he'd eaten to comfort Pale. In fact, if he let go of his concentration even slightly, he would be able to feel his stomach complaining of hunger.

Lukas hesitated for a moment, but soon picked up the tableware. He didn't have an appetite since he had just drank the coffee, but after eating a few spoonfuls of soup, his appetite returned.

The simple meal quickly came to an end.

In the meantime, Iris read a book without paying any attention to Lukas. Looking at the cover, it was still a book about Lukas.

All of a sudden, Lukas wanted to read that book as well.

“The people you know.”

Without taking her eyes from the book, Iris spoke.

“Most of them agree with Diablo’s ideals.”

“...what?”

“They came to understand the ideas he advocated.”

Lukas remained silent for a moment.

“Do you mean the crazy claim about spreading death to the Three Thousand Worlds?”

“Yes.”

Silence fell once more as he recalled Diablo’s claim once more.

“I can’t understand.”

But even after thinking about it again, he still felt that he couldn’t understand it.

“It’s not even sophistry. There’s no way the people I know would agree to that.”

Right. Unless they all had collectively gone mad.

But Iris made a puzzled expression before nodding as if she understood something.

“I guess you didn’t hear everything from Diablo, did you?”

“He told me to hear the rest from you. That’s why I’m here.”

“...from, me.”

Iris lowered her head slightly and lightly ran her finger across her lips. It was a habit that appeared whenever she was lost in thought.

“Most things are recorded in this place.”

Then, looking at Lukas, she continued.

“Not everything, most things.”

She repeated her words with emphasis. Then she looked at Lukas’ face. As if she expected to see some kind of reaction after he heard this.

But she didn’t show any reactions to Lukas.

Iris... was a woman who could perfectly hide her thoughts if she wanted to. Although she hadn’t been easy to read in the first place, the unique light in her eyes had become several times deeper than before. In order to forcefully peek at her thoughts, she would have to be agitated or confused, but Lukas couldn’t think of a way to do that.

In other words,

Lukas couldn’t guess what Iris’ intentions were for saying this.

“This place looks huge, doesn’t it? It’s just as it looks. This library is even bigger than the current world outside that has become a mega universe after the Great Fusion.”

After saying that, she took a moment to catch her breath. He had the vague feeling that she was gathering her momentum.

Lukas...

Had a hunch that what she was about to say was the most important.

“But even though it’s huge, it isn’t infinite. That is the truth of the world.”

For a moment, Iris’ eyes seemed to become pitch black for a moment.

“Nothing is eternal in this world.”

...Something.

He felt like this was something he’d felt before.

When was it?

It was definitely not when he was Lukas, but perhaps it was when he was Frey.

The look in Iris’ eyes was similar to something he’d seen before—

“-then you can go now.”

“What?”

“Or is there something else you want to say?”

When Iris tilted her head to the side and asked this, he became speechless.

Of course, there was nothing Lukas needed from Iris. Because he hadn’t expected to meet Iris in the first place.

“...Diablo had sent me here confidently. It seemed he thought that I would be able to reach some kind of conclusion.

“I see.”

“However, that didn’t turn out to be the case.”

Lukas spoke with a complicated voice.

“I still don’t understand Diablo’s ideals. I still think of him as a risk factor, and I still haven’t changed my mind about killing him whenever I encounter him.”

“Nevertheless, that is all I can say.”

“Iris, what are you hiding-”

It was at that moment.

The space next to Lukas split open and someone suddenly appeared.

It was Pale.

“You...?”

Without even looking at the bewildered Lukas, she looked around with a pout. Then, she revealed her signature bright smile.

“I came to pick you up since you were taking so long!”

“How did you come here?”

“The entrance didn’t disappear and it’s still open. Ah. That stupid skeleton ran away. Gloomy bastard. I don’t like that guy. Next time I see him, I’m going to kill him.”

She crossed her arms while speaking as if it was no big deal.

Then, she looked up at the towering bookshelves as tall as buildings and muttered in a faint voice.

“Hmm. Indeed. This place is...”

“...”

“What about you, Lukas? Are you done with your business?”

It was at that moment.

Pale’s gaze, which was moving around, finally settled on Iris.

For a moment, the two silently looked at each other.

It was Pale who smiled first. After making her signature wide smile, she suddenly grabbed Lukas by the arm and began leading him away.

“Since you’re done with your business, let’s get going. The ‘top’ seems a bit noisy.”

“Wait. I’m not...”

“Hurry.”

He couldn’t understand Pale’s suddenly rushed attitude. Lukas, who was half led and half dragged, subconsciously turned back to look at Iris, and couldn’t help but tremble.

For the first time, there was a ripple of emotion on Iris’ expressionless face.

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Season 2 Chapter 490

Palm and fist collided. (*: Palm technique vs fist technique)

Rumble!

Together with thunder-like explosions, a dust storm swirled in every direction.

Even the ones who had escaped from the mine were affected despite being far away. They felt the ground beneath them shake as their bodies were buffeted by heavy winds that threatened to carry them away.

Dok Go-yun's body was pushed back. But he didn't have any injuries.

"Hmph."

Instead, he even sneered as if to show off.

In the skirmish just now, he'd clearly had the advantage. Although the young man's body hadn't been pushed back like Dok Go-yun's, his right arm had been shattered to such an extent that it looked like a rag.

Of course, it wasn't a one-sided advantage.

The right side of his forehead was split and blood flowed from it, although it wasn't a serious injury, it was unlikely that the bleeding would stop easily.

Even as the blood dyed his eyes, Dok Go-yun didn't blink. Instead, he analysed the condition of his body.

His left knee was cracked, his abdomen and chest were bruised, and his right shoulder was fractured while his left palm was torn. (PR: 'tis but a flesh wound)

He hadn't suffered any fatal injuries, but he thought that it would be a bother, so he decided to use it now.

Dark Cloud Fog(黑雲霧), Mother's Palm Wrap(母掌包)

Fwoosh-

Dark fog that was incomparable to before was released from Dok Go-yun's body.

The young man's eyebrows furrowed at that. Maintaining his stance, he observed it for a while before he finally realised.

This thing's goal wasn't to attack.

Taht!

Only then did he kick off the ground to narrow the distance with Dok Go-yun, but he was a step too late.

"You were too slow!"

In the darkness, Dok Go-yun let out a laugh. As he stretched out his right arm, the dark fog that was surrounding him raged like a turbid stream and pushed the young man's body away.

The young man tried to hold on by releasing his internal energy but was soon swept away forcefully.

Dok Go-yun didn't let go of this chance and immediately chased after him. Running faster than the flying young man, he then stretched out his pure white hands.

Boom!

He unleashed the Fourteen Vexing Bone Palms(煩骨十四掌) technique in order, pressuring the young man.

He'd done it. He'd controlled the flow.

Dok Go-yun continued his offensive as if he was dancing.

"What's wrong? Your movements are so slow!"

The young man was being driven into a corner, but he muttered without exposing a vital point.

"...demonic arts are demonic arts. I can't believe you were able to heal your wounds in an instant."

"Haha. It's okay to admit you're jealous."

"I'm not jealous. You didn't use it from the beginning. The reason is simple. It must have a pretty heavy price."

Even as he said that, the young man stumbled as if he would collapse at any moment.

"Oh? Is that so?"

Although Dok Go-yun smiled as he answered like that, inwardly, he was surprised.

The young man's guess was right.

Mother's Palm Wrap was capable of healing most injuries in an instant, but it had the disadvantage in the form of its extreme consumption of internal energy.

'I also lost too much blood.'

Although it could heal internal and external injuries by increasing the user's healing factor, it could not replenish blood that had already been lost.

Of course, even if the opponent realised that, that didn't change Dok Go-yun's superiority.

The stumbling young man stomped the ground with his right leg. Crack! The ground cracked like a spiderweb, and pieces of stone were sent flying. In the meantime, an enormous amount of power condensed in the young man's fist.

He was a quick witted guy.

Realising that as time passed he would be more and more at a disadvantage, he decided to use this trick and end it in one blow.

'Good. I'll accept it.'

Not thinking that he'd lose in a head on contest, Dok Go-yun also raised his vitality* to the limit. (*: not exactly, think of a pure form of 'internal energy')

As the inner principle of the Dark Cloud Fog, the Black Spirit Possession, began to unfold, both of Dok Go-yun's arms became dyed black as if they had been painted with ink.

Crunch, as if he wasn't in a hurry to release it, the internal energy gathering on the young man's fist began to emit light.

By the end of this collision, one of them would become a corpse. But neither side thought that the corpse would be theirs.

Nevertheless, the outcome of the match would forever be unknown.

Just before their two powers could collide, a gentle breeze blew between them.

At least that was how it felt for Dok Go-yun and the young man.

At some point, with a flutter of robes, Yang In-hyun appeared at the point where their powers would collide.

"...!"

What was he doing?!

A look of bewilderment flashed across Dok Go-yun's face. Even if it was Yang In-hyun, he would not remain intact if he were to stand in the middle of the collision.

However, if Dok Go-yun were to withdraw his power or try to forcibly change direction, he would have to bear the recoil with his body.

His opponent was equally flustered.

Srrng-

In the meantime, Yang In-hyun drew his sword and slowly swung it in a clockwise direction.

As a result, the essence of the dark cloud released by Dok Go-yun was captured on the tip of the blade.

"...!"

Even while witnessing it with both eyes, he couldn't believe it.

It was neither broken nor sliced.

Like a thread attached to the tip of a needle, Dok Go-yun's killer move was manipulated by Yang In-hyun as he pleased. As a result, the force of the dark cloud gathered at the tip of the sword gradually began to be neutralised.

Soon, the sword reached the opposite direction. In other words, it reached the place where the young man's fist was surging.

Boom!

The sound of thunder was heard once more.

But instead of being sent flying dozens of miles, the young man's body simply shook as he took a few steps back.

"..."

The young man's expression also hardened for the first time. Dok Go-yun felt that this reaction was natural.

It wouldn't have been so surprising if their attacks had been blocked or even destroyed directly.

But the technique Yang In-hyun displayed was several levels above that.

It was a technique that couldn't be explained as simply the exquisite use of Gentle Overpowering Movement(以靜制動)*, and at the same time, it was also proof of how great the distance between them was. (*: basically the 'redirecting/making use of the opponent's attacks' that is present in many(most) martial arts.)

"...who is this sir?"

The young man spoke in a respectful tone.

Just now, this man could have stopped the fight in a much easier way. At that time, the openings that they'd both shown as they launched their killing moves to take each other's lives were fatal. If he had wanted to, he could have used them to slice through their throats before they had even realised they were dead.

"I think you are misunderstanding something."

"...misunderstanding?"

"Right. We have nothing to do with the evil actions being carried out in this mine."

"..."

The young man's eyes narrowed.

"You probably mistook the black fog surrounding the mine to be similar to the dark cloud fog that Dok Go-yun uses, but that's wrong. The two powers are completely different."

"..."

"You should have experienced Dok Go-yun's dark cloud fog enough in your skirmish just now, so if you analyse the black fog covering this area, you'll understand."

The young man hesitated for a moment before doing as he said. Upon seeing him close his eyes and concentrate, Dok Go-yun wanted to launch a technique at his body, but he remained still after noticing Yang In-hyun's gaze.

After a while, the eyes of the young man's handsome face, which were filled with bewilderment, opened.

"...I don't believe it."

"So you understand."

"I apologise. It was my mistake..."

As he said this, the young man bowed.

A vein pulsed on the head of Dok Go-yun, who was watching on.

“Hey, aren’t you apologising to the wrong person? I was the one who got hit by your surprise attack.”

When he looked at Dok Go-yun, the young man’s expression became cold once more.

“You asked for it.”

“What?”

“Did you not expect this to happen when you decided to learn demonic arts?”

As he looked at the young man, Dok Go-yun grit his teeth as if he was pissed.

“I’ve never seen such an asshole. Do you know who I am to be so rude to me?”

“Don’t know. Don’t care.”

“You brat, you really wanna see if...”

“Stop.”

After interceding with a brief word, Yang In-hyun looked at the young man.

“...it seems you have calmed down enough so I would like to ask you something.”

“What is it?”

“Who did you learn martial arts from?”

* * *

“That...”

Iris’ voice cut off slightly. Confusion was clear in her expression. But she was able to recover her emotions faster than they appeared, and she looked at Pale with her characteristic cool figure.

Their eyes met in the air.

“...”

Lukas felt strange.

Seeing Iris and Pale at the same time felt extremely unrealistic. It was as if characters from entirely different novels had come out of the pages and met each other.

‘They’re similar.’

They were strangely similar.

Of course, their appearances, atmospheres, and physiques were different.

If so then? What was the similarity that Lukas was seeing between them?

Lukas looked at Iris. As she looked at Pale, a smile began to spread across her face.

It was at that moment that Lukas realised the identity of the strange feeling he'd been having while looking at Iris.

"It's an honour to meet you, Blue Knight of Famine."

"Huh? You know me?"

"Because you are quite famous."

"That's strange. There is no way anything about me is written in this library."

Pale only spoke a little, but it was enough for Lukas to realise something.

There were no records of the 'World of Void' in the Akashic Records, or in other words, the Void Records. This place carried a record of everything that happened in the multiverse. But the 'World of Void' did not fall into the category of 'everything in the multiverse'.

It was nothing but a dumpsite for abandoned possibilities. That was the identity of the 'World of Void'.

"I know about you too. Black Witch!"

"How?"

"I know everything. Mm, even that Lukas had been indebted to you in the past."

Pfft, then Pale let out a laugh. It wasn't obvious, but anyone could tell that it was done mockingly.

"I guess you forgot everything now. Ah, how pitiful."

"..."

The atmosphere gradually became sharper.

This wasn't just Lukas' imagination.

"You forgot your oath. Did you know that? It's much harder and crueller to forget a promise than to break it! But every single one of you betrayed Lukas."

"...that was done by God."

"Was it because of the rule? Ah. Of course it was. However, that doesn't mean exceptions were impossible, does it? Moreover, I don't think you can even fool yourself with that excuse!"

"..."

"Mm. I said too much. I'm sure you'll forget it all anyway, so it doesn't matter. Listen to my words with one ear."

Pale finished speaking with a smile.

Iris was silent for a moment before speaking.

"Blue Knight Pale, I never would have expected you to mention the rules of God."

"Mm?"

“After all, aren’t you one of God’s biggest victims?”

“What are you talking about?”

“Well. Should I talk about it here? About the life of a blue haired girl named Pale before she became the Blue Knight of Famine. —I guess you forgot.”

Like a magnolia blooming in the dark, Iris’ white teeth showed as she smiled.

“Aren’t all the records of you before you went to the World of Void in this place?”

Ttuk.

Pale froze.

“...it’s strange.”

And the smile on her face disappeared.

“How many extra lives do the people outside have?”

Then she stretched out her hand.

It was her characteristic stance when calling out her sword. Crack! Something emerged from the ground.

“Stop...!”

Lukas belatedly tried to stop her, but unlike with Diablo, Pale had no intention of stopping. In an instant, she grabbed her sword and rushed towards Iris.

“Kuk!”

It was dangerous.

Iris wouldn’t be able to take even a single blow from Pale. Just as Lukas was about to urgently call upon the power of void.

“Hey, Blue Knight. I’ve never seen you, or your armour, before.”

Iris called out with a smile.

“Is that what your sword is supposed to look like?”

“...?”

At that, Pale looked down at her own sword. Then she realised.

The sword she was holding was not its usual pale colour, but was instead covered in ridiculous rainbow colours.

“Huh?”

“You didn’t summon it. I materialised it.”

Then, the tip of the blade moved like jelly and tried to cover Pale's entire body. Pale belatedly tried to let go of the sword, but it had already taken on a lumpy form, even down to the hilt, so it was hard to get rid of.

Just as Pale's body was about to be completely swept away by the mucus. Bang! The mucus was sent flying following a sound similar to that of compressed air bursting.

Iris looked at the figure and said.

"You cannot become the Blue Knight in this place."

"...aha. That seems to be the case."

Pale gave her a torn smile.

"But I don't think I need a sword to eat you."

Those words were right.

Even without becoming the Blue Knight, Pale was still a formidable being. She might even be able to enter the minimal time zone as she was now.

But Iris' relaxed expression didn't go away.

"I can't defeat you."

"It's good that you know."

"Nevertheless, if it's in this place, it is possible for me to run away forever. While still pestering you."

"..."

"Would you like to play tag with me here forever?"

The two women were smiling at each other.

That was certainly true. But Lukas felt like he could see a rift growing between them.

"...hmm."

Pale was the one to turn away first. She spoke with a huff.

"Let's go."

She grabbed Lukas by the arm.

And, somehow, he was unable to shake her off. It was as if Lukas was stuck to Pale. Before leaving, he turned to look at Iris' face one last time.

And he realised again.

Iris was a woman who could always hide her true feelings behind a smile.

Whether she felt joy, sadness, anger, or nothing at all.

She always had a smile on her face. That was just a way of life for the woman named Iris Peacefinder.

...In other words, that meant.

If Iris 'felt nothing' towards Lukas, she would have smiled. She would have smiled like she always did.

But she didn't.

Right before they left, Iris was expressionless