

## **Great Mage 81**

### **Season 1 Chapter 81: Hruhiral (4)**

It hadn't been long since Oydin Predickwood became an Apostle. This meant that he hadn't made Nozdog's power completely his.

This was natural.

Apocalypses were much stronger than other Demigods. Moreover, even among the Apocalypses, Nozdog's power was the extremely dangerous and volatile power of death.

He knew that. After becoming an apostle, it was something he kept in mind.

He'd always treated his power carefully. However, there was something he didn't know.

In order to not be consumed by Nozdog's power, it was necessary to release the bloodlust that built up over time.

"Kuk..."

Oydin groaned and clutched his head.

His eyes became bloodshot.

'It's getting harder to suppress the bloodlust.'

When he was outside the forest, he did not suffer from these symptoms because he could kill someone every day.

However, after returning to the Great Forest, he had no one to kill.

It had only been a few days, but it had already reached this state.

'I want to kill.'

No, he *had* to kill.

If he continued suppressing it, he felt like he would go crazy.

His vision became tinted red.

It didn't matter who it was. He wanted to kill someone.

He wanted to split their flesh, drain their blood, rip out their intestines and smash their bones to pieces.

Oydin scratched his shoulder crazily.

It was so violent that his skin split, and blood began flowing out.

However, the pain cooled his head.

'Let's kill someone.'

Oydin left his house the moment he made up his mind.

All he had to do was not use his divine power.

Of course, Oydin had the ability to kill someone and cover his tracks without having to use his divine power.

“ ... ”

Then he saw a woman walking near the stream.

Oydin observed her from the side.

Her beautiful face was familiar, and after a moment, he realised who she was.

She was the girl who used to hang out with Snow a lot before she became the Queen.

“Syax.”

Oydin smiled as he whispered her name.

\* \* \*

“Hoo...”

Syax closed her eyes as she let out a sigh.

She was tired.

She didn’t think she’d slept more than five hours in the last few days.

This was a common occurrence while she was a Mercenary, but she hadn’t expected to do it even after returning home.

Her body demanded rest.

‘I should call it a day.’

It was late at night. It would be rude to visit someone at this time.

Just as she made up her mind and turned around.

“Ah.”

Someone was standing behind her. Syax froze for a moment.

“Did I surprise you? I’m sorry.”

A soft voice was heard. At that moment, the clouds that were covering the moon shifted and illuminated the person’s figure.

Seeing the exposed face, Syax sighed in relief.

It was Oydin Predickwood. He was one of the High Elf Elders and Snow’s older brother.

And he shared a very good relationship with Syax.

“Mr. Oydin.”

“Mm. Hello.”

Oydin gave her his usual bright smile.

At that moment, Syax froze for a moment. For some reason, she felt that something was out of place.

'...it must be an illusion.'

"What are you doing out here so late at night?"

"Ah, I guess you haven't heard. But I've brought two outsiders into the village. I have to deal with a few things while reporting on them..."

"Outsiders?"

"They're helping me track down the necromancer that has been operating around the vicinity of the Great Forest recently."

"..."

"Mr. Oydin?"

"Ah. Sorry. I'm just a bit tired. ...so you're the one who's responsible for finding the necromancer."

It was a mission that Snow must have given her.

Syax nodded with a proud expression.

“That’s right.”

“Have you gotten any clues?”

“No. Unfortunately...”

“I see.”

Crunch.

Oydin mumbled softly as he stepped closer to her.

When she saw this, the strange feeling she felt earlier became even clearer.

It was similar to the feeling she had when she was in danger.

‘What’s going on?’

Oydin was one of the Elders who protected the village, and he had the noble blood of the Predickwood family flowing in his veins.

He was one of the Elves who worked harder than anyone else to maintain peace in the Great Forest.

He'd also had a close relationship with Syax for almost one hundred years.

In fact, when Syax was younger, she also considered Oydin to be her older brother. (TL: Oppa!)

She'd been shy, so she never showed it or said anything, but it was a thought that she had.

'But what is this feeling?'

While she tried to sort through her feelings, Oydin continued to approach her.

Syax stepped back subconsciously.

The cold water of the stream wet her ankles, but her spine was similarly cold.

"Syax."



Just as Oydin whispered her name.

Splash.

Syax fell on her buttocks into the stream, causing water to splash up.

She hadn't fallen.

Someone had pulled her by the nape of her neck.

She saw a man's back.

It was a man with a large and muscular body that she'd notice anywhere.

"Ivan...?"

"Yep."

Ivan swept his bangs while responding to her. It looked like he had just been washing his body as his hair was still wet.

Syax was confused and couldn't help but ask.

“What’s this about?”

“What a rude way to talk to the person who just saved your life. Stop whining, and get out of here. I can’t fight while taking care of you.”

“Fight...”

At that moment, Syax was startled as she suddenly felt a stinging pain in her cheek.

Her cheek had been cut, and blood was flowing from it.

“Th-, this...”

“Is that a spirit?”

Ivan raised an eyebrow while asking this.

Beside Oydin was the blurry figure of a woman who had her eyes pointing at the ground.

Syax muttered in a low voice.

“Stonia. A High-grade Wind Spirit...”

It was only then that she understood what was happening.

Oydin had tried to kill her with Stonia’s power.

If Ivan hadn’t pulled her back at that moment, her head would have fallen to the ground.

“Mr. Oydin...wh-...why...”

Oydin was still smiling.

He was smiling so brightly that his white teeth seemed to shine.

“You should be one of the outsider’s that Syax brought. I suppose you are also the Magic Warrior who has been destroying my undead.”

“Hoh. ‘Your’ undead? You’re not even trying to hide it. Even if you’re related to the Queen or whatever, it’s over motherfucker.”

He said what he liked as though he didn’t care that Syax could hear him.

Oydin laughed at Ivan’s words.

“Did I say that? In any case, it’s your word against mine.”

“You don’t seem to be very sane. Well. That’s okay. Let this old man help you with that. You should feel better after I hit you in the head a few times.”

Crunch.

Didn’t look sane?

“Kuku.”

Oydin let out a laugh.

That wasn’t wrong.

He felt strangely excited.

His bloodlust soared.

He had come out to kill someone. He finally saw Syax, but when Oydin tried to kill her, he failed.

It was nothing to be happy about, but Oydin was happy.

Right. He was happy.

He felt an extremely strong sense of liberation that he had never felt in his life.

Oydin felt like the dark clouds in his heart had truly cleared at that moment.

“HAHAHAHA!”

He started laughing like a madman.

He understood why he felt so liberated.

It was because he had finally revealed his identity. And it was even in the place where he was born and lived for hundreds of years.

“Good! Very good!”

He had the blood of the Predickwood family, which made him a noble among High Elves, yet he wielded the power of a Demigod and defiled the world.

The feeling of immortality was so addictive that it seemed to paralyze his brain.

Oydin slowly looked around.

Lilund, the home of the High Elves. It was the most sacred place in the Great Forest as it sat atop the roots of Hruhiral.

“I just got an interesting idea.”

Purple energy began flowing from Oydin’s hand.

Ivan furrowed his eyebrows.

‘This bastard is planning on using his divine power.’

It seemed he had truly decided to stop hiding his identity.

This was what Ivan wished to see, but he couldn’t help the anxiety that filled his heart.

This guy was truly strong.

“Hey, human. Do you know why the High Elves chose this place to start their village?”

“How would I know that.”

“It’s because of Hruhiral. The World Tree that is connected to every tree in the Great Reynolds Forest. Therefore, the Queen of the Forest would be able to immediately grasp the situation of the Great Forest simply by observing the World Tree. How many races reside here, if there are any invaders, if the forest is being polluted and to what extent...”

“What are you talking about?”

“What I want to know is... What would happen if the mother of this forest, Hruhiral, were to die?”

“...!!!”

Shock blossomed on Syax’s face.

She knew.

If Hruhiral died, then the entire Great Forest would die.

“D-, do you know what you’re saying?”

Syax’s shock was natural.

For the Elves, Hruhiral was like a mother.

At least Syax had believed all the Elves thought so.

Regardless of whether they were the obvious High Elves or Wood Elves, even the highly aggressive Dark Elves, the seclusive Grey Elves or the Ice Elves who lived all the way in the Frozen Lands.

What was more shocking was the fact that these words had come from the lips of a noble Predickwood.

“Of course I know. I know even better than you do. I’m a Predickwood, after all.”

Oydin’s body slowly began rising into the air as ferocious winds blew around him.

It was Stonia’s power.

“This wasn’t my original plan. I intended to just rest for a while before leaving. But I’ve changed my mind. The Hiralgard are also away at the moment, which means there are no obstacles. Syax, listen to me carefully. Then pass what I say onto my sister.”

Crack! Crack!

The ground began to crack, and undead began crawling out of the cracks.



Cold sweat dripped down Syax's face.

"Your one and only brother will transform the Great Forest into a land of death."

A ferocious light shined in Oydin's eyes.

Syax looked at the undead and bit her lip.

'These undead are much stronger than the ones we encountered before.'

Could the village stop them?

...No. It was no longer a question about whether they could stop them or not.

They had to stop them.

Even if they had to risk their lives!

"What the hell? There aren't any bodies here, so how can you make undead?"

Ivan could not help but ask in confusion.

Oydin laughed.

“You are misunderstanding something. I am not a necromancer. I am an Apostle with the power of death. Don’t compare me to a simple necromancer.”

“Th-, that.”

Oydin laughed and turned to Syax again.

“I will slowly kill Hruhiral in this way. If I use all of my power, it will take about a week. Do your best to stop me.”

“Do you think we will just let you do as you please?”

“You can say that after you’ve defeated my friends.”

Ivan laughed as he watched the undead, lust for battle practically flowing from his pores.

“After playing with them for so long, these guys even became your friends.”

Ivan clenched his fist before he froze for a moment and smiled.

“My friends are better looking.”

“What?”

Fwoom!

At that moment, a powerful firestorm appeared in front of Oydin, causing his expression to become stiff at the surprise attack.

“Kuk!”

Oydin shook his hand violently.

The nearby skeletons all hastily threw themselves to block the fire. But they were unable to block it completely.

Oydin threw himself back using Stonia’s power, his body rolling across the dirt floor.

Ivan laughed at this scene.

“Am I late?”

“No, your timing was perfect.”

“That’s good.”

Frey said this as he came to a stop beside Ivan.

He looked at Oydin with a sharp gaze.

“I thought he was smart, but it turns out that he is quite stupid. Otherwise, he would never summon his undead in the middle of the village.”

“Well he certainly has a few screws loose. Are all Apostles like this?”

“I think so.”

Lukes also didn’t appear to be completely sane when he met him.

“...anyway, if I knew he was such an emotional guy, I would’ve provoked him from the start. Or maybe sneak attack him.”

“Well, it doesn’t matter. We can just attack him now.”

Ivan smiled viciously as a red haze seemed to rise up from his body. This was proof that he’d entered full combat mode.

“...”

Oydin got up.

There were no injuries as he'd only rolled across the dirt, but he looked at Frey with an expressionless face.

“I see. So there were two outsiders? A First Class Magic Warrior and a powerful Wizard...very powerful indeed.”

“Oh oh. You still have time to run your mouth. It seems I'll have to fix that. Frey, I'll kill him.”

“No, wait.”

“Why?”

Ivan was a little annoyed as his body longed to fight.

On the other hand, Frey was calmly observing Oydin.

By revealing himself in the Elven village, this showed that he had the confidence to win even if the entire village became his enemy.

Moreover, despite knowing how powerful Frey and Ivan were, he was still quite calm.

Paat.

Frey released the Great Sage's Staff from its bracelet form.

This was an opponent that he needed to go all out against. Just as he'd done against Lukes.

Then Oydin began to mutter.

"I originally had a contract with the Wind Spirit King."

Although this was information that Frey had already received from Camille, it was still strange for him to bring it up here.

However, Frey still listened to him.

"But the proud Spirit King could not stand the power dwelling in my body. As soon as it felt it, it terminated the contract. Kuku. Well, if your spiritual power is strong enough, you can take control of a Spirit and use it like a puppet."

'Spirits have consciousnesses.'

Frey knew this because the Darkming, the Spirit contracted to him, had its own distinct personality.

“Mental domination. Oydin...you actually used the forbidden contract.”

Anger was clear in Syax’s eyes.

It wasn’t a contract between equals. Instead, it was a slavery contract.

Spirits were creatures that were born from and dwelled in nature. In a way, they could even be considered as nature in itself.

Naturally, Elves who loved nature would also love spirits.

It was unthinkable for them to use Spirits as tools. Furthermore, the act of forcing them to sign a contract and controlling their minds was considered extremely revolting.

At that moment, Syax realised that Oydin had truly thrown away his Elven nature.

“The power of death is extremely powerful, but I still felt that it was lacking something. So I learned a new skill.”

Oydin removed a dagger from his pocket and cut into his own palm.

Blood flowed from the injury and fell onto the ground.

Frey immediately realised the skill he learned.

“A contract. You signed a contract with a Demon?”

“They’re less resistant to the presence of Demigods. Unlike the spirits. Fortunately, I’m talented with contracts.”

A blood colored seal appeared on the ground.

Frey’s eyebrows furrowed as he saw this because the seal was familiar.

Seals’ shapes were not fixed and instead were dependent on the Demon being summoned.

And Frey knew the seal that Oydin was using well.

“Are you going to summon Asura?”

Only



Oydin froze.

“...it seems you know a bit about Demons. But knowing won't change anything.”

Frey lowered his staff as a weird light shined in his eyes.

Asura.

One of the three Demon Grand Dukes contracted to Iris Phisfounder.

If Oydin intended to summon him, then Frey would not stop him.

This could be an opportunity.

### **Season 1 Chapter 82: Hruhiral (5)**

“Shit. This is why I told you to let me kill him!”

Ivan was clearly annoyed, but Frey ignored him as he observed the undead surrounding them.

His eyes then landed on Syax.

It seemed that she had finally grasped how horrible the current situation was.

Frey approached her while speaking.

“Leave this to us. You need to go explain this situation to the Queen.”

“Huh? Explain this situation...”

How was she supposed to explain something like this?

Syax’s face suddenly darkened because she knew that she was the only one who could complete this task. Outsiders like Frey and Ivan would never be trusted enough.

Syax bit her lip before saying,

“I’ll be back soon. I’ll be sure to bring reinforcements, so please hold on until then.”

Syax left immediately.

Frey looked at the undead again.

They were stronger than the ones they’d encountered outside of the forest, but they weren’t much of a threat.

“Stop hesitating so much! They’re just a bunch of weak bastards!”

Ivan roared and swung his fist in all directions.

Knife Fist.

He unleashed the ranged attack that turned the undead into powder, but the effect he saw was not what he'd expected.

Ivan's expression froze a bit.

'These guys are tougher.'

If the undead that they'd met outside the Great Forest were sand, then the ones in front of them now were rocks.

Far from turning them into powder, his attacks hadn't even been able to destroy any of them completely.

When some of them tried to put themselves back together, Ivan roared with anger.

"Eat this, you boney bastards!"

Fwoosh.

Red air came out of Ivan's body, pushing back the skeletons that were trying to pick up their pieces.

Psss.

This time, the effect was much more obvious as numerous skeletons exploded into powder.

"Frost Scream."

Bright light emerged from the tip of the Great Sage's staff as Frey unleashed one of the spells he'd stored.

A large piece of ice smashed many of the surrounding skeletons. However, Frey never took his eyes off of Oydin.

He was looking at him because he wondered when Oydin would be finished, but Oydin, who felt that he was checking because he was anxious, let out a loud laugh.

"It's too late!"

Woowoong.

He spat out a mouthful of blood onto the shining summoning circle.

The blood soaked into the ground, causing it to clump together and form various shapes. They were the lost souls of hell shedding bloody tears.

These souls simultaneously released a terrible scream.

Ahhhhh-

And Frey couldn't help but think that they were fortunate Syax had already left.

This was because anyone without a sufficiently strong will would go crazy simply from hearing that horrific scream.

Woooooh.

An ominous wind seemed to blow through the trees, causing the screams of the lost souls to stop.

A Demon slowly rose up from the summoning circle on the ground.

The first thing that appeared were two heads. Then, forearms thicker than trees began appearing one after the other.

The Demon had six such arms, each holding a different weapon.

Asura.

It was a moment when one of the six Archdukes of the Demon World once again appeared on the continent.

He was so large that one would feel suffocated just from looking at him.

Pak.

Ivan, who had just smashed a skeleton's head, spat on the ground before saying.

"This guy is way stronger than the high-ranking Demons I encountered before. Is he one of the Archdukes?"

"That's right. Although I wasn't able to summon him in perfect condition."

Although Oydin said this, satisfaction was evident on his face.

It had only been three years since he'd learned of the summoning method, but being able to summon an Archduke was clear evidence of his talent.

His smile became even more relaxed.

“This is Asura...even though the summoning was not perfect, he is still strong enough to easily get rid of you two. What do you think? Don’t you think he’s a suitable replacement for the Wind Spirit King?”

Frey and Ivan didn’t answer.

They must’ve been terrified.

Oydin let out another laugh as he spread his arms.

“Now...! Asura! Kill them!”

[...]

Asura didn’t move immediately and instead inspected his surroundings.

He looked at the surrounding forest, the stream and Hruhiral that stretched high into the sky.

There was a bit of discomfort in his gaze.

[...is this the land of the Elves? To summon me to a place like this. You must be out of your mind.]

“Wh-, what did you say?”

[Your words are short. Be more polite, little Elf.]

“...huk!”

As he said this, Asura turned his eyes to glance at Oydin.

Oydin, who was just about to speak, felt an incredible pressure in his heart and was forced to take a few steps back.

[If it wasn't for your talent, I'd never have signed a contract with a youngling like you.]

Even though his words were insulting, Oydin didn't dare to refute them.

His back was wet with sweat.

[But it's been a while since I had a vacation, so it feels pretty good. It would have been better if it wasn't the land of the Elves though.]

He felt his appetite stirring.

Asura's different faces each turned to face Frey and Ivan respectively.



The moment he met his gaze, Ivan felt his heart flutter subconsciously, and immediately, his pride flared up.

'What are you afraid of, Ivan?!'

Frey was even more shocked by the familiar gaze.

[Anyway, a contract is a contract. Should I kill these two humans?]

"R-, right."

Oydin responded with a pale face.

Frey approached Asura.

Then he looked up at its faces before saying,

"The Archduke of Demons and the ruler of the Slaughter Hell, Asura."

[That's right, human Wizard. Do you intend to beg for your life?]

“Not exactly.”

[Hmm.]

Asura observed Frey closely.

Then, both of his heads tilted at the same time.

‘That look in his eyes...I think I’ve seen it before.’

He couldn’t remember it very well.

It was strange.

He would never forget such a unique human, and he didn’t think he’d met the one in front of him before.

It couldn’t be possible either.

The humans that he’d known before should’ve been nothing more than cold corpses by now.

Because they were only mortal.

“I want to ask you something.”

[Do you think I will give you an answer?]

[You should, Asura. Because you owe me.]

[...?]

Conductive Sound.

No. Was it Telepathy?

Using Telepathy on a Demon.

This was the first time...no.

This was not the first time.

There had been a guy who did the same thing a long time ago.

Asura frowned at the memories that he could not recall completely.

[Pardon my manners, Asura.]

[What?]

It was at that moment.

The landscape around Asura suddenly changed. It transformed from the lush forest to a desolate hell filled with endless screaming.

It was the Slaughter Hell, his own territory...

Asura realised that this was his Soul Space. And the man was still standing calmly in front of him.

His appearance was different from before, but Asura paid no attention to that.

[You're a pretty ridiculous guy. Do you understand what you've just done?]

Asura's body grew to dozens of times larger than he had been before. Almost as if he was trying to pierce the sky with his size.

The fierce aura that exuded from his body also became many times stronger.

This was natural.

The body that had been summoned in the Great Forest could only use a portion of his true power.

However, this was his true form.

The true essence of the Demon known as Asura, the true monarch of the Slaughter Hell in the Demon World.

“This is your Soul Space. With your power, it would not be difficult to erase my existence.”

It was exactly as Frey said.

He was currently in his soul form, which meant that Asura could snuff out his existence without much effort.

In a sense, he had placed his bare neck against the tiger’s fangs.

No, it was much more dangerous than that.

[Why did you come here?]

“I wanted to talk quietly with you.”

[Just because of that?]

Asura let out a laugh.

[I'll admit, you are a very interesting human. However, that's all that you are. I have lied for thousands of years. Do you think I've never met anyone who also pretended to be as bold as you?]

Asura lifted one of his weapons.

It was a hammer.

When Asura had grown to the size of a mountain, his weapons had grown with him.

The hammer in his hand was a mountain in its own right.

[Begone, mortal. I have nothing more to say to you.]

Then the hammer fell slowly, creating tremendous wind pressure.

The screams of the souls in the surroundings became even louder, as though they were screaming for him to kill Frey.

It was safe to say that if the hammer hit his soul, Frey would cease to exist.

However, Frey still remained calm.

“I came here to receive the debt from a bet, Asura.”

[...]

The hammer stopped.

[Debt from a bet?]

“I made a bet with you, and won. You promised me three favors to use at any time.”

[...]

Asura had a strange expression on his face.

[Was it a contract?]

“It was.”

[There’s only one person that I ever made such a contract with.]

It was about 4,000 years ago.

At that time, Asura hadn’t yet become an Archduke, but he had power that was close to one. At least, he had the strength to defeat the Archduke who ruled over the Slaughter Hell at that time.

However, the Archduke of the Slaughter hell was not such a simple figure.

Therefore, Asura increased his power by signing contracts with mortals in the Middle Earth. (TL: the author used the exact same ‘Middle Earth’ as in LoTR, so expect to meet Frodo soon ⇨ ⇨ ⇨)

Then he met a human.

A Wizard who was a friend of his contractor at that time, Iris.

He remembered him clearly because he was the one human who had the highest chance of crossing the transcendent boundary.

Lukas Trowman.



[Tell me what bet we made.]

Frey looked around.

“Is this scene the Slaughter Hell?”

[That’s right.]

Frey, who was silent for a moment, finally spoke.

“...I made it possible for you to view this landscape from the highest point.”

[...]

Asura’s eyes suddenly glowed a bloody red.

Frey realised that he was using one of the powers Archdukes gained upon reaching their level.

The Essence of Man, the ability to view the soul.

Asura looked at Frey for a long time before bursting into maniacal laughter.

[Hahahaha! Hahahaha-!]

His mad laughter shook the Soul Space violently.

Even Frey had no choice but to cover his ears because of how loud the laugh was.

The lost souls also began screaming as though they were sharing their master's joy.

[It's really you. Kukuku! How interesting. I heard you died during a fight against Lord. Did you come back?]

"That's what happened."

[But...you're ridiculously weak now.]

"That's none of your business. More importantly, are you more willing to answer my questions now?"

[Of course. You deserve at least that much.]

The stronger the Demon, the more important the agreements, contracts or promises, and the weaker the Demon, the less likely they were to keep their promises.

There were even cases of them eating their contractors.

Asura had never been like that. This was one of the reasons that he was able to sit on the seat of Archduke.

For Demons, the only way for them to truly elevate themselves was by signing contracts.

Of course, they could still become stronger if they broke the contract or ate their contractor. It was not that hard.

This was why a majority of Demons could not resist the temptation and chose the easy way to become stronger.

“Iris Phisfounder. I was told that she is still alive. Is that true?”

[That’s right.]

“ ... ”

Frey wasn’t sure how to feel.

Hruhiral and Asura. Two transcendent beings had confirmed her survival.

Iris Phisfounder was truly alive, just like he was, somewhere on the continent.

“I want to hear everything you know about Iris.”

[That’s not difficult. But I find this really interesting.]

“Interesting?”

[Kuku...]

[At the moment, I am no longer contracted to Iris.]

“Did you end the contract?”

[No. She was the one who ended it.”]

“Why?”

[I guess she no longer had a need for my strength.]

He didn’t understand.

Only

Frey narrowed his eyes.

“...you’re saying that she wouldn’t need the power of the Ruler of the Slaughter Hell and one of the Six Archdukes of the Demon World?”

[The power I can exert on the continent is limited anyway.]

When he heard the words that Asura said next, Frey felt his heart become heavy as though it was filled with lead.

[She must consider herself to be out of my league after spending thousands of years with the Demigods.]

### **Season 1 Chapter 83: Hruhiral (6)**

“Are you certain that Iris joined hands with the Demigods?”

[That’s how it appeared to me. There was one time that Iris summoned me, but when I finally arrived, I was met with quite the surprise. The Lord of the Demigods was standing right beside her.]

“...”

He’d seen her standing with none other than Lord.

Frey had no choice but to accept the truth.

[It wasn't just me either. Barbaros and Zefar were there too. Kuku! It was certainly rare for three Archdukes to gather in one place. Only Iris, who had a once in a thousand year talent, could do it...but.]

"She never summoned you to fight."

[Right. Because our power is very limited on the continent. I don't know what exactly happened after the war, but I think Iris made some kind of deal with Lord.]

"A deal? What deal?"

[I'm not sure. But it seemed she didn't want to fight a losing battle against Lord, so she wanted to negotiate more favorable conditions.]

"When did that happen?"

[It wasn't long after you disappeared. So about 4,000 years ago.]

"..."

Iris, no.

Schweiser and his other friends seemed to have guessed that Lord was the reason behind his disappearance.

Lord did not leave any trace of his actions, but in truth, the fact that there were no traces was the best piece of evidence.

What Asura was talking about happened right after Frey had been trapped in the Abyss.

Schweiser thought that Iris had gone into hiding at that time because she could not handle Lukas' death.

But that wasn't the case.

It seemed Iris was moving alone to achieve some sort of goal.

[Iris changed a lot since you disappeared. It used to be hard to guess what she was thinking, but it became impossible. However, she didn't go crazy. That's for sure. I've seen enough crazy humans to tell the difference.]

"..."

[Anyway, after her deal with Lord, she began working with the Demigods.]

"Is it possible that they controlled her mind? Or threatened her?"

[I don't know about threats, but it wasn't mind control. I'm not sure if there's anything that could subdue her mind in the first place.]

Frey agreed.

No matter how powerful the Demigods were, Iris' spiritual power was not something to be trifled with.

All five heroes, including Frey, were masters of their respective fields, which meant that their mental states were far beyond the capacity of normal humans.

In particular, Iris was a witch who specialised in Demon contracts, so her resistance to mental attacks was much stronger than the others.

[Over time, the frequency with which she summoned me began to lessen, and then she suddenly ended the contract a few hundred years ago. Without even the slightest explanation. I heard the same thing happened to Barbatos and Zefar.]

Asura's lips curled upward.

[Zefar was extremely offended by that, and he hasn't signed any contracts with mortals since then. He's quite narrow-minded.]

"...is that all you know?"



[That's right. No...wait.]

Asura seemed to think about something for a moment before opening his mouth.

[Iris...seemed to be searching for something.]

“Looking for something? Like what?”

[That human. The one with white hair and golden eyes. His name was...]

“Schweiser Strow.”

Asura nodded as Frey supplied him with the name.

[Right. That was the name. The one who was called the Great Sage. Iris seemed to be looking for his inheritance.]

“Schweiser's inheritance?”

[Right. I heard her muttering about finding a 'core' or something.]

“...!”

Core.

The only thing that Frey could think about at that moment was Anastasia, Schweiser’s magnum opus.

A Golem core that stored a whopping 1 million ME.

‘Iris knows about Anastasia?’

He didn’t know why Iris was looking for a core. However, if he was able to complete Anastasia, he felt like he’d be able to understand why.

Anastasia would have the answers to most of his questions.

‘I’m running out of time.’

Frey realised once again that he did not have the time to relax and enjoy a slow pace.

[Is that all you wanted to know?]

“Yes.”

[Good. You still have two more requests. Tell me what you want.]

Frey pondered for a moment before asking.

“Can you kill Oydin?”

[Impossible.]

Asura shook his heads.

[I'd never do something demeaning. I'm not bragging or anything, but I've never harmed my contractors. No matter how many favors I owe you, it's not something I will do.]

It was a pity, but he knew he was asking for too much.

“Then what about returning to the Demon World without listening to Oydin's orders?”

[That's easy enough.]

Doing that alone was quite easy.

Although his current strength in the outside world wasn't complete because of the faulty summoning, he was still not something that Frey and Ivan were capable of handling on their own.

[Then there's one more.]

"...could you sign a contract with me?"

"With you?"

Asura spoke in a surprised voice.

[Didn't you say before that you weren't interested in signing contracts with Demons?]

"I'm no longer in a position where I can pick and choose as I like. I have to use every option available."

It was clear to him that a contract with Asura would be of great help to him. Although his powers were restricted on the continent, the power of an Archduke was not something that could be ignored.

Asura looked at him with a slightly weird expression.

[Do you still intend to kill all the Demigods on the continent?]

"That is my only purpose in life."

[Kukuku!]

It was a clear voice filled with determination, and Asura could not help the laughter that escaped his lips.

Demigods.

They were transcendent beings who were practically the rulers of Middle Earth.

If a Demigod appeared in the Demon World, Asura would not be afraid of them.

Each of the six Archdukes, who each ruled over a hell, was no less powerful than the Demigods.

In fact, it was safe to say that they were stronger than the Demigods, excluding Lord and the Apocalypses.

That's why Frey's existence was so interesting.

Compared to Demigods, humans were insignificant beings.

Yet one of these insignificant creatures had declared that they would annihilate the Demigods.

And it wasn't the case where this man was ignorant of the Demigods' power. Instead, he was probably someone who had more knowledge about the Demigods' strength than anyone else in the world.

Nevertheless, he didn't hesitate to fight back. Even when he was afraid, he struggled to overcome it.

Asura realised exactly what Frey was.

[You are a true warrior.]

"I'm a Wizard."

[I mean your fighting spirit, you fool.]

"..."

It had been a long time since he'd been called a fool.

Asura let out a hearty laugh.

[Fine. I'll sign a contract with you. You don't have much talent, but I will do it because of our agreement. Kuku. You will be my most interesting contractor since Iris.]

Woowoong.

Blood-colored patterns began forming in front of Asura, and when Frey took a closer look, he realised it was the summoning circle used to summon him.

[This is my summoning circle. Make sure you memorise it well so you can summon me when you get the time. We will form the contract then.]

“Got it.”

Asura’s figure slowly began to blur.

Frey wasn’t surprised at all. After all, this was a phenomenon that he had already witnessed once that day.

His soul began leaving Asura’s Soul space.

And just before he left completely, Frey heard Asura mutter under his breath.

[What an interesting human...]

\* \* \*

Frey blinked.

He had returned to reality.

They had spoken for a long time in the Soul Space, but only a few seconds had passed in reality. (TL:...so why did he spend half a day with Hruhiral then?...)(YH: author won't reveal naughty things)

Asura looked at Oydin and said.

[I'm heading back.]

“Wh-, what did you say? What are you talking about?! I summoned yo...”

[So noisy.]

Asura swung his arm. The sword in his hand twisted and barely missed Oydin.

Crack! Crack!

Crash!



“...urk!”

Hundreds of trees behind Oydin were swept away in an instant.

With only the wind pressure released from his lazily swung blade, even the heavy forest trees that were deeply rooted in the ground were sent flying.

[You should be more concerned about whether you’ll survive tonight, puppet.]

“...?”

Puppet?

Gurgle...

While Frey was trying to decipher the meaning behind those words, Asura’s body transformed into blood and fell to the ground, soaking it once more.

Ivan, who was unsure of what was going on, could only ask with a confused expression on his face.

“What the hell? Why did he just leave? Frey, what did you do?”

All he knew was that Frey spoke to Asura.

He was asking because this guy looked innocent, but he knew that Frey had something to do with what happened.

“Well. It’s a good thing for us in any case.”

“That... but something doesn’t feel right.”

“Let’s focus on Oydin first. Just because Asura is gone doesn’t mean we can defeat him.”

Frey’s expression was a bit strange.

He looked at Oydin while pondering the words Asura had said while leaving.

Oydin trembled.

“I, I don’t believe this! Bullshit! H-, he...clearly said that I could use Asura to avert any crisis!”

“...”

Now that he thought about it, there was something he couldn’t understand.

Who taught Oydin how to summon Asura?

'It could be Iris.'

He couldn't let a clue about her slip away.

Oydin looked exhausted, but he didn't let his guard down. Because he still had his divine power.

"Uahhh!"

Crack.

The ground split apart, and undead began appearing once again.

This time, there were many more of them, but there were four Death Knights at the front who stood apart from the group.

They all wore blood red armor.

"Ivan, watch out for those guys with red armor at the front."

"What are they?"

“Bloody Knights.”

“Huh?”

“...in short, they are a higher ranking undead than Death Knights. They have a more developed combat ability compared to Death Knights.”

“Uh...so they're basically just sturdier punching bags?”

Frey opened his mouth before closing it again.

Ivan shouldn't die at his level.

Then he turned back to Oydin.

He was flying in the sky on the back of a Bone Drake he'd summoned.

Did he intend to run away?

But he was acting strangely.

“Ivan, can I ask you a favor?”

“Go ahead.”

After seeing Ivan snort, Frey covered him in some strengthening spells. They wouldn't help him much, but it was better than nothing.

Ivan smiled as he saw his faintly glowing body.

“This is nice.”

“Be careful. They aren't easy to handle.”

“Got it.”

Frey flew up with a flight spell and shot after Oydin.

The Drake was flapping furiously as it headed towards its destination without looking back.

It didn't take long for Frey to realise where Oydin was headed.

The top of Hruhiral.

Oydin landed there before turning around to glare at Frey.

Anger and hatred were clear in his eyes.

“Who the hell are you? And what trick did you use against Asura?”

“It’s pointless to tell you since you will die here.”

“You can try...!”

Oydin shook his hand.

The Bone Drake shot forward with a loud roar.

Thud!

Then the body of the Drake that was rushing towards Frey froze in a block of ice and fell to the ground.

“Eeeek...!”

Oydin shook his hand again, and purple energy began to flow from it.

Undead began to rise from the branches of the World Tree, and upon seeing this, Frey couldn't help but say.

"I also have a question."

"Shut up!" (TL: how rude)

The undead began rushing toward him.

However, Frey quickly understood that Oydin was no threat to him.

Was it because Oydin had been weakened?

If so, then why was he so weak? Was it because he expended a lot of energy to summon Asura? Or was it because of the Bone Drake and Bloody Knights he just summoned?

It was possible since summoning Asura consumed a large amount of energy.

After all, summoning an Archduke was no easy task.

If another Archduke other than Asura had been summoned, then everyone in the village including Frey and Ivan would have had to risk their lives to force it back.

There was only one thing that Frey was curious about.

Why was Oydin investing so much energy into tricks like summoning Demons despite being an Apostle?

Crack! Crack!

All the undead became frozen and shattered.

Oydin's gestures became more frantic. However, in contrast to Oydin, Frey's facial expression became.

A haze of icy air seemed to come from his body.

"Nozdog has control over the power of death. Yet you seem to only have the ability to summon undead."

"This is the power of death...! I, I control death...!"

"This is just necromancy. I don't understand. Are you really Oydin?"

Only



“What...what are you talking about?”

“...”

Crack.

The sound of Frey stepping on a piece of ice was particularly loud.

Oydin, who received his sharp gaze, shivered subconsciously.

“You, are you even an Apostle?”

### **Season 1 Chapter 84: Hruhiral (7)**

‘Among the Apostles, there are those who are able to hide their divine power. The Apostles of the mighty Demigods, who the Circle calls the Apocalypses, and Lord.’

That was the information he received from Riki.

...Riki claimed to have betrayed the Demigods, but Frey didn't really believe him.

So naturally, he wouldn't just take his words at face value.

He believed the story about the Demigod's hibernation because he had seen Indra's severed head with his own eyes.

However, the phrase 'Apocalypse's Apostles could hide their divine power' was different.

He had ample reason to doubt it.

'Asura called Oydin a puppet.'

He didn't know exactly what he meant by that. However, it made Frey's question implicitly clear.

The power that Oydin showcased was in no way threatening.

In fact, Frey had never felt any threat to his life since encountering the man.

To put it bluntly, the effort that he needed to exert paled in comparison when compared to Lukes, Indra's Apostle.

Besides, the depth of his ability was too shallow. It was too meager for him to believe it was the power of death.

Otherwise, why would he be so willing to summon a Demon while being able to utilise divine power?

All of this brought one question to his mind.

'Is Oydin really the Apostle?'

Frey walked toward Oydin, whose cold, sweat-covered arms were shaking.

"A-, Apostle? Did you ask if I was an Apostle? Obviously...! I. I am Lord Nozdog's Apostle!"

"I've heard about Nozdog before."

Nozdog, the Demigod with the power of death.

There was a fair amount of information about him in the Circle.

This was natural. After all, the Circle had once led a punitive expedition against him. And the result was... a disastrous defeat.

The Trowman Rings, who had power comparable to the Three Great Circles, headed on a downward spiral following the deaths of the Circle Master and many key circle executives, and although it wasn't as much, the other circles also suffered heavy damage.

"It's not just about bringing the dead back to life. It was said that he always had a purple mist surrounding his body. If anyone who was not strong enough inhaled this mist, they would die instantly."

"K-, kuh."

“It wasn’t just that either. With just a touch, he had the power to melt skin and flesh from bone, and he could create ghosts that couldn’t be defeated through normal means. You are an Apostle, so it is impossible for you to have all of his power. However, even if we take that into account, you are still too weak.”

Frey looked at the undead around him.

“Look at this. Oydin, look at the undead that you summoned. Is this all the power you have? The power of the Death Apocalypse’s Apostle?”

“U-, uh...”

Oydin shivered.

The man before him was calling him weak. Originally, he would not have expected it just because he said it.

But...he knew that this man was stronger than him.

[I’m sorry. But this is a choice that you will regret for your entire life.]

The voice of the Wind Spirit King appeared in his mind at that instant.

At the time, he had only scoffed at her words, but now, he felt somewhat uneasy, as if her prediction was about to be proven.

Was Nozdog really tricking him?

“Nozdog...Lord Nozdog...!”

Oydin cried out his name.

At that moment, divine power erupted from his left eye, and purple smoke began spewing from it.

Pshhk.

‘Artificial eye? Is that the medium?’

The plume of smoke rose into the air before taking shape.

Frey was dumbfounded.

He had not expected him to contact his Demigod in such a situation. However, Oydin was already unable to think clearly.

He looked up at the sky with a desperate expression. He looked towards the only one who would be able to assuage his doubts.

That being stood high in the sky, looking like a god of death at that moment.

It was a skeleton with pure white bones wearing a sharply contrasting black robe. (YH: Overlord?!)

Even Frey felt his heart shake when he looked into the green fires that burned within the skeleton's eye sockets.

Cold sweat began forming on his forehead.

'That's Nozdog.'

He realized it immediately.

The power of the being in front of him reminded him of Riki.

He already found it difficult to breathe just by looking at the image in front of him, which wasn't even the main body.

[What is it?]

“Please tell me. Lord Nozdog...! Am I really not your Apostle?”

[...]

“Th-, this guy said that I was too weak! Is he telling the truth? He must be spouting nonsense, right? I... I am Lord Nozdog’s Apostle, aren’t I? Ha, haha!”

Nozdog looked at Oydin, who was laughing awkwardly.

His gaze could be predicted by the movement of the fires in his eye sockets.

So when Nozdog’s gaze turned to him, Frey stepped back and raised his guard.

[I didn’t expect Oydin’s identity to be revealed so quickly. Interesting. How did you find out?]

It was a questioning tone.

Frey realised that Nozdog was curious as to how he’d learned of this.

“Because of the traces that were left around the Great Forest.”

[You felt it? You’re quite sensitive for a human. There are a few people like that. But even then, it would not be so fast.]

“What are you trying to say?”

[The traitor.]

Frey sincerely felt that it was fortunate Ivan wasn't with him at the moment. Otherwise, if that simple guy heard Nozdog's words, he would have reacted as though they had already been caught.

Frey wouldn't make such a rudimentary mistake.

He simply looked up at Nozdog with an expressionless face, as if to ask what nonsense he was talking about.

Nozdog stared at his face.

Then the pure white head of the skeleton tilted to the side.

[That's right...I would expect no less from someone who realised that Oydin was not actually my Apostle. As expected, this little ploy attracted enough attention.]

'...this bastard.'

Was the undead plague that had been unleashed on the Great Reynolds Forest simply bait to lure out the Demigods' traitor?



No, it wasn't just that.

Frey looked at Oydin, who was staring at Nozdog with a horrified expression on his face, once again.

"I see."

From the start, Oydin's purpose had only been to serve as bait.

He wasn't sure exactly how it was possible, but he couldn't just ignore this chance.

If he poked at him a bit, he should be able to get a reaction of some kind.

"I don't know what you're talking about. This is my first time talking to a Demigod, but you talk a lot more than I expected."

[...]

Nozdog observed the human in front of him.

He had been alive for tens of thousands of years, and it was not a hard task for him to understand the thoughts of mortals.

After asking a question that he determined to pierce the core of what he wanted to know, he would immediately be able to know the truth from even the slightest reaction.

That was why he had responded to Oydin's call so quickly.

He was sure that if someone who was able to force Oydin into a corner, to the extent that he would call for him, appeared, they would definitely be connected to the traitor.

But somehow, he was unable to read anything.

'How perplexing.'

This was something that Nozdog had not felt in over ten thousand years.

He could not tell what this man before him was thinking.

If other Demigods heard him say that, they might've burst into laughter, but it was the truth.

He, who had lived for tens of thousands of years couldn't read the intentions of a man who had not even lived 100 years?

'That makes it even more suspicious.'

Oydin slowly stepped forward.

“Lord Nozdog...please answer me. I threw away everything. You can’t do this. Please...am I just a puppet...no. I, am I...”

[You’re not a puppet.]

Nozdog shook his head.

When he heard this, Oydin’s eyes lit up.

“Do you...really mean that? Then I am really you...”

[You’re not my Apostle. You were just bait. And.]

Nozdog pointed a boney finger at Oydin.

[There’s no reason to keep the bait alive when it failed to catch the fish.]

“Uh...urk...”

Oydin's body began to melt.

First, his hair fell out. Then his skin flowed down like water, and his eyes fell out.

Oydin's appearance, which was even more gorgeous than Peran's, disappeared in an instant.

"U-, u-, urk...ugh...!"

He tried to catch his melting skin, but it was impossible.

His hands had also melted, revealing his white bones.

"Ah...no wa..."

Those were Oydin's final words.

Puk.

His body collapsed in a pile.

He'd died in vain.

Frey felt a little empty inside because he had been prepared to risk his life against him.

He turned to Nozdog once again.

It might have been because of Oydin's death, but his figure had begun to blur.

[Circle. It's definitely starting to become a pain. And if the traitor is intending to cooperate with you...it will become even more annoying.]

He muttered softly as he disappeared.

[Even if we have to pay a price, it'll be better to wipe it out completely.]

“...”

With those words, Nozdog's image vanished completely.

Frey looked up at the sky. It was still the dark night's sky.

He really wanted to see the crescent moon that was hidden behind the clouds. But there was something he needed to do first.

“I think you can come out now.”

“...”

After he said that, someone finally appeared.

Frey turned around.

White hair that seemed to glow in the dark and skin that was even whiter than that.

She smiled gently with her destructively beautiful face.

Snow De Predickwood

The Queen of the Elves and Oydin’s sister.

“How did you know?”

“You mean after you purposefully revealed your presence?”

Frey didn’t speak politely, and Snow did not show any displeasure because of that.

Instead, she looked at Frey with a curious expression on her face.

“Hmm.”

Her aura was very different from the last time they met.

At that time, her body seemed to exude the nobility and grace that one would expect from a Queen, but now, it was like she was a completely different person.

In fact, she even looked a little cheerful.

Her gaze turned to Oydin’s corpse, which was in a pool of blood in front of Frey.

“So this is how it ended.”

“...”

“Thank you. For putting my foolish brother to rest. Originally, it was something I intended to do with my own hands.”

...was this her true appearance?

The way she spoke didn’t change much, but her expression was completely different.

“You knew that this man was a Demigod’s subordinate?”

“That’s right.”

Snow nodded and touched her slender waist, causing Frey to notice the sword that was holstered there.

“How? Did Hruhiral tell you?”

“No. Hruhiral does not say anything about them.”

“...then.”

“It was the one who told you about Oydin’s identity.”

Riki?

Riki was the one who told her?

‘Why?’



Frey remained expressionless, hiding the agitation he felt inside. It was possible that she was lying just to get information from him.

However, after hearing what Snow had to say next, he knew that she wasn't.

"Demigod Riki with the power of the sword. Rest assured, Wizard Frey. You and I are on the same side."

"Who are you?"

"Snow Predickwood, Queen of all Elves. But that isn't what you want to know, is it?"

Snow laughed, revealing her white teeth.

"As for my identity, I will tell you when the Magic Warrior King's successor joins us. For now, we should head down. There's something we need to deal with."

"What do we have to deal with?"

"My brother's final struggle."

The moment she smiled and spoke bitterly, divine power began to pour out of Oydin's corpse.

'He's already dead, so how is this happening?'

As he thought this, Frey prepared his mana.

Snow muttered while slowly pulling out her sword.

“I tried to kill Oydin outside of the Great Forest because I was afraid something like this would happen. But it is inevitable now as his evil plan has already been exposed.”

Snow pointed to Oydin’s body.

“Nozdog planted seeds into Oydin’s body as he killed him. He intends to make use of the divine power still within it, and something really troublesome will come out.”

Chh.

Only

Oydin’s blood began to clump together. Then it flew toward Frey at a tremendous speed.

Frey used Blink to escape the blood.

However, the blood continued and fell from the tree as though Frey had not been its target in the first place.

“That was it?”

“Look down, and you’ll understand.”

Frey stood on the edge of the branch and looked down at the village.

**Season 1 Chapter 85: Clean Up (1)**

As he looked down from Hruhiral, Frey’s expression became strange.

A gigantic magic circle had been drawn on the ground.

The magic circle, which could be seen clearly even from the top of Hruhiral, was emitting an ominous, bloody light, similar to Asura’s circle. However, the pattern was different.

“He used Oydin’s blood as a medium to summon something.”

“It’s huge. Maybe even a Dragon might come out of it.”

Roaaaaaar!

At that moment, a Dragon made entirely out of pure, white bones, stepped out of the magic circle.

Its eye sockets lit up as a ferocious roar tore through the forest. (TL: if this doesn't wake those elves up...nothing will)

Snow let out a cheerful laugh.

"A word can become a seed. This proverb seems to represent this situation quite well."

"..."

"Well then..."

Snow covered her face with a wooden mask.

It wasn't any ordinary mask.

Instead, the moment she put it on her face, her appearance began to change.

Her white hair became black, and her noble and mysterious aura faded.

"A magic tool?"

"It's called Jenki's Mask. Because my normal appearance is too eye-catching."

“I suppose you don’t want to reveal your identity.”

“Right. It’s not yet time.”

Frey nodded.

“If you help me, I’ll be able to stop the Dragon.”

“That’s a weird thing to say. The Great Forest is the home of the Elves, so aren’t you the one helping?  
Thank you in advance.”

He could feel that she was smiling behind the mask just by looking at her eyes.

What she said did make sense.

It seemed that Snow was someone who liked having conversations, but now was not the time to chat.

Rooooaar-

The Bone Dragon caused a large commotion.

In that short moment, it had already uprooted countless trees, and deep scars marked the ground.

After looking at each other's eyes for a moment, Frey and Snow lept from the tree at the same time, completely in sync.

\* \* \*

"Fuck this!"

Ivan swore loudly.

Anyone would react in the same way if a gigantic skeleton Dragon appeared from out of the ground.

What's more, he'd had a hard time defeating the Bloody Knights and had finally gotten the chance to take a breather.

"I thought this would happen..."

Syax was sad as she saw the destruction being wrought upon the forest.

From the moment the Dragon appeared, it had already smashed dozens of trees, and the destruction seemed far from over.

It was a truly heartbreaking sight for Elves.

This was true for the Elves she brought as reinforcements as well.

“Wind Spirit!”

“Lend me your strength!”

The Elves began using all of their means to desperately attack the Bone Dragon, but they failed to produce any results.

The Dragon’s bones were too hard, and its magic resistance too strong.

Someone couldn’t help but mutter.

“I can’t believe the Hiralgard isn’t here at a time like this...”

They would not have been this desperate if the Hiralgard had not left the village for a mission.

Most of the High Elves’ outstanding warriors were a part of that group.

It was then.

Crack!

Ivan's fist smashed the Dragon's bones, causing the eyes of all the Elves that saw this to widen dramatically.

This was because the Dragon's bones, which they had been unable to damage, even after trying their best, were smashed so easily.

However, Ivan's expression crumpled.

'I used up too much of my strength. It's not like I can't damage it... but I won't be able to last for much longer.'

Tat.

Then Frey and Snow fell from the sky and landed beside him.

Ivan clenched and unclenched his fist as he threw a glance towards them.

It would be different with that guy around.

"What about Oydin?"



“Dead. Now, all we need to do is clean up the aftermath.”

“You say that like it’s as easy as flipping a palm. That monster won’t be easy to beat.”

“But we have to anyway.”

As snow spoke in a bright tone, Ivan tilted his head slightly.

“Who’s this chick?”

“A partner. Not completely trustworthy.”

“You’re too much. Couldn’t you introduce me more warmly?”

Frey didn’t pay attention to her joke. It wasn’t a situation where they could afford to play around.

Snow grumbled as she tightened the grip on her sword.

“He’s loud, but he’s not that much of a threat. The three of us should be enough.”

“...fine.”

“Let’s get to it.”

Frey, Ivan and Snow looked up at the Dragon, and maybe it felt their gazes, because the forest was once again shaken by a loud roar.

\* \* \*

“You’re late, Riki.”

A gloomy and unpleasant voice sounded out.

It sounded like someone was scratching the bark of an old tree with their nails, but it was a voice that he’d heard countless times before.

Riki turned his head calmly without even the slightest twitch of an eyebrow.

It was a hideous old man who sat slouched in a chair. He had numerous age spots on his face, a bulbous, aquiline nose, hazy eyes and messy hair.

Even if one tried to find something good in his appearance, it would be impossible.

“You’re early, Ananta.”

“Kukukuku. Same old, same old.”

Riki sat down after taking a look at Ananta, who was laughing in the darkness.

He wasn't as late as he made it seem.

Apart from him, there were three others there. And they were still waiting for two more to join them.

“Wasn't Nozdog the one who called us here today?”

This time, it was a bubbly voice.

Demigod Leyrin, who had gray hair, put her chin on her hand as she spoke in a bored manner.

“This is a special occasion. I can't believe that Nozdog, who is the most taciturn after Riki, actually called a meeting.”

“There must be something important to discuss.”

It was a Demigod with hair that looked like fire.

Leyrin looked at him before saying.

“Agni, did you make an Apostle yet?”

“Not yet.”

“Aren’t you a little too late? Lord said that everyone should bring an Apostle to the next meeting. He said he’d check each and every one of us.”

“I will make one in time. Don’t worry.”

“You’re such a pain in the neck. Fine, I won’t worry. You’re on your own.”

Leyrin frowned and waved her hand a few times.

It was then.

[It seems I am the last one.]

The void split, and with a gloomy voice, Nozdog appeared.

His skeletal appearance stood out a lot among the group of Demigods.

“Lord’s not here yet?”

[Lord won’t be coming this time.]

“What? I wanted to see his face after such a long time.”

Leyrin leaned over the table with a sad expression on her face. However, her grumbling ended there as it was a common occurrence.

After all, Lord was busier than the five of them combined.

“So? Why did you call us here, Nozdog?”

[I’m sure you’ve already guessed the reason for this meeting. At this point, there’s only one thing that would warrant such an urgent meeting.]

Ananta let out a low laugh before saying.

“You discovered a clue about the traitor.”

[That’s right.]

Nozdog nodded and observed these people whom he'd known for tens of thousands of years.

He'd deliberately spoken publicly about the traitor, but no one had any noticeable reactions.

He didn't expect to see any anyway.

If he could have found out who it was with only so few words, then they would have been captured already.

He wasn't even sure that the traitor was an Apocalypse in the first place.

Nozdog still found it unbelievable.

Was there really a traitor among their people?

Theirs was not a bond that was bound by a few years or decades as those among mortals.

They had been together for thousands and even tens of thousands of years.

Their minds were already entangled like webs down to the deepest depths, reaching to the point where they even shared feelings and emotions.

Nevertheless, the fact that they had been unable to find the traitor meant that they were extremely adept at controlling their emotions.

Therefore, in order to find the traitor, they must first break their composure.

'That's easy to say.'

He knew how difficult such a task was since even he himself would not so much as twitch an eyebrow if something were to not go as he wanted.

"Huh? Really? Yay! So we can finally get rid of that ungrateful bastard?"

[No. I only have a clue. We still don't know who it is.]

"Hmm. I see."

Leyrin.

At first glance, one might think from her actions that she was quite expressive. However, her insides were colder than ice.

Nozdog continued speaking without paying much attention to her outburst.

[I created several Apostles and scattered them across the continent.]

“You made several Apostles? That’s possible?”

[It would be impossible if they were all the real thing. But except for the real one, the rest are just trash who can’t even properly use the bit of power I gave them.]

“I see. So they’re bait.”

[That’s right. And one of them, whom I planted near the Great Reynolds Forest, died.]

“The Great Forest...that’s near where Riki stays.”

The Demigods’ eyes all turned to Riki. Though no one looked at him openly with suspicious gazes, it didn’t make it any better.

Riki simply nodded.

“There were some undead around the area.”

[Riki, you said you made an Apostle a while ago.]



“Is there a problem with that?”

[It's not that. It's just...haven't you hated interacting with mortals since that incident 4,000 years ago?]

“...”

As he said this, Nozdog turned to Riki.

[That human country you destroyed. What was the name again...]

“Icollium.” (TL: ...)

Riki said the name for him.

Nozdog, no. Every Demigod seated there felt his emotions fluctuate slightly.

However, it was not suspicious. They all knew that Riki had been greatly impressed by the man he'd fought there.

“It was called Icollium. Nozdog, I wonder why you're suddenly bringing up that story.”

[It's because I'm curious as to why you would suddenly make an Apostle,]

“Lord said to make one. It was in preparation for the meeting.”

[...]

He wasn't wrong, but Nozdog was a little suspicious.

The only ones who could get away with disobeying Lord's orders were the five seated in this room.

And among those here, Riki especially had numerous conflicts with Lord.

It was slightly suspicious that Riki so obediently followed Lord's orders.

Leyrin spoke with a bored expression still on her face.

“Alright, that's enough. Tell us what clues you've found.”

[The dummy Apostles I made also had the ability to hide their divine power. This means that unless they revealed their power first, those troublesome pursuers from the Circle would never be able to find them. Only a Demigod would be able to see through it.]

“Then...”

[For now, the more suspicious are the ones who reside near the Great Forest.]

For a moment, silence descended upon the room.

Finally, Agni said.

“Does that include Riki?”

[That’s right.]

“...”

Agni’s expression became slightly strange.

In truth, he still didn’t believe that there was a traitor among the Demigods. And even if it were true, he did not believe it would be one of the five.

[If we consider the range of a Demigod’s perception, then four people, including Riki, are the main suspects. Lord will speak directly to the four of them during the meeting in three months time. Riki, you are no exception.]

“I’ll keep it in mind.”

Riki nodded calmly without showing any reactions.

Nozdog looked at him for a moment before speaking.

[Everyone must bring their Apostles to the meeting. However, we should consider alternatives to hide their appearances. Our Apostles' identities are our weak points as long as we don't know who the traitor is.]

Everyone nodded.

The meeting was important for the Demigods, but it was also an opportunity that the traitor would not dare to pass up.

The Apocalypses' Apostles were particularly well hidden, so they would participate in the meeting just to learn their identities.

"Then, I'll see you there."

Leyrin was the first to leave, followed by Ananta, Agni and finally Nozdog.

Riki was the only one left in the dark room.

"Hmmm..."

He tapped on the arm of his chair, deep in thought.

“As it is... my plan won’t work.”

If he was to take his real Apostle, then Nozdog was bound to be suspicious.

Only

He had made a blunder, so to speak.

However, he could use the method Nozdog mentioned and use someone who wasn’t his Apostle to fool Lord.

“It’s difficult. It’s a really difficult problem.”

But it wasn’t impossible.

Riki’s murmur echoed in the dark room.

**Season 1 Chapter 86: Clean Up (2)**

“...”

Syax was dumbfounded by the sight in front of her.

The Bone Dragon, a monster powerful enough to be considered the Lord of undead.

It was the first time Syax was seeing one in person, but from the knowledge that she had gained, she knew how ridiculously powerful it was.

When the Bone Dragon first appeared from the bloody summoning circle, Syax believed that the village's destruction was inevitable.

And she was not alone.

The majority of the Elves thought so too.

Neither their spells, spirits nor weapons had been able to so much as scratch the Dragon's bones.

That's why the sudden appearance of people, who suddenly began fighting the Dragon, was like the arrival of a team of heroes to the Elves.

Crack, crack.

Suddenly, hundreds of ice spikes filled the sky, causing Syax's jaw to drop.

'So many ice spikes were created in an instant...'

It was clear who had cast the spell. Because there was only one Wizard in the village who might've been able to utilize such powerful magic.

Frey.

Moreover, she didn't just focus on the scale of the attack.

The movement of the Dragon made it tricky to deal damage to it while minimizing the destruction of the village.

"...!"

Syax shuddered.

Frey's skill was phenomenal. It was beyond amazing.

Syax was perhaps the only one among the Elves present who could truly understand how shocking the sight before them was.

Archmage.

Frey was definitely an Archmage.

Syax finally realised the weight of the word at that very moment.

She could see it clearly.

An image of the entire battlefield was in Frey's mind at that moment. On it were the positions of every ally, enemy and civilian that were present, and by using that image, he was able to think of ways to combine dozens of spells, and he was able to pinpoint the right places to release them.

But it wasn't just Frey who was amazing.

"Kuhh!"

A man roared as he charged toward the Bone Dragon, his lion mane-like hair blowing fiercely in the wind.

Boom!

His fist struck the Dragon's leg with a loud sound.

Considering the Bone Dragon's size, such an attack should have been akin to being bitten by a mosquito. However, the result was the opposite.

Crack!



The Bone Dragon's front paw was smashed, and the giant monster staggered backward.

The bones of this large Dragon, which had not been scratched by the Elves' attacks, shattered like glass.

"A-, amazing."

"They are...?"

Then someone appeared behind the Dragon and swung their sword at the Dragon's remaining foot.

Kak!

The forefoot was cut off easily, revealing a clean cut.

"Aht!"

"Th-, that lady!"

The High Elves simultaneously revealed expressions of relief.

They soon cheered with their arms raised in the air.

They immediately recognized the masked, black-haired swordswoman.

“I-, it’s Swordna!”

“Hiralgard’s Swordna is here!”

\* \* \*

‘It’s loud, but it’s not that much of a threat.’

Snow’s judgement had been accurate.

As she said, they had overwhelmed the Bone Dragon from the moment the fight began.

However, it wasn’t that the Dragon was weak.

How could that be?

The being that they faced was none other than a Bone Dragon. Something that only a necromancer who had reached the pinnacle of necromantic arts could even hope to summon.

But this one was incredibly clumsy.

It was unable to properly use its destructive power, the strength of its bones or even the simplest of spells.

‘Come to think of it, none of the undead that Oydin summoned had a consciousness.’

Undead were not monsters that were all without intellect.

Like the Lich that Frey encountered on the Cortez, the higher the undead’s rank, the closer they got to human intelligence.

However, Oydin’s undead were different.

Their power was slightly higher than normal undead, but their intellect was much lower.

Was it because he was only half an Apostle?

“Get down, you lizard bastard!”

Ivan’s fist crashed into the Dragon’s head.

Boom!

There was a loud explosion as the Dragon's head was smashed.

The Bone Dragon lost its balance and stumbled backward, and Snow did not miss that opening.

She jumped up with a light step that looked like a gentle dance move, and sliced the Bone Dragon's neck.

Krrrr...

That was the final blow.

Smoke billowed out of the Bone Dragon's body as it began to fall apart like a rain of bone fragments.

The size of these bone fragments were large enough to be threatening to the Elves, even if they couldn't harm the three of them.

Snow's expression hardened.

"That savage..."

"Barrier."

Suddenly, a barrier appeared to block the bone fragments, and Snow's stiff expression smoothed.

"You're an even more amazing wizard than I thought."

Frey responded after confirming that no more fragments were falling from the sky.

"The front was strong, so supporting from the rear was easy."

Snow smiled and turned to Ivan.

"Right. This Magic Warrior is also quite powerful. But you know. You are the reason that guy and I could fight so comfortably."

Frey's ability had long surpassed the level that could be described as skillful or talented.

He had overwhelming experience, impeccable judgement and was able to maintain his composure even in an extremely chaotic situation.

Thanks to this, they had been able to defeat the Dragon while sustaining barely any damage.

It wasn't that there were no casualties, but considering the Dragon's might, their losses were negligible at worst.

“His battle awareness is really strange.”

Ivan approached them while brushing bone dust off his face.

Snow nodded and sheathed her sword.

Chuk.

Just as she admired Frey’s ability, Frey was also astonished by the skill that she had displayed.

Frey noticed that there was something hidden in her power, but he chose to keep it to himself for now.

“Hoo...”

Ivan shook his head, his mane-like hair swinging wildly and his face red with exhaustion.

He was definitely the most tired among them.

After defeating the four Bloody Knights as well as the other undead, he had helped them subdue the Dragon without taking a break.

“Goddammit. I came out to have a bath. I didn’t expect to have to deal with this shit.”

“Let’s clean up first. Then we’ll hear what this woman has to say.”

“Sure.”

Snow looked around.

They won, but it had left a huge scar on the forest.

She muttered with a depressed voice.

“First... I should probably say something to everyone.”

\* \* \*

It took about three days to restore the forest to a state that was barely acceptable.

In particular, Frey once again displayed a spectacular performance.

The moment he cast a cleansing spell on the trees that had been damaged by the death energy, Snow showed a shocked expression for the first time.

“You even know purification magic?”

“Is that a problem?”

“N-, no. There’s no problem... but isn’t that magic basically useless to humans?”

“It is.”

Purification magic.

It was something that was only used by priests and saints who specialised in purification.

The mana cost was not very high. However, it was very inefficient and difficult to control, so most Wizards didn’t bother to learn it.

Of course, Frey, who had been known as the Great Mage in the past, had learned a lot of magic that many would not have bothered to learn.

He had used many small tricks before, but none were on the same level as purification magic.

“...”



Snow became even more curious about Frey's identity.

She could not understand him at all.

The man in front of her had displayed incredibly high attack, defense and support skills. And looking at him now, it seemed that his skill in purification magic was not lacking in the slightest.

"You know a lot about magic for an elf."

"I can't learn it myself because my talent is lacking, but I am incredibly interested in Magical Science."

This made Frey wonder just what she was talented in then. He looked at her waist.

The sword that she'd used to kill the Dragon was no longer there.

Snow smiled.

"Huhu. What's with that lecherous gaze? Are you having trouble taking your eyes off of this Queen's slender waist?"

"..."

From her words, it would have been impossible to tell that she was an Elf.

Was this type of personality common among the Ice Elves?

Frey began pondering that and completely ignored Snow.

“...it’s not fun when there’s no response.”

Snow grumbled and left.

That night, Frey and Ivan headed to Hruhiral since they had been summoned by Snow.

Tak.

The door closed behind them.

They were in a large room, but only Frey, Ivan and Snow were present.

Snow sat on a chair with her legs crossed.

“If it’s here, then we won’t have to worry about our conversation being overheard.”

Ivan snorted and said.

“You are quite courageous, Your Majesty. To call us here without any escorts.”

He clearly still didn't like this demonically beautiful woman.

However, when Snow simply smiled and took out Jenki's Mask, his expression changed.

“That mask...”

“I have the skills to protect myself, so of course I wouldn't worry.”

As she put on the mask, her hair changed color once again.

Ivan had a dumbfounded expression on his face.

“...you were that strong fighter wearing the mask?”

“Thank you for the compliment. You're not bad yourself.”

“...”

Ivan's lips shut tightly.

He had been the one who had watched her fight from the closest distance. He knew that her skill was in no way inferior to his.

Ivan, who believed in giving respect where it was due, could no longer ignore Snow.

Even though he still didn't like her, he would not continue to treat her in the same rude manner.

"That's enough for introductions. Can you tell us your identity now?"

"Of course. I am Riki's Apostle."

"..."

Frey and Ivan fell silent at the same time.

They were shocked when she had simply revealed her identity without any hesitation.

"That guy has an Apostle? No. Well. There's nothing strange about it even if he did."

In the first place, they hadn't been interacting with Riki for very long.

Ivan nodded as he inspected Snow once again.

"That explains your sword skills."

"Huh? I didn't use my divine power in the fight."

"...you're that strong even without using divine power?"

"Right. Isn't it natural? If I was to use my divine power, then the aura would definitely leak out. I'm an Apostle, but I rarely use my divine power."

"..."

If that was the case, then her true strength was quite terrifying.

But Frey felt that something wasn't right.

What was Riki's power in the first place?

'Demigod with the power of the sword.'

That was how Riki introduced himself.

It was a very abstract power, unlike the other Demigods who had powers over lightning, poison, or death.

'Using a sword?'

He felt that it was very likely that something more was hidden beneath that simple explanation.

"The Queen of Elves is an Apostle. If Syax learned of this, she would be devastated. So that's why you go under a different name while using the mask."

"I am also the Circle Master of the Hiralgard, and while I play that role, I use the pseudonym Swordna. Only a few people know this."

"...does anyone know that you are an Apostle?"

"No one else knows. Only you two. It's not an easy thing to accept."

"Why did you become Riki's Apostle?"

"My entire family was destroyed by a Demigod. That means that I am the only surviving Ice Elf on the entire continent."

Snow's voice was calm. It didn't sound like she had any anger or resentment toward the Demigods.

But Frey knew that everything wasn't as it seemed.

"But they are too strong. As a mere mortal, there was nothing that I could do. So I don't regret accepting Riki's offer."

Snow smiled bitterly.

"You are a true Queen."

Snow felt like Frey was one of her own kind.

This man was truly interesting.

She was sure that he was human, but she couldn't help but feel that he was much older than her. Even now, as they sat face to face, she couldn't even begin to guess his true depth.

Although he seemed so warm and kind, he was also able to become more heartless than anyone when necessary.

And she was sure that it would be one of his greatest weapons when he faced transcendent beings like Demigods.

'She's so similar.'

Frey didn't think that his words were wrong.

It would have been impossible for him to sign a contract with Asura 4,000 years ago, even if in a desperate situation.

How would he react if a traitor other than Riki were to appear before him and offer him the chance to be their Apostle?

"Anyway, what I'd like to tell you is... hmm."

Snow suddenly stopped talking and closed her eyes.

Ivan tilted his head.

"What's wrong? Why did you stop talking?"

"It seems she's connected to Hruhiral. Let's just wait for a moment."

"She calls us here late at night and then does shit like this."



Ivan folded his arms and grumbled in a childish manner. It was clear that he really didn't like Snow.

After a while, Snow woke up from her state and looked at Frey with a complicated gaze.

"You've been in contact with Mother."

"That's right."

"To enter Mother's Soul Space without being an Elf... I don't know how many more surprises you will give me."

"..."

Only

"...anyway. Mother would like to express her sincere gratitude for your help before."

"Anyone can express their gratitude in words."

When Ivan said those words in a blunt tone, Snow gave a laugh, showing her agreement.

“Huhu. Right. I also have my face as a queen, so I won’t be stingy. Follow me, and I will give you something as a sign of gratitude. You will not be disappointed.”

Ivan scoffed as he also stood up.

“Hmph. I won’t take it lightly if you make me look forward to it like this and your gift turns out to be a salad.”

### **Season 1 Chapter 87: Clean Up (3)**

Frey and Ivan followed Snow as she began to head downward.

“We’re going underground?”

“To be precise, we’re going to the roots. Huhu. Usually, only Queens and a few Elders are allowed to enter. You should feel honored.”

“You’re taking us to such a place?”

Ivan spoke a bit hesitantly.

Rather than feeling honored at such an opportunity, he felt more like he was being dragged into something troublesome.

Snow shrugged.

“It doesn’t matter. It was Mother who gave me permission after all.”

They continued a bit further.

The surroundings began to darken, and they could no longer feel the presence of Elves around them.

Frey realised that they were really close to Hruhiral’s roots.

One interesting thing he noticed was the fact that although it was not bright, it was not very dark either.

And the reason for this was small firefly-like creatures that floated around and gave off gentle light.

“What are these? Fireflies?”

“You’re so rude. They’re Spirits.”

“...there are Spirits this weak?”

“It’s because they haven’t even become low-ranked Spirits yet. In a sense, they are the closest beings in nature to true purity.”

Snow nodded at Frey’s words.

“Don’t touch them. They don’t like savages like you.”

“Sorry for being a savage.” (TL: classy, bougie, ratchet)(YH: a savage wouldn’t say that :o)

After a while, they arrived at a huge room.

The strange thing about this room was that it was brighter than the others, and there was a tree in its center.

Ivan made a strange expression.

“There is a tree among the roots of another tree?”

“In truth, this is Hruhiral’s true form. If Oydin knew about this, he would have come here to contaminate Hruhiral instead of going to the top.”

This tree was much smaller than the ones on the surface.

The trees in the Great Reynolds Forest were all quite large, but this tree was only about half the size of the others.

Nevertheless, despite its small stature, this tree exuded a majestic aura that surpassed even the enormous Hruhiral on the surface, so much so that even Ivan, who usually had a smart mouth, had nothing to say.

Snow walked up to the tree before leaping lightly and picked two fruits that were growing on its branches.

She then smiled and stretched her hands out to Frey and Ivan.

Ivan made a face.

“...although it’s not a salad, I don’t particularly like this gift any better.”

“What nonsense are you saying? This is Hruhiral’s fruit. For those like you, who walk the path of magic, it is a precious item that they couldn’t obtain even if they were willing to spend thousands of gold coins.”

“A treasure? Well. I’ll admit it does look better than an apple.”

Snow turned her head with an angry expression and looked at Frey.

“Frey, you understand its true value, don’t you?”

“Right. It is truly amazing. It is an item that doesn’t fall short of any known elixir. Ivan, eating it at least double your mana capacity.”

“...really?”

Mana was the most important power source for Magic Warriors. Especially for Ivan, whose martial art required much more mana than the others.

If Ivan’s mana capacity could double just by eating this fruit, then it would benefit him greatly.

Snow shook her head.

“You’re like a monkey who can’t even recognize a treasure that’s right in front of your face. It’s been over a hundred years since anyone other than an Elf was given the chance to eat this fruit...”

“Hruhiral has given us an amazing gift. It is a great honor.”

Snow’s expression softened a bit when Frey expressed his sincere gratitude.

Ivan simply glanced at the fruit before taking a bite out of it and beginning to check. “

“...!!”

“Well. The taste isn’t bad.”

Frey and Snow both had shocked expressions when they saw this.

“Y-, you idiot! If you eat it like that without any preparation...!”

“Huh? Ugh...”

Ivan’s blank face suddenly turned red.

Frey instantly slapped his palm onto Ivan’s back.

Chak.

“Urk...!”

“Sit down and focus immediately. I just scattered the fruit’s mana. When the shock disappears, the fruit’s mana will begin running wild once more.”

“K-, kuh...”

“If you want to keep your insides where they are, you need to concentrate.”

Ivan nodded, his face covered in cold sweat.

Looking at him, even Frey couldn't help but make a comment.

"What an idiot."

\* \* \*

"He's going to be like this for a week."

Frey sighed as he looked at Ivan.

He was sitting on the floor with a serious expression on his face, doing his best to keep his mana in check.

It was a good thing he was a First Class Magic Warrior who had trained his body to the peak, or his body would have already burst like a firecracker.

Snow looked at him with a bit of pity.

"This guy really knows nothing. Has he never taken an elixir before?"

"If you think about it, he's actually pretty amazing."



“What?”

“If he never took an elixir before, it means that he reached his current stage just by training.”

“...”

He wasn't saying that it was wrong to rely on elixirs but that Ivan's talents should be recognized since he was able to become a First Class Magic Warrior with nothing but pure effort.

Especially when considering the fact that the martial art he practiced was none other than Kasajin's Warrior King's Fist.

Frey only had superficial knowledge of it, so he wasn't too certain, but he was sure that the higher the stage, the harder it became.

At the least, it would have been impossible to reach Ivan's current stage without working yourself to the bare bones.

“That's true.”

As Snow was someone who walked the path of the sword, she was the first to admit to Ivan's effort.

With just a glance one would see that his entire body was covered with scars, which showed that he devoted himself to hellish training.

“It can’t be helped. Frey, you still need to prepare for tomorrow’s event.”

“...hm.”

Frey’s expression stiffened a bit.

Suddenly, he became a little envious of Ivan’s situation.

As if she guessed his thoughts, Snow’s expression became a bit serious.

“Elves do not forget favors. You wouldn’t stop them from showing their gratitude, would you?”

“...I guess not.”

“I think so too.”

Snow smiled brightly. At that moment, it seemed as if the dark underground suddenly brightened.

Snow’s beauty was truly destructive.

'She can only be like this in an Elf village.'

Elves who valued harmony and balance in nature would only feel admiration and awe at Snow's beauty.

However, if Snow were to appear in a city of humans, who were more sensitive to beauty than any other race, there was no telling what hideous acts might happen.

Frey shook his head slightly.

"When will you eat the fruit?"

"Hmm."

He looked down at the fruit in his hand.

Although it wasn't much compared to Torkunta's heart or the Frozen River, it was still a significant stepping stone to his goal of 8 stars.

Besides, he wouldn't need to control his mana for a week like Ivan.

Frey's current body made it easy for him to absorb elixirs.

In addition to this, Frey's superb mana control meant that he would be able to absorb the fruit's mana within one or two days.

In other words, there was no need for him to rush.

"I'll take my time. First, I need to prepare for tomorrow."

"Well. That's a good idea too."

Snow let out a soft laugh.

\* \* \*

The next day was bound to be very busy.

Frey was going to be thanked directly by the Elven Elders as well as the general High Elf population.

"Thank you."

"You saved our lives..."

Their eyes, which had been filled with suspicion and hostility before, were now filled with warmth and gratitude.

This was to be expected.

After all, Frey and Ivan were two heroes who helped save the Elf village in its crisis.

He wasn't sure what would have happened if Snow killed Oydin and had to deal with the Bone Dragon herself and if there would be less damage.

'It's a good thing Ivan isn't here.'

Frey shook hands with the elves.

They grabbed both of Frey's hands, their gazes filled with gratitude.

With Ivan's personality, it was almost certain that he would not have been able to handle such a stiff atmosphere.

To be honest, even Frey found it a bit tedious and tiring.

Contrary to his inner thoughts, Frey's outward appearance and reactions were excellent.

“Savior, I praise your courage.”

“The scar on the forest is not light, but I believe the children of Hruhiral will be able to overcome anything.”

Frey remained humble and listened to every one of them while maintaining a smile on his face.

The Elves became even more enthusiastic when he even gave a light greeting during the event.

The Elves reacted as though they were personally witnessing the Heroes’ return.

‘That wasn’t much.’

Inwardly, Frey was quite shocked. The Elves he remembered were a much simpler species.

Even if they were sincerely grateful inside, they would still express it in a modest manner on the outside.

However, these Elves were expressing their emotions as clearly as humans.

Well, 4,000 years had passed after all, so it wasn’t strange that they might have changed after their interactions with humans increased.

The next one to step forward was Camille, who wore a tired expression on her face.

She looked at Frey before saying.

“You’ve truly become a hero.”

“Camille, I’m sorry.”

He felt like he had no choice but to apologize to her.

On the day they fought Oydin, Camille had knocked out the elves who had been monitoring him.

Fortunately, Camille was quite skilled, so no one knew that she was the one who did it. Nevertheless, Frey felt sorry for asking for her help knowing she wouldn’t refuse.

“It’s okay. I’m more sorry for not being more helpful. All I could do was watch from the side.”

Camille’s eyes shined.

“It was my first time seeing Hiralgard’s Swordna in person, but she is just as strong as the rumors claimed. Same with that man, Ivan... come to think of it, where is he?”

“...he had a bit of a situation. So he’s recuperating at the moment.”

“Hmm. He looked fine to me, but I guess it’s impossible to fight a Bone Dragon without sustaining any injuries.”

Frey didn’t bother to fix Camille’s misunderstanding.

She gave a bright smile while saying.

“Anyway, why don’t you come over later? The brats with me want to try their hands against you, and even I’m itching to have a go.”

“Sure.”

With that, Camille left.

Frey greeted a few more Elves before returning to Syax’s house.

Syax and Snow were sitting at the table and seemed to be discussing something.

When Frey appeared, Syax got up and bowed,

“Then I will take my leave, Your Majesty.”



“...hmm. Right. I understand.”

Frey felt that she was fleeing the house.

When Frey turned and gave her a curious glance, Snow sighed.

Only

“When I first came to Lilund, Syax and I were the closest friends. She was very curious for an Elf. She was the only one who came to see me, an Ice Elf. I was very happy back then...”

Snow seemed to reminisce about that time.

However, after shaking her head a few times, she returned to her usual demeanor and turned back to Frey.

“There’s been some news. Riki wants to see you. He said he wants to discuss something about the upcoming Demigod meeting.”

“Why me?”

When he asked this, Snow shot him a strange look.

“It seems like he intends to take you there.”

### **Season 1 Chapter 88: Clean Up (4)**

Frey decided to head straight to Riki’s hut.

There were no other events planned anyway.

When Snow got up as if she was going to go with him, he could not help but ask.

“Is it okay for the Queen to just leave the village?”

“Huh?”

“You have to protect the Great Forest.”

He didn’t know if she could just leave the forest like that.

Frey thought his question was quite reasonable, but the gaze that Snow shot him at that moment made him think something was wrong.

“Sometimes you say some very old-fashioned things. Does the Queen have to stay in the village all the time?”

“...true. High Elves also seem to have gained a high degree of flexibility.”

It was clear that he should no longer hold any preconceived notions he had because of his past knowledge.

As Frey tried to reflect on this, Snow tilted her head slightly.

“Huh? What are you talking about? If the Elders knew what I wanted to do, they’d definitely try to stop me.”

“What?”

“The important thing is to stay hidden.”

Taking the mask from her pocket, Snow gave a short laugh.

“Don’t worry. I always leave a doppelganger in Mother when I leave. I don’t mean to brag, but I’ve never been caught. I’m an expert at this. Huhu!”

“...”

It certainly didn’t seem like something one should boast about, but Frey did not say anything as it was difficult to enter or leave the Great Forest without an Elf to guide you.

'It would be troublesome to get a guide.'

It couldn't be helped. After all, he couldn't ask for Syax to take him to see Riki.

Ivan couldn't accompany him as he was still absorbing mana in the basement below Hruhiral.

Before they left, Frey turned to Snow and said.

"It's going to take us a long time to go back and forth. So shall we use Warp?"

"Huh?"

Snow looked at him with a confused expression on her face.

"That would be more efficient... but is that possible?"

"It won't be too hard since it's just the two of us. I memorised the coordinates of Riki's cabin."

When they'd gone to Riki's cabin the first time, he'd immediately memorised the coordinates because he was sure that there would come a time in the future when he would need it.

When using the Warp spell, there would be a mana trace, so it would be too conspicuous if he did it in the city.

If something went wrong, it was possible for pursuers from the Blake family to notice it. However, in the Great Forest, where the mana density was quite high, the traces of the mana would disappear after a few hours.

In the first place, it would be strange if they were able to enter such a place.

Snow shot Frey a disbelieving stare.

'Is it possible to cast Warp on your own?'

Of course, theoretically, it was possible.

Frey seemed to be a 7 star Wizard whose mana control and capacity was nothing to scoff at.

However, there were no Warp Stones there.

Using Warp without a Warp Stone was not simply memorizing coordinates as Frey had said. It also required at least a dozen Wizards just to perform the necessary complex calculations and adjustments.

'It would take weeks to do all of that alone.'

In any case, she had no reason to refuse if the Warp was really possible.

“Then I’ll owe you one. However, if we do it near the village, it may attract attention, so we should do it after we get out of the Great Forest.”

Frey nodded since he agreed with her opinion.

They were able to leave the forest within half a day by using the same shortcut that Syax had shown him when they arrived.

However, the time they took was reduced by half because they moved with haste.

Frey then found a large clearing and immediately began drawing the magic circle for Warp on the ground.

Snow couldn’t take her eyes off Frey who moved his hands without hesitation.

“I’ve finished drawing the circle, so you can come in.”

“Is there a magic circle at Riki’s hut too?”

“No.”

He responded immediately.

Frey observed the magic circle on the ground for a moment while explaining.

“The reason why both departure and arrival points are drawn is because you can save a lot of mana by doing most of the calculations and creating the magic circles beforehand. Of course, this also means the Warp points are fixed.”

“Then, wouldn’t it be difficult without the other magic circle?”

“Not necessarily. On the other hand, if you complete all the calculations before casting the spell, have the required quantity of mana and accurately pinpoint the target coordinates, there would be no problems.”

Frey laughed, and his robes fluttered as his mana was unleashed.

“In other words, it’s no problem for me.”

\* \* \*

As the Warp ended, Snow looked down at her hand.

“The stability is ridiculous.”

The floating feeling, motion sickness and dizziness that were usual characteristic of a Warp were hardly felt.

It was, in part, because the number of people moving was low, but this result was not possible if the controlling Wizard wasn't skilled.

Snow looked closely at Frey's face.

Despite using the immensely complex and taxing Warp spell, he hadn't even broken a sweat.

'There's so much I want to know.'

The amount of questions she had about Frey only grew.

However.

'There are things that take priority.'

She looked at the little shabby hut in the middle of a clearing.

The moment her gaze turned to it, the door of the hut opened, as if it was waiting for them.

Cree-



It was basically a sign for them to enter.

Frey and Snow entered the cabin.

It was the same unique space that he'd witnessed during his first visit. Even Riki was sitting in the same place.

"You came quickly. Warp. It's a really useful spell."

There was a cup of tea in front of him, including ones for Frey and Snow.

Steam rose from them, and it seemed they had just been brewed.

"Would you like a cup of tea?"

Frey, of course, had no intention of drinking it.

"Oydin wasn't Nozdog's Apostle."

Even though he said that with a sharp tone, Riki's expression didn't change.

“I didn’t know that such a shortcut was possible.”

“...is that all you have to say? Ivan and I fought in vain because of you.”

“Do you want me to apologise?”

“I don’t want anything from a guy like you who has a stiff neck. However, you need to acknowledge the fact that you gave us wrong information. To maintain a smooth, cooperative relationship in the future.”

The atmosphere became heavy.

Frey and Riki glared at each other while Snow gulped inwardly.

‘This guy...’

He was not backing down at all even though he was facing a Demigod.

This was something that Snow could not help but be shocked at.

This silver-haired man was a transcendent being who ranked within the top 5 among all the Demigods.

Even a Wizard who had reached the highest level, a Knight who had seen the peak of sword arts or a Magic Warrior who had sharpened their martial arts to the limit would not be able to break free from the shackles of mortality to face him.

Even though she knew that he wouldn't kill her, the innate fear that an animal felt in the presence of a true predator could not be ignored.

However, it wasn't that Frey was not afraid of Demigods.

The difference was the fact that even while knowing their strength, possibly better than anyone else, he refused to back down.

"You're right. I understand what you're saying, and I'm sorry for giving you false information.'

"...!"

Riki's honest apology changed not only Snow but also Frey's impression of him.

What Frey had just done could be considered a gamble with his life. To see if the man before him had truly betrayed the Demigods.

Although it was just a minor provocation, the fact that the other person was a Demigod made what he'd done very dangerous.

But Frey had still willingly made that choice.

If Riki was not sincere, then it would be much more dangerous for him to continue this alliance.

Riki continued speaking in a calm manner.

“It’s not enough to just give a verbal apology, so I will also give you something that will help you.”

“Something that will help?”

“If you kill an Apostle, you get a crystal. The Circle seems to have learned of this already.”

“That’s right.”

Frey already knew how amazing these crystals truly were.

The mana contained within one of them was comparable to the Frozen River that he’d taken before. If he was able to get a hold of two more, he would be able to reach 8 stars immediately.

Riki took something from his pocket.

“That’s...”

“It’s a crystal. However, I didn’t get this from an Apostle. This is the crystal I got after killing Indra.”

“...!”

Looking at Frey’s shocked expression, Riki continued.

“This is only the leftover, but it should still be of great help to a human.”

Leftovers.

Although Riki said that, Frey knew that this crystal was not something to look down upon.

When he’d hunted Demigods in the past, there were also spoils. No, he couldn’t call them spoils.

With the knowledge and technology available at the time, they would not have dared to try to digest anything obtained from the Demigods.

Instead, their lives would be in danger if they weren’t handled properly.

However, the crystal that Riki had brought out was different.

‘That’s more than enough for a human.’

Moreover, it was several times larger than the crystal he had obtained from Lukes.

It couldn't be said that the crystal's capacity was in direct proportion to its size, but he was certain that if he refined it, he would be able to reach 8 stars.

'8 stars.'

Frey shuddered inwardly at the weight of those words.

'If I were to reach 8 stars and Ivan completely absorbs the fruit. As well as a few 7 star Wizards and strong Knights to support me...'

It would be possible for them to kill one of the weaker Demigods.

Of course, he couldn't be sure, but there was no doubt that their chances would, at the very least, increase exponentially.

It might've been impossible for any other Wizard, even when they reached 8 stars.

But Frey had experience. He'd fought against Demigods numerous times before and had slain many of them.

The experience he had was literally worth its weight in gold.

“If you take this, you will be able to go up one level.”

Riki seemed to know that too.

He looked at Frey with a deep gaze before speaking.

“Frey, you should participate in the Demigod meeting in three months.”

“What was that?”

“Riki, what are you talking about?”

It was completely unexpected.

Frey’s expression changed, and so did Snow’s, even though she expected it.

Unlike them, however, Riki kept talking in the same tone.

“The other four Apocalypses, as well as Lord, will be attending this meeting together with their Apostles. Although they will use all kinds of methods to hide their identities... it is still an opportunity we can’t afford to miss.”

“I agree, but isn't it too dangerous? Besides, Frey isn't an Apostle. Won't Lord be able to see that?”

“He can see whether someone is an Apostle or not. However, there are ways to bypass Lord's scanning. Just like how I didn't notice Oydin was just bait. Demigods aren't omniscient.”

Snow didn't understand what Riki was talking about,

Frey's expression became a bit strange.

“...you're suggesting that I become an Apostle?”

“That's right.”

“...!”

It wasn't something that he hadn't thought of before.

Frey had thought something similar while looking at Snow.

How would he react if another Demigod like Riki offered to make him their Apostle?



“I refuse.”

Frey was certain.

Inwardly, he was quite surprised.

At the time, he'd thought that he'd at least consider the matter, but unexpectedly, there was no hesitation in his words.

“Why?”

“No matter how powerful it might be, I have no intention of ever using divine power. I'm a Wizard.”

Right.

That was the reason.

Frey did not intend to throw away magic.

Magical studies, which had accompanied him since birth, was already deeply imprinted into his consciousness.

It was not an exaggeration to call it his foundation.

If he were to fight the Demigods after giving up his magic power, he was certain that his sanity would be destroyed in no time.

4,000 years.

He was able to stay sane throughout all the time he spent in the Abyss, which felt like it lasted for an eternity, all because of Magical Science.

“Right. There’s no Demigod who wouldn’t understand that.”

What was that supposed to mean?

Before Frey could even begin to ponder what those words meant, Riki continued speaking.

“Frey, absorb Indra’s lightning crystal. You will be able to control both divine power and mana.”

“That’s impossible.”

The two powers were completely incompatible.

Only

However, Riki's expression remained confident.

"No. It's possible."

"Why do you think so?"

"Because."

Riki's eyes turned to look at Frey's grey hair.

A color that was rare in the Kastkau Empire. No, a color that was rare even in the entire continent.

**Season 1 Chapter 89: Whatever it takes to Become Strong(1)**

The tea had cooled down, and no more steam rose from it. However, Frey did not notice that fact.

It was possible to use both divine power and mana!

Riki had spoken with confidence, but Frey wouldn't just believe his words so easily.

Still, the reason he did not reject the notion outright was because of a person's voice that floated in his head at that moment.

[You've changed a lot. It seems you awakened. Right. You have the blood of the Blake family after all.]

[If I'll be honest, I hoped you'd never learn to use magic.]

[It would be better to not put too much trust in the Circle.]

'Heinz Blake.'

The second son of the Blake family and Frey's second brother.

He seemed to know something about the Blake family, which was why he gave Frey that advice.

Frey didn't ignore his advice, but at the same time, it couldn't be said that he had taken it to heart.

'I didn't think too deeply.'

Right.

He hadn't thought too deeply about it.

Frey raised his head and looked at Riki once more.

Riki spoke slowly, as if giving him the time to gather his thoughts.

“I looked into you. Frey Blake, the third son of the Blake family. Was considered to be desperately lacking in magical talent, so he was treated like an unwanted child from a young age before eventually being sent to the academy like he’d been expelled from the family.”

“So Isaka Blake would not have said anything to you either. He looked for you after learning that you had awakened your talent for magic, but he was unable to find you as you had hidden your whereabouts.”

“That’s right.”

The information Riki had revealed wasn’t much.

Information about Frey’s childhood was an open fact with Pillat, and one would be able to learn it simply by asking anyone on the street.

What Frey was more curious about was the Blake family.

“What on earth is the Blake family?”

“In simple terms, it is a huge laboratory.”

“What...?”

That answer surpassed even his wildest imagination.

A huge laboratory?

The Blake family, which was one of the most prestigious families in the Kastkau Empire?

“Research on a way to harmonize divine power and mana has been going on for a very long time. Then, under the direction of Leyrin, one of the Apocalypses, they began research in earnest.”

“Leyrin.”

It was the first time he had heard the name, but it was worth remembering since it belonged to one of the Apocalypses.

“It is said that there were thousands and tens of thousands of trials and errors. But even then, Leyrin didn’t give up. Hundreds of years can’t be considered a long time for Demigods, but given our tendency to get bored easily, her persistence is commendable. She devoted that much time to do countless experiments and research. Then.”

Riki met Frey’s gaze.

“The Blake family was born.”

“...”

Frey spoke after a heavy sigh.

“The Blake family is one of the top five within the Kastkau Empire. If even such a place is just a Demigod laboratory...”

“The Demigods’ influence in the Kastkau Empire is particularly strong compared to other countries.”

The most powerful empire in the history of humanity was actually controlled by Demigods.

He had vaguely expected it, but he was still shocked to actually hear it.

“Do you also know everything about the Circle?”

“No. Their hideouts are too numerous and scattered. Even if a few are destroyed, it doesn’t actually affect the entire organisation. Besides, those Circle Masters and Rounders have learned not to stay in any single location for too long, so it’s difficult to carry out targeted attacks.”

“But isn’t it possible to do something if you’re really determined?”

Riki’s expression changed for the first time.

“You are a member of the Circle, but you don’t seem to know much about it. The Circle is by no means an organisation that can be looked down upon. In fact, although they were only low ranking ones, the

Circle has succeeded in killing a few Demigods. They've been a thorn in the Demigods' side for numerous years."

"..."

Frey had trouble agreeing with the remark that it was not an organisation that one could look down on.

The Trowman Rings and the few small circles close to it, as well as Benieng and Honors Dugengar and Lukes, had caused him to subconsciously underestimate the Circle because that was all he'd seen.

'I can't do that. I haven't met any key figures yet.'

He decided not to form any opinions before seeing more in person.

Anyway, after hearing that they'd succeeded in hunting Demigods before, the confidence that Frey had in the Circle rose a bit.

"That's all I know about the Blake family. I know nothing about the details or the processes. But I'm certain that the members of the Blake family, including you, can use both divine power and magic."

Isaka, Mischael and Heinz.

Frey's expression became a bit strange.



Perhaps it was highly likely that Isaka and Mischael were subordinates of the Demigods, but Heinz's involvement was questionable.

Heinz definitely knew the Blake family's secret.

Perhaps, he might even know things that Riki didn't.

Nevertheless, he was a part of the Circle.

'Is he a traitor?'

Or a spy?

He couldn't know.

Heinz could be classified to be on both sides, but where was he really?

"The Circle is now suspicious of the Blake family."

Shepard had said that they knew Isaka Blake was communicating with Demigods.

That was several months ago, so their doubts should have deepened by now. They might have even found conclusive evidence.

He was not suspicious of Heinz at the moment.

Shepard had seemed to trust him greatly, and Dugenjar was afraid of him, but he showed no hostility.

But what if they found out that the Blake family was actually the Demigod's laboratory? Would they have the same feelings towards him?

But now wasn't the time to worry about him.

'I would also be suspicious.'

Considering the fact that he'd been abandoned as a child, the suspicion towards him might not be as much as Heinz, but it would be present nonetheless.

'It makes sense why Heinz told me not to fully trust the Circle.'

He'd given the advice because of their family history.

"Let's return to the reason why you're here. Frey, will you accompany me to the Demigod's meeting?"

"It's not something I can decide immediately. I need time to think."

“I understand.”

Riki expected something like that.

“But you can’t wait too long. You will need at least a month to get used to using divine power, so tell me before then.”

“It won’t take that long.”

Frey looked at him for a moment before saying,

“I will decide after I’ve reached 8 stars.”

“Go ahead.”

“But I can’t absorb this crystal in its current state... can’t it be refined into an elixir?”

There were very few people on the continent who knew how to refine the crystals.

The only person that Frey knew was Adelia, who had unparalleled talent for alchemy.

In fact, it was not hard for him to meet her. He could even head to the Trowman Rings' hideout right now since he had memorised the coordinates.

Of course, because of the barriers, he wouldn't be able to enter the village directly, but if he were to call her from outside the forest, she would definitely agree to meet him.

However, the Trowman Rings were working very hard at the moment to get back on the right track, so Frey didn't want to go back and distract them.

"Hmm. Now that you mention it, it's probably useless to humans in this form."

Riki picked up the crystal and rose to his feet.

"Come back at this time tomorrow. I'll have refined it by then."

It would only take him a day to refine the crystal.

Frey was once again forced to acknowledge the Demigods' power.

Riki took the crystal with him as he disappeared into the void.

Frey and Snow exchanged glances for a moment before they both stood and left the hut together. (TL: I honestly forgot she was there...)(YH: Same :o)

As they stood in the warm sunlight, Snow began to speak.

“Honestly, I didn’t understand anything you two were saying.”

She had a complicated expression on her face.

“The things about the harmony of divine power and mana or a huge laboratory... but from your expressions, they should be very serious, right?”

“Right.”

They were very serious.

No one could deny that the divine power the Demigods used was an extremely powerful force.

If he could truly use divine power and mana at the same time, then Frey’s strength would at least double.

“I’m thinking about spending a day here. Is that okay?”

“A day or so is fine.”

“Alright.”

Frey then began drawing a magic circle on the ground.

Snow, who was curious, couldn't help but ask.

"What kind of magic circle are you making now?"

"A summoning circle."

"Huh? What are you going to summon?"

"Asura."

"...Asura from the Demon World? You are going to summon a Great Demon here?"

"Yep."

He needed to sign the contract.

Frey ignored Snow's shocked expression as he continued his work.

Then he looked around.

'As expected.'

There was a light barrier around them, and it was probably Riki who made it.

It was so well hidden that even Frey had been unable to immediately notice it.

'This barrier should be able to conceal the aura that will be released when Asura is summoned.'

Now was the best opportunity for him to summon Asura since he couldn't do it in Lilund.

\* \* \*

'It's harder than I expected.'

She smiled awkwardly.

Around her, many monsters kneeled with their heads bowed.

These were the ones who'd chosen to surrender.

Despite the fact that there was a large number of monsters, just as many of them had chosen to defy her.

“I’ll just have to kill them.”

Her pupils instantly lengthened like those of a predator.

However, when she blinked her eyes, they returned to normal.

It was then.

“...?”

She felt someone’s presence.

She immediately flew into the night sky, her red hair fluttering behind her and leaving a fiery trail in her wake.

‘There’s someone on Drake Mountain.’

She had an ominous feeling.

The intruder was at the top of the mountain, where the entrance of the dungeon was located.



It was strange.

She had successfully taken control of several mountains in the area, including Drake Mountain. In short, they had become her 'territory'.

Therefore, when someone invaded her territory, she would be able to notice it at once.

However, this person was different. It was almost as if they appeared out of thin air.

Tat.

She landed on the small island in the center of the volcanic lake and found someone standing there.

It was a woman with fascinating purple hair.

It was strange.

She was sure that this was the first time seeing this human woman, so why did she feel like she'd seen her before...

"Ugh..."

She instantly felt a strong pain in her head, causing her to bite her lip.

'It's not me.'

Torkunta.

It was Torkunta's memory. His memory was warning her.

'This woman... came out of the dungeon as well.'

When was it? Decades ago? Centuries ago? She couldn't tell.

However, she was sure that this woman was extremely strong.

She was someone who had suddenly disappeared like a ghost after casually brushing off Torkunta's breath attack.

She suppressed the headache and spoke, her voice slightly hoarse from the pain.

"Who the hell are you?"

“...”

However, the woman didn't respond to her.

She just continued looking at the island with a blank expression. She seemed to be looking at the largest tree on the island.

The tree where the entrance to the dungeon was located.

“...I can't believe the last room was opened.”

Only

“What?”

“It must have been something only he could solve.”

“What are you talking about?”

“...”

The woman had a complex expression on her face, and the wind began to blow heavily for a moment.

“...huh?”

However, in the next instant, the woman had vanished.

**Season 1 Chapter 90: Whatever it takes to Become Strong(2)**

There was a reaction immediately after Frey’s blood dripped onto the ground.

Fwoosh.

A whirlwind of demonic energy blew fiercely in the clearing.

Snow took a few steps back and frowned.

‘Such dreadful energy.’

Elves, especially High Elves who were particularly sensitive to energy, would have trouble withstanding such energy.

As an Ice Elf, Snow was able to handle it a little, but it still made her very uncomfortable.

Crunch!

Asura appeared from the summoning circle

He was smaller than when Oydin had summoned him, being only two times larger than a human at best.

However, the aura he exuded was just as powerful.

Frey looked up at him.

“Asura, I summoned you to sign the contract.”

[Right. You summoned me faster than I expected.]

Asura nodded before he suddenly frowned.

[...such concentrated divine power. Is there a Demigod nearby?]

Frey was amazed.

Riki was currently in his cabin, and because the space inside the hut was distorted by Riki’s ability, it could be said that it was in a separate section of space from the forest.

Frey, who was extremely sensitive to divine power, could not even feel a hint of it till Riki opened the door and stepped out.

However, Asura had instantly realised that there was a Demigod around.

'Is it because he's an Archduke?'

An Archduke of the Demon World and the Ruler of the Slaughter Hell.

It seems he was truly not inferior to Demigods when it came to ability.

"That's right. There's a Demigod nearby."

[Hmm. You want to sign a contract with me now in case you have to fight him?]

"No. For now, there won't be any fights with Demigods."

[I see.]

He didn't find it necessary to tell him about the alliance with Riki, and Asura did not question him further.

His attitude showed that he didn't care whether they had to fight or not.

Only an avatar was brought to Middle Earth anyway.

Although it came with extremely limited power, death or injury had no significant effect on his real body as a result.

If Frey asked him to fight against Riki, then he would do so to the best of his ability.

Even though the Demons, as a race, had no hostility toward the Demigods.

[The contract has already been completed.]

“Already?”

[Right. Your blood was transferred to my main body in the Demon World by the summoning circle.]

“...”

He’d signed a contract with a Demon Archduke, yet he felt like nothing had changed.

As Frey inspected himself, Asura added.

[You won’t find any significant changes because the contract I signed with you was not normal.]

“...is it because I lack talent?”

[In the first place, a person with your talent could never become my Contractor.]

He understood.

The ‘talent’ that the Demon was talking about was a completely different field from the magic he was good at.

And Demons were able to see a Contractor’s talent with just a glance.

He didn’t know the standard, but Frey believed that his talent was ‘underqualified’ in the eyes of the Archduke Asura.

[Anyway, keep in mind that the contract can never be terminated unless you do it yourself.]

[I look forward to the next time you summon me. Of course, you’ll need to use mana.]

He smiled in a strangely bright way.

[Your talent is definitely lacking. but your mana is really amazing. The density and purity of your mana has probably not been seen in over a thousand years... if Lilith learned about you, she’d probably get jealous.]



“Lilith...you mean the Succubus Queen?”

[Right. Hmph... vulgar Demon slut.]

Asura’s voice was filled with contempt.

Frey knew that Lilith was also an Archduke of the Demon World like Asura, but Frey didn’t focus on her.

“If mana is required for your contract, how did Oydin summon you?”

Then Asura spoke in his deep voice.

[Divine power and mana are both just lumps of energy to me. When they’re sent to the Demon World, everything is converted to demonic energy.]

“...”

[If you have nothing else to say, I’m leaving.]

Asura’s body was sucked into the summoning circle, and it disappeared together with the demonic energy.

Frey then approached Snow, who was standing a distance away.

“...it’s not even enough to call you amazing anymore. I can’t believe you signed a contract with a Demon Archduke after only a couple words.”

It was not strange that she felt that way.

For Frey, the contract with Asura was due to an agreement they made 4,000 years ago, but in the eyes of Snow, a third party, he was a monster who signed a contract with a Great Demon without even having a proper conversation.

Frey didn’t correct her misconception.

He started preparing to spend the night near the hut.

He found a relatively flat piece of land, made a bonfire and took out a sleeping bag.

Snow noticed this and came over to the bonfire.

Frey handed her some jerky from his bag. Snow said thanks before biting into it.

Just like Syax, she didn’t really behave like an Elf.

They looked up at the starlit sky.

Frey fell asleep while looking at the sky.

\* \* \*

“It’s done.”

Frey received the glass bottle from Riki with a strange expression on his face.

“Some of the effect was lost in the process of refining the elixir, but there isn’t that much of a difference.”

“You refined it yourself?”

“That’s right.”

“...”

“If you’re done here, then leave. I have work to do.”

Frey left the hut at Riki's prompting.

Snow stretched and said.

"Then shall we go back home?"

Frey once again used Warp to take them to the entrance of the Great Forest.

Then he followed Snow into Lilund and went directly to the basement below Hruhiral.

It had only taken them half a day to return, and the sight he saw was the same as when they left.

Ivan was still sweating profusely and moaning in pain as his mana spread messily around him.

Magic Warriors usually had no knowledge of how to make fine adjustments with their mana, and it seemed Ivan was no different.

Frey walked over to him and placed his palms on his back.

Ssss-

"...Hm!"

Ivan stiffened up for a moment before he relaxed as he realised it was Frey.

Frey infused his mana into him and helped calm the wild mana, causing Ivan's expression to become more relaxed.

Frey then removed his palms and turned to Snow.

"I'm going to take the elixir that Riki made for me now. It'll take between three days and a week for me to absorb it. This place is very isolated, so I want to absorb the mana here."

"Do whatever you like. I'll get some food and water for when you and Ivan wake up."

Things to eat.

Frey turned to look at Ivan and found an arrangement of salads at his side.

Snow let out a laugh.

"It's the perfect payback for that savage."

"If Ivan sees that, he might collapse in despair."

“Ahaha. That sounds wonderful.”

Snow playfully waved her hands before taking her leave.

Frey then picked a spot near Ivan and sat down before taking out the elixir he got from Riki.

‘Let’s leave Hruhiral’s fruit alone for now.’

The elixir alone was enough to let him reach 8 stars, so he decided not to waste the fruit.

Frey’s expression became a bit strange.

Just by looking at the elixir, he could tell just how much mana it contained.

‘If I just measure the quantity of my mana, I will soon surpass my past life.’

Frozen River, Torkunta’s heart and now Indra’s crystal.

It was natural that this would happen as he’d consumed those three items that were worth more than their weight in gold.

But real his problems would start now as he could no longer increase his strength with the help of elixirs.

It would take a completely different process for him to reach 9 stars instead of simply increasing his mana control and capacity.

Frey shook his head.

“That’s something to think about later.”

He took the elixir.

\* \* \*

“You called for me, Your Majesty.”

Syax bowed her head. It was a very humble and polite greeting.

Snow smiled gently, inwardly feeling sad at her attitude.

“I called you because I’d like to ask something.”

“Ask me something?”

The Queen of the Great Forest shared her consciousness with Hruhiral, and the knowledge of every successive Queen was stored in Hruhiral to be shared with the next generation of Queens.

In others, as the Queen, Snow had immediately become one of the most knowledgeable Elves in the forest.

“Right. It’s about Magical Science. You are the best Wizard in all of Lilund.”

“I see.”

Syax nodded. Certainly, if it was about magic, it wasn’t a surprise that the Queen didn’t know about it.

“Do you know that Frey is a 7 star Wizard?”

“I do.”

“To put in simple terms, how strong is he really?”

Syax went silent for a moment before slowly opening her mouth.

“...I have wandered the continent for decades.”



She'd recently been staying in Pillat, but in fact, she had traveled all over the continent.

The memories of her travels had remained imprinted in her mind.

"It was an opportunity to broaden my horizons. I've been to almost every region, and I've met a lot of people. Among them were 7 star Wizards who were praised as great Archmages."

Syax remembered the scene of Frey fighting against the Bone Dragon.

At that time, Syax was probably the only person who accurately understood the power Frey displayed.

"They are 7 star Wizards like Frey. But their skills aren't on the same level. Frey is far better than any Archmage I've ever encountered."

"...better? In some aspects?"

"In every way."

Syax was certain.

"His mana capacity, casting speed, the strength of his spells, his mental ability and his situational awareness are all perfect. To be honest, his true strength is not something I dare to guess. Frey is the strongest Wizard I've ever met."

“Hmm...”

Snow felt that she had to agree with Syax’s words.

The power he’d shown in their fight against the Dragon was extraordinary.

He used triple casting as easy as breathing, and his situational awareness made one wonder if he had a third eye in the sky.

‘He’s an expert.’

Snow only had a superficial knowledge about Magical Science. However, she could see that he was very skilled at fighting.

‘I can’t see the limits of his power.’

After thinking for a while, Snow finally spoke.

“What exactly is the difference between 7 stars and 8 stars?”

“Spatial control.”

“Huh?”

“...”

There was a moment of silence as Syax tried to organize her thoughts before speaking.

“8 star Wizards are able to project their mana rooms in the space around their body.”

Only

“I don’t understand what you mean.”

It was a bit of an esoteric theory to explain to someone who wasn’t a wizard, but Syax tried to explain to Snow who had a confused expression on her face.

“Every Wizard has a mana room, and they are able to control the mana stored there at will.”

“...then if they were to project it out...”

“Exactly. Although the scope would be limited, they would be able to take control of the space that embodies their mana room. In other words...”

Syax's eyes shined.

“At least within that space, no one else would be able to use mana.”