

## **M. in Hell 211**

Chapter 211 - Son

[What in the world... are you talking about?] Satan asked in confusion.

The darkness surrounding him writhed.

"...S-Someone is impersonating you, Lord Satan," Julia Vilkova answered.

[Impersonating... me?]

"Y-Yes!" Julia nodded with a pale face.

A breathtakingly strong pressure fell over the area.

[Who dares to impersonate me, Satan?] a voice filled with confusion and rage rang out.

He couldn't figure out what was going on.

"I-I do not know."

[What have you been doing for the cult to be in this state, Julia?]

"M-My apologies! Due to the battle against Lucifer's forces..."

[Lucifer's forces?]

What nonsense was that?

"Lucifer has appeared and is attacking the Demon Cult."

[What?]

"A-And this is just my guess, but... I believe the person impersonating you has orchestrated this battle."

[...]

Satan remained silent, and he felt his mind going blank. He wanted to laugh in disbelief but couldn't do so because he was still absorbing the Demonic Origin.

[Who could have...]

Impersonating a prince of Hell...? That wasn't possible unless the impersonator had power comparable to one.

The Demon Cultists were not dumb. If someone had tried to impersonate him with average demonic energy, they would've figured it out for sure.

[Could it be...]

A certain possibility crossed his mind.

The darkness covering Satan fluctuated.

[The demon king...?] he said in a fearful voice.

It was a possibility he didn't want to think of.

[No, he is dead.]

He would've shaken his head if he had one.

When Satan crossed over to Earth, he'd felt the presence of the demon king disappear because of the dimensional wall.

In reality, he hadn't felt the presence of the demon king for thousands of years. There was no way he could have been revived out of the blue.

[That is impossible.]

It seemed that Satan was trying to convince himself.

"Lord Satan...?"

Julia was bewildered.

She had served Satan for hundreds of years, but it was her first time seeing him so alarmed. No, it was the first time she'd seen Satan feel fear.

[What are the other Aspects doing?]

"Lord Belphegor and Lord Crimson Fiend are still absorbing the Demonic Origin, and as for Lord Kalgia..."

[Is he still investigating the Demon of Prophecy?]

"Yes."

The darkness flickered.

There wasn't anyone who could take action at the moment.

[Hmm.]

Whoever was impersonating Satan wasn't important at the moment. Rather than finding the culprit, dissuading Lucifer from attacking was a greater priority.

[...I have no choice.]

The darkness surrounding Satan writhed.

He had no other choice.

Part of the darkness surrounding Satan fell off as if he were cutting off his flesh.

\* \* \*

"Master Kang-Woo."

"Hm?"

Lilith entered Oh Kang-Woo's room.

Kang-Woo, who was inspecting the Key of the Demonic Sea while sitting on the bed, nodded in greeting.

"The battle with the Demon Cult branch in Africa has begun."

"What's the status?"

Lilith smiled and said, "Lucifer's forces are overpowering them, but... they have also suffered great losses."

It was too bad that someone as powerful as Mammon hadn't appeared. Nevertheless, it seemed that the strength of a Demon Cult branch with thousands of members was pretty good. They would be able to damage Lucifer's forces to the extent that Kang-Woo was hoping.

"And Lucifer?" Kang-Woo asked with expectant eyes.

The most important thing was how much Lucifer had been weakened through this battle.

Lilith answered without hesitation, "He clearly seemed fatigued."

"Good."

Kang-Woo smiled while nodding.

Not even the princes of Hell had infinite stamina. The more they fought, the more their stamina decreased and psychological fatigue accumulated.

It would be a different story if Lucifer replenished his stamina by using a hit-and-run tactic. However, he was battling in a frenzied state; it was a given that he would be tired.

'That must be how precious his son is to him.'

It was hard to believe Lucifer was the same person whom Kang-Woo knew from before. Lucifer had changed after going to the continent of Aernor.

'I guess it doesn't matter.'

It didn't matter if he'd changed or not. Kang-Woo needed a prince's soul, and Lucifer had been ripened just right. That was the important thing.

"How's Lucis doing?" Kang-Woo asked Lilith while licking his lips.

Lilith answered with a mischievous smile, "He has already lost his mind. He will easily give up on his own life if I tell him to."

"That's not enough." Kang-Woo laughed. "He should be able to give up on something more important than his life."

"...Oh, my." Lilith's eyes shone. She caressed Kang-Woo's cheek while looking as if she were high on drugs. "He will most certainly be able to do what you are thinking of, my king."

"That's good."

Lilith never exaggerated. If she said so, it was fair to judge that Lucis had completely become her slave.

"What about the others?" Kang-Woo asked.

"Balrog and Vaal Zahak are in the middle of preparations. As for Echidna... I think you should leave her out of this operation."

"Why?"

As Kang-Woo asked her that, Lilith started to squirm. Her hair turned into tentacles and wriggled about.

"How could we make such a cute little girl fight?! I wish I could just use my tentacles to—"

"Please don't do anything to my Echidna."

"Fufufu. Haaa, I wonder if this is how it would feel if I bore your child in the future..."

Fortunately, it seemed like Echidna was popular with both Han Seol-Ah and Lilith.

'That's good.'

Echidna would likely become the bridge between his companions on Earth, Seol-Ah and Kim Si-Hun, and his companions from Hell, Balrog and Lilith. It might not be necessary for now, but it would be in the long term.

'All for the sake of living as a wealthy bum!'

He had to eliminate as many factors as possible that could cause conflict.

"In that case, don't tell Echidna for now."

Kang-Woo stood up.

In reality, he didn't want to show Echidna this 'plan.'

'The same goes for the others.'

That was why he hadn't made Seol-Ah, Si-Hun, Cha Yeon-Joo, and others participate in the plan. They still didn't know much about him, and they were likely unprepared to accept it.

"Let's go."

"Yes, Master Kang-Woo."

Click.

Kang-Woo opened the door.

"Ah."

He found Seol-Ah standing in front of the door while holding a tray with a cup of coffee on it.

She flinched in surprise.

"A-Are you heading out already?" Seol-Ah asked while taking a glimpse at Lilith.

He'd already told her about Lilith, but it seemed like Seol-Ah still felt awkward around her.

"Fufu. Yes. I happen to have some secret plans with Master Kang-W—"

"Don't be silly," Kang-Woo chided.

He softly hit Lilith's head, reached to grab the cup of coffee Seol-Ah had prepared, and drank it in one go. Hot coffee poured down his throat.

"I'll be back in a bit," he said.

"Ah... Okay," Seol-Ah replied while making a lonely expression.

Kang-Woo hummed for a moment and recalled what Echidna had said to him.

"How about we go on a picnic with Echidna and the others once this is over?" Kang-Woo asked.

"Ah, s-sure! I'd love to!" Seol-Ah agreed, nodding furiously.

Her reaction was similar to Echidna's.

Kang-Woo softly laughed and nodded.

"Hmm," Lilith murmured, looking at Seol-Ah with great interest.

[That human girl seems to have fallen for your charms as well, my king,] Lilith said for only Kang-Woo to hear.

[Be quiet,] he replied coldly so that Lilith wouldn't think of doing anything weird.

"Have a safe trip."

"Thanks."

"Umm... You take care as well, Ms. Kurosaki—I mean, Ms. Lilith."

"Hoho. Let us talk again later, Seol-Ah."

Kang-Woo and Lilith walked out of the apartment.

Lilith stared vacantly at the closed door for a moment before saying, "You mentioned that a symbol of wings appeared on Seol-Ah's back, right?"

"Oh, yeah. There was just one pair in the beginning, but now there are two."

The angel wing symbols that were on Seol-Ah's back were becoming more and more vivid as time passed.

"Hm. I feel like I have heard something about this from Amon before..."

"From Amon?"

"Yes. He said something about it while talking about angels, but... I wasn't interested at all at the time, so I cannot quite remember."

Lilith wasn't interested in what people aside from Kang-Woo said.

"..."

Kang-Woo had been interested in talking about it since it was related to Seol-Ah, but he quickly started walking again.

This was not the time to think about Seol-Ah.

"Well, then..." Kang-Woo jumped into the air and flew. "Let's begin."

\* \* \*

Slam—!!

The earth was torn apart, and a horrible scream rang out.

"S-Stop him!!"

"Arrgghh!!"

"M-Monster."

A vast grassland in Africa had been ripped apart in such a horrifying way that calling it Hell would be embarrassingly inadequate.

A demon with ten black wings on his back, goat horns on his forehead, and black skin was walking on top of the torn and distorted land.

He wasn't very tall, but he did not resemble a human at all. His face was contorted like a monster's.

The demon, whose horrid face resembled a goblin's, was walking along the ruined surface.

Then he raised his hand.

CRAAAAACK—!!

"AAAAHHHH!!"

With one swing of his hand, a black sphere appeared out of thin air.

Dozens of Demon Cultists were dragged in by its huge gravitational force, and the chilling sound of bones being crushed rang out.

"Fuuu."

A sigh emerged from the mouth of Lucifer, the demon who was massacring the Demon Cult.

[L-Lord Lucifer.]

[You should rest a little...]

The demons following him spoke up out of worry.

Lucifer shook his head and replied, "I will not rest."

His son, Lucis, had been kidnapped by Satan, so there was no way he could rest.

Lucifer looked down at his hands.

'It must be because I am on Earth.'

He was far weaker than back in Aernor, where he'd become the Evil God and surpassed his old self in the Nine Hells.

Ever since crossing over to Earth, he had been slowly regaining his power over time as if he was getting used to the Earth, but he did not have the time to wait lying around.

'I have no choice.'

Despite becoming weaker, he could still exercise as much power as when he had been in the Nine Hells. He wasn't sure how strong Satan had become after absorbing the Demonic Sea from the demon king, but he should at least be a match for Satan.

"Let us move on."

Lucifer was about to turn around when...

[L-Lord Lucifer!!]

A subordinate came running toward him.

Lucifer turned toward the subordinate and frowned.

[L-Lord Lucis was lying collapsed on the ground over there!]

"...What?" Lucifer uttered with wide eyes.

He quickly walked toward the subordinate and saw that he was definitely carrying Lucis on his back.

"Move!"

Lucifer had fought endlessly after hearing that his son had been kidnapped, so Lucifer's patience had reached its limit. His judgment was getting cloudy, and his sense of reason was fading.

With his son in front of him now, Lucifer couldn't think of anything else.

He hugged Lucis.

"Lucis! Wake up!"

"Fa...ther?"

Lucis's eyes widened.

Lucifer sighed in relief when he realized his son was unscathed.

"You stupid boy."

"I-I'm sorry, Father."

"Where's Sata—"

Stab.

Lucifer felt something sharp pierce his heart.

"Cough." He coughed up black blood.

Lucifer looked at Lucis in disbelief.

"Son, what... are you—"

The tips of Lucis's mouth went up.

He said with a voice full of madness, "I am taking over your throne, Father."

"Kurgh."

Lucifer collapsed with his eyes wide open and saw a black Rift in the distance. A red demon mask appeared from within the black Rift.

"Sa... tan," Lucifer murmured.

Then he heard a demon laughing in the distance, "Kekeke."

Chapter 212 - I Am the Real Satan (1)

"Sa... tan," Lucifer murmured.

Then he heard a demon laughing in the distance, "Kekeke."

"You..."

Uncontrollable rage surged inside Lucifer. His head felt hot.

Rather than the pain from the blade penetrating his heart, it was the fact that his son Lucis had stabbed him that hurt even more.

Lucifer's vision blurred, and he felt his consciousness and rationality fading away. He was filled with madness.

"Sa... taaaaaan!!!"

BOOM!!

Lucifer pushed Lucis aside and stomped on the ground. His ten wings spread open, and his voice was filled with madness.

He shot out at supersonic speed before his voice even reached Satan. Lucifer raised his hand, summoning a black sphere into it that he then crushed.

[Very good,] Satan—no, Kang-Woo, who was hiding behind a mask, said.

'It worked,' he thought.

Lilith had brainwashed Lucis and used him to inflict a psychological attack on Lucifer. Lucifer was already tired after fighting against the Demon Cult, so the psychological attack damaged him greatly. Even at first glance, it was clear that he was weaker than when Kang-Woo had fought against him in the Nine Hells.

Kang-Woo smiled. He pulled his arm back and stared at Lucifer's fist.

'Skybreaker.'

Two Authorities merged. He took a step forward and punched.

Rumble—!!

The earth shook. The ground that they were standing on sank, accompanied by a rumbling akin to that of an earthquake.

Kang-Woo jumped into the air and lightly waved his hand, shooting black blades from the darkness that shrouded his body.

"YOUUU!!!" Lucifer roared.

His demonic energy flickered and spread out, deflecting Kang-Woo's black blades to the floor.

'I guess he's still a prince of Hell despite being half-dead.'

Among the seven princes of Hell, Lucifer was ranked third. He was strong even despite being fatigued and injured.

'But...'

Kang-Woo smiled. Lucifer wasn't so strong that Kang-Woo wasn't a match for him.

"You... scumbag!!! Lunatic!! How could you do something so horrid?!" Lucifer raged.

Considering the situation, such a reaction was expected. Kang-Woo had brainwashed Lucifer's son to stab his father's chest. There was nothing more depraved, evil, and crappy than that.

Yet, Kang-Woo couldn't help but laugh at Lucifer's words.



[...]

Kang-Woo remained silent. He was angry.

"Lord... Kang-Woo."

"My... apologies."

Memories of the past flashed through his mind. He recalled what his subordinates had said to him with their dying breaths back.

These memories were from before he had taken over as the demon king—when he had been at war against the seven princes of Hell. Lucifer's forces had been overwhelmingly stronger than Kang-Woo's.

He recalled how Lucifer's forces had captured his subordinates and forced them to suicide bomb their allies.

The memories Kang-Woo had tried to forget came flooding back to him.

[Bull,] he said in a low voice while looking at Lucifer tremble in anger.

Kang-Woo didn't believe in the phrase, 'You reap what you sow.' In most cases, the person who reaped and the one who sowed were two different people.

Still, hearing the demon, who had used Kang-Woo's subordinates to execute all sorts of deranged tactics, say something like that made him frown.

[Did I not tell you before?]

No demon cared about morals in battle. They did not yield nor compromise. Those who yielded would die, and those who compromised would lose. To survive, one needed to be willing to do whatever it took.

Answer to evil with greater evil, and return bloodlust with even greater bloodlust—the moment Kang-Woo forgot that, he would be the one to get devoured.

[What did you expect in a battle between demons?]

"I will tear you apart, Satan."

It seemed like Lucifer couldn't hear Kang-Woo's voice anymore.

Lucifer glowered at Kang-Woo as he emitted a strong bloodlust.

'Yeah, this is more like it,' Kang-Woo thought.

He laughed while looking at Lucifer, who was filled with rage.

Making Lucifer lose his mind and run wild had given Kang-Woo a far greater advantage than the physical injury he'd used Lucis to inflict on Lucifer. After all, the angrier someone became, the simpler their actions and the cloudier their judgment would be.

Kang-Woo narrowed his eyes and analyzed Lucifer's movements.

'Here he comes.'

BOOM!

Lucifer kicked the ground, and his ten wings spread out. Thousands of feathers poured down like raindrops.

'Authority of Insight.'

The eyes behind the red demon mask lit up as the trajectories of the thousands of feathers entered his mind.

Kang-Woo then lowered himself and kicked off the ground. He ran as if he were avoiding shell fragments, dodging the feathers infused with demonic energy.

He extended his right hand behind him. The Key of the Demonic Sea took the form of a dark-red spear, and he grabbed and threw it.

"You should not have laid a hand on my son," Lucifer said while looking at Kang-Woo intensely.

Lucifer clapped, and a black sphere appeared, deflecting the Key of the Demonic Sea. He put his hand inside the black sphere and pulled out a weapon—a spear.

'Pride.'

It was Lucifer's Hell Armament, a powerful weapon that symbolized his power and defined his existence.

Lucifer rushed at Kang-Woo while gripping Pride in his hands.

Slash!!

At that moment, a fire whip struck Lucifer.

He turned his head and frowned, uttering, "You're..."

[I am Yogg-Saron, Lord Satan's loyal subordinate,] a demon covered with green tentacles replied with a light laugh.

'Yogg-Saron...'

It was a name Lucifer had never heard before.

Nevertheless, Lucifer shook his head after thinking about it for a while. It wasn't the time to think of things like that.

"Army of Pride," Lucifer commanded his subordinates. "Punish the demon who dared to point a sword at me, Evil God Lucifer."

[Yes, sir!!]

[Kill him!!]

Lucifer's subordinates shouted while rushing forward.

However, there weren't that many of Lucifer's subordinates left. Due to the continuous battle against the Demon Cult, their numbers had been reduced drastically.

[Vaal Zahak.]

[Command me as you like, Lord Satan.]

A skeleton wearing a black robe appeared from the black Rift where Satan had appeared. He caressed a black crystal orb while laughing in a chilling way.

Vaal Zahak had told Kang-Woo to command him as he liked, but his command had already been decided.

[Kill them all.]

[May your will be done, Lord Satan.]

Demonic energy exploded from the crystal orb. The bodies of the demons that had died during the war started to arise like an army of the dead.

"GRRRR!!"

Tap. Tap.

A black knight appeared from the Rift and went to the front, taking position as leader of the undead army.

[Kekeke,] Vaal Zahak laughed evilly.

His empty eye sockets shone with a yellow light.

[Go, Reynald,] he called out the name of his Death Knight.

The Death Knight sitting atop a skeleton horse unsheathed his sword.

"Hwoooooo!!" the skeletons roared.

The undead army and Lucifer's forces clashed.

"Satan..." Lucifer narrowed his eyes. "I see you're planning on seeing this to the very end."

[I would never have even started it if I did not intend to,] Kang-Woo said leisurely.

Everything was going as planned.

'The problem is the angels who will arrive after I kill Lucifer.'

Still, Kang-Woo wasn't that worried about that either.

'Angels aren't gonna be able to tell that I'm a demon.'

He was sure of it.

Ruler of Demonic Energy, the Trait that he'd earned after awakening as a Player, had given Kang-Woo the ability to hide the traces of his demonic energy completely. Neither Tirion, God of Heroes, nor Benigoa, a goddess from another world, had been able to tell that he was a demon.

Tirion had found out that Kang-Woo was a demon only after they established a link, but Kang-Woo would have no reason to do such an exchange of souls with an angel.

'In the end, the angels will target...'

The angels would most definitely target the Aspects of Evil, the ones who still hadn't appeared.

Kang-Woo smiled.

Just like how he had instigated bad blood between Lucifer and the Demon Cult, all Kang-Woo needed to do was pit the angels against the Aspects of Evil. Then, he would just reap the profits when he got the chance.

'I'll have to hide Balrog and Vaal Zahak, though.'

Kang-Woo's subordinates were linked to him through the soul, so they could also enjoy the effect of the Ruler of Demonic Energy. With it, deceiving angels would be a piece of cake.

Nevertheless, even if Balrog and Vaal Zahak could hide their demonic energy, their outer appearance was still a problem. Balrog looked like a typical demon that appeared in media, and Vaal Zahak was a skeleton. There was no way that the angels wouldn't be wary of them just because there was no demonic energy coming from them.

Echidna and Lilith were safe since they had a human form, but he would have to hide Vaal Zahak and Balrog very well.

'But it's still a huge plus.'

There was nothing better for him than angels actively moving to hunt down the Aspects of Evil instead of him. Kang-Woo would have to thank Lucifer for bringing the angels to Earth.

'Very nice.'

He couldn't help but smile after seeing everything turn out as he'd intended.

[Now, let us bring this to an end.]

Kang-Woo spread his hands, and a huge amount of demonic energy gathered before him.

"..."

Lucifer silently glared at Kang-Woo while holding the spear shaft of Pride.

The fight was about to enter its climax.

Just then...

BOOM!!

'The hell was that?' Kang-Woo thought.

Something flew from the sky and landed on the ground.

Kang-Woo and Lucifer looked at the unknown being that had come flying in out of the blue.

[I am death.]

'Huh?'

A red demon mask... body covered in a shroud of darkness...

[I am the end.]

'Fucking wait.'

Kang-Woo's mouth fell open in surprise.

The being behind the red mask covered with darkness continued, [I am the father of all wrath, and I am wrath itself.]

'The fuck?'

[I am...]

'What the hell is happening?'

Yellow eyes shone from behind the red mask.

[...Satan.]

"..."

"..."

Then there was silence.

The being wearing a red mask turned his head and said, [Lucifer, I have come to talk. I am not sure what has happened, but there has been a misunderstanding. I have no intention of fighting against y—]

Satan flinched when he found himself locking eyes with Kang-Woo.

[What in the world...? Who are you...?] Satan asked confusedly. Then he remembered what he'd heard from Julia Vilkova. [I see! You must be the one who dared to impers—]

BOOM!!

Kang-Woo aggressively stomped on the ground and pointed at Satan.

[Ha! How dare you use the name Satan, you impersonator?! Are you devoid of the fear of death?!]

[What? Impersonator? What are you t—]

[Silence!]

[No, you're the impers—]

[How dare you speak my name?!]

Kang-Woo extended his arm and used the Authority of Blaze in Satan's direction.

[I am the real Satan!!!!] Kang-Woo shouted in an enraged voice.

Chapter 213 - I Am the Real Satan (2)

'Aaaahhhh, what the fuck is happening?!'

Oh Kang-Woo fell into a state of confusion.

He said whatever popped into his head after seeing Satan suddenly appear, but he was still bewildered. Kang-Woo didn't understand how things were playing out like this.

'Is he actually Satan?'

It was an unreal coincidence. Moreover, this demon was also wearing a red demon mask and shrouded in darkness.

Kang-Woo didn't want to believe the demon was Satan. In fact, he hoped it was just a prank from Lilith.

'There's no way.'

He shook his head.

Lilith seemed to have a carefree attitude from a glance, but she knew she had to draw a line between private and public matters. She would never do something so meaningless that would obstruct the plan.

'In that case...'

The demon in front of him was actually Satan.

'He said he had come here to talk to Lucifer and that there had been a misunderstanding.'

Based on that, there was one thing Kang-Woo could conclude...

Who wanted to avoid confronting Lucifer's forces?

'The Aspects of Evil.'

The ones leading the Demon Cult... the ones who made the Demon Cult... the ones who were creating an endless conflict and could be called the seed of all danger and evil...

Kang-Woo had no choice but to believe Satan was one of those Aspects of Evil.

"Hah," he laughed in disbelief.

He'd used the name of Satan as a cheat code to overcome hard situations, but he hadn't imagined that Satan truly was one of the beings who led the Demon Cult.

'Oh, fuck.'

Kang-Woo felt like he'd found a bug while spamming the cheat code. He didn't know how to react. He'd used it so many times that he didn't know how to patch it.

'I can't let him do as he wishes.'

If there was one thing he was sure about, it was that he couldn't stand still and watch the real Satan do as he wished.

Leaving everything aside, Kang-Woo couldn't let people find out about two things: the fact that he was the Demon of Prophecy and that he'd killed Alec Osborne and Reynald.

Revealing those secrets would be on a whole other level compared to when it was revealed he was the demon king. He'd managed to talk things out regarding the fact that he was the demon king, but he wouldn't be able to do the same for the other two secrets.

If it were revealed that Satan really existed and people learned that Kang-Woo had been acting as him...

'It'll be the end.'

There was no need to think hard about it. All the trust and relationships he had worked so hard to build on Earth would crumble.

Kang-Woo had to do everything he could to stop the real Satan from making his presence known to the world. No, at the very least, he had to stop himself from being revealed as the 'fake'.

'But wait.'

Kang-Woo narrowed his eyes.

He looked at the Aspect of Evil with the red demon mask and shroud of darkness, whom he thought was the real Satan, and sensed the demonic energy coming out from Satan.

'Isn't it a bit weak?'

Satan was not even on Mammon's level, let alone Lucifer's. It was a bit of a stretch to even call Satan a prince of Hell now.

If they had been in a different situation, he would've considered him an apostle, not an Aspect of Evil.

'Well...'

The gears in Kang-Woo's mind turned.

'There are two possibilities.'

Either Satan hadn't recovered his full strength yet, or the one in front of Kang-Woo wasn't the real body.

'Either way...'

There was one conclusion. At that moment, Satan was weak.

Kang-Woo's eyes shone. He clenched his fist and licked his lips.

'I can do it.'

No, he had to. It would all be over if he couldn't.

'Damn, how did things turn out like this...?'

That wasn't the only problem.

Kang-Woo lifted his head to see that both Lucifer and the real Satan were also confused.

"What in the world..."

[Y-You are the true Satan, you say? What nonsense...]

From Lucifer's point of view, there were suddenly two versions of the demon who had killed his subordinates, kidnapped his son, and provoked him in all sorts of ways. He could not understand what was happening at all.

Meanwhile, it was obvious what Satan was thinking. As soon as he arrived to clear up the misunderstanding with Lucifer, he saw someone impersonating him. The worst thing was that the impersonator was saying that he was the fake one.

Upon realizing everything that had happened so far had all been because of the impersonator, Satan couldn't help but think the situation was unfair.

The three demons fell into a state of confusion.

The one who acted first was, as expected, Kang-Woo.

[Hah! I am exasperated! Throughout my whole life, I've never expected to see someone dare to impersonate me!]

[What in the hell are you talki—]

[Enough of your poor excuses!] Kang-Woo shouted.

Satan became confused after seeing the impersonator trying to make him out to be the fake. He frowned aggressively.

'Shit,' Satan thought.

Things were getting troublesome for him.

The best way to prove he was the real Satan was to show Wrath, his Hell Armament. However, this was not his main body; it was just a fragment that he had created while giving up on a portion of the Demonic Origin. Consequently, he couldn't use his Hell Armament.

At that moment...

[Take a good look at this! This is Wrath! This is proof that I am the true Satan!]

[What...?] Satan uttered, his eyes widening in shock.

There was a pitch-black sword of darkness in the hands of the demon impersonating him.

[How did you—n-no! That is a fake!!] Satan quickly shouted.

He was surprised for a brief moment, but he was sure that it was a fake.

After all, the real Wrath was in his main body.

Yet...

"...What a boring show," Lucifer remarked, narrowing his eyes.

Kang-Woo laughed in disbelief and said, [I am just as baffled as you. How dare trash like this interfere in our battle?]

He shook his head in disbelief.

From Lucifer's gaze and tone of voice, it was clear who he trusted more.

'Me, obviously,' Kang-Woo thought.

There was no need to think about it.

Between Satan who did not even have demonic energy comparable to that of a prince of Hell and was trying to talk things out instead of fighting... and Satan who exuded breathtaking demonic energy, possessed Wrath, and was trying to have a deathmatch like real demons should... it was obvious who Lucifer would believe more.

"Fuck off, distraction. I am not sure why you are trying to impersonate Satan, but that in itself is more than enough reason for me to kill you here and now."

[No, I am telling you that I am the real Satan—]

"I believe I told you to fuck off."

Lucifer emitted a strong bloodlust.

Satan grabbed his head and said, [I am... I am Satan... Why do you not believe me?]



He had never felt so frustrated and miserable ever since he had opened his eyes in the darkness of the Nine Hells. He had not felt like this even when he lost against the demon king.

Satan would not be feeling like this if he had lost in battle from weakness or died a glorious death instead.

He glared at his impersonator.

'Who is he?' Satan wondered.

Someone who had such an intense amount of demonic energy and was strong enough to pretend to be him...

'...'

There was only one person he could think of.

'No.'

Satan trembled.

He recalled a giant mouth with countless sharp teeth... and the face of the horrifying predator who devoured demons and even the princes of Hell.

That predator was neither a human, a demon, nor a god. He was just... a monster.

He was twisted and full of evil. He was someone who went against all comprehension and understanding.

'The demon king is dead,' Satan thought.

The demon king had clashed head-on with the distortions of time and space that existed between the dimensions of Earth, Aernor, Huan, and the Nine Hells.

'I had planned it that way.'

After considering the worst-case scenario, Satan had given Amon a command before planting him in the demon king's army. If Satan were to lose against the demon king and the demon king tried to return to Earth like he always mentioned... Amon was to make sure the demon king would be torn apart by the dimensional wall.

'Did he... betray me?'

Satan remembered that hunchbacked, wrinkled demon—Amon. There was no one as capable as him when it came to black magic, not even a god. Amon's black magic could interfere with the providence of the universe that was otherwise known as the system.

'No.'

Satan knew Amon wasn't a trustworthy subordinate. Nevertheless, Satan had felt the energy of the Demon King being torn apart by the system.

'But...'

He turned his head and looked with trembling eyes. There, he saw a demon wearing a red demon mask just like him, with eyes full of madness and evil.

'He didn't... die?'

Tap.

[There is no point in talking any longer,] Kang-Woo voiced quietly. He turned his head and spoke to Lucifer, [We cannot let someone interfere in our sacred battle, can we?]

"...Nonsense."

It wasn't a sacred battle in the first place.

Lucifer narrowed his eyes.

"However, I also do not like the fact that it has been interrupted."

Satan insisted, [Like I said, I am the real S—]

[Then let us deal with the interference first,] Kang-Woo said, cutting Satan off.

Kang-Woo and Lucifer turned simultaneously and rushed toward Satan. Kang-Woo's Wrath and Lucifer's Pride struck Satan simultaneously.

Bash!!

[Kurgh!!]

The body that Satan was currently using was just a fragment of his main body, and it was not even as strong as Mammon. There was no way that he would be able to take a collaborative attack of two beings at the level of a prince of Hell when he could not even use his Hell Armament.

[AAAHHH!!!]

They kept exchanging blows, and the wounds in Satan's body deepened.

[Damn it! Listen to me, Lucifer!!!]

Slash! Boom!

[Gaaaahhhh!!]

The fragment of Satan slowly crumbled at Kang-Woo and Lucifer's collaborative attack.

Satan's energy weakened noticeably.

[I am...!! Satan!!!] he cried desperately.

Satan felt like he was about to go crazy due to the situation.

"I do not know who you are, but thank you," Lucifer said coldly. His gaze sharpened as he turned and glanced at Lucis. "Thanks to you, I was able to recover my reason."

Lucifer had been so baffled by the appearance of the impersonator that his crazed mind had calmed down. He now knew what he had to do.

[Aaaahhhh!!] Satan screamed.

Stab! Slash!

The two Hell Armaments overwhelmed him.

Satan felt like he was about to go insane, as a replica of Wrath, the Hell Armament that had been with him his entire life, was overpowering him.

He was enraged and frustrated.

[I am Satan!! I am the real Sataaaaaaaaaan!!!]

Crack!

The black sword stabbed him while he was screaming.

Chapter 214 - I Can't Believe That Worked

'Done.'

Oh Kang-Woo was sure it was a done deed; he felt it with his hands. He had completely pierced Satan—or to be precise, the being who was assumed to be his fragment or clone.

Of course, Kang-Woo smiled.

'That was dangerous.'

He had almost fumbled because he had been so flustered by the situation. He'd been just as surprised when Balrog had appeared and called him the demon king.

Kang-Woo looked down at Satan, who was melting and turning into some black viscous liquid that resembled tar.

It seemed that Kang-Woo had guessed correctly that the Satan before him was just a fragment of Satan's original body. If it were Satan's main body, he wouldn't have melted.

'I managed to put out the biggest fire.'

Nevertheless, the fundamental problem would not be resolved until Kang-Woo killed the real Satan. Satan would keep claiming that he was the real Satan, and Kang-Woo would continue having headaches because of that.

'But...'

Kang-Woo smiled with bright eyes.

It turned out that Satan was actually on Earth. On top of that, he happened to be the one leading the Demon Cult from the shadows.

'If I play my cards right...'

Kang-Woo thought that he could use that to his advantage.

Just like how pus from a wound slowly accumulated, he could resolve all the crimes he had committed by blaming them on Satan as long as his main body didn't die.

Kang-Woo could make use of Satan.

'Now's not the time though.'

Kang-Woo turned while looking down at Satan's melted fragment.

The situation wasn't over just because he'd gotten rid of Satan's fragment. The main event lay elsewhere.

'Why is Lucifer so quiet all of a—'

Kang-Woo looked for Lucifer, who had suddenly disappeared during their collaboration.

"Huh?" he uttered in a confused voice.

Lucifer was nowhere to be seen.

[Lucifer!] Kang-Woo called out in Satan's voice.

He turned around to find Lucifer glaring at him with cold sunken eyes while holding Lucis.

"Let me go! I! I have given my soul to Lady Lilith!"

"Stay still."

Lucis was struggling to get free, but Lucifer knocked him out. Then Lucifer sighed and waved his hand in the air.

A blue Gate appeared.

[Shit!!]

Kang-Woo stomped on the ground and shot forward at supersonic speed, creating a sonic boom and a strong gust of wind.

'Shit!'

He bit his lip anxiously. Lucifer's escape had not been within his expectations.

Lucifer and Lucis were gradually disappearing through the gate. Kang-Woo reached out and grabbed Lucifer's arm.

[Are you running away?] Kang-Woo asked.

"I... have come back to my senses," Lucifer answered in a cold voice.

He indeed appeared different from his enraged look before.

[You are delusional if you think I will let you run away.]

Kang-Woo pulled on Lucifer's arm aggressively, pulling him out of the Gate slightly.

"Satan," Lucifer said as he glared at Kang-Woo. In a voice filled with powerful bloodlust, he declared, "I will be back."

[...]

"I will be back one day to destroy everything you have. I will make sure you regret what you have done today for the rest of eternity."

Rather than a threat, it was closer to a curse.

Kang-Woo used the Authority of Titanic Might and pulled Lucifer's arm. However, Lucifer pulled back, resulting in the severing of his arm.

Rip—!!

[Lucifer...]

Lucifer's arm was ripped off like a severed lizard's tail, and black blood poured out.

"Remember this, Satan," Lucifer said quietly, "I will be back."

With that, he completely vanished through the blue Gate.

"..."

Silence fell over the battlefield.

[U-Urghh!!]

One of the demons Lucifer had left behind charged toward Kang-Woo. Kang-Woo slowly raised his hand, grabbed the demon's horn, and crushed it.

Crack!

The demon fell to the ground and screamed. Then Kang-Woo raised his foot and stomped on the demon's head.

Crunch.

The demon's brain exploded over the ground.

"Shit, shit. Fuck!!"

Kang-Woo couldn't help but curse. He grabbed and pulled on his hair.

'I shouldn't have let him go.'

He had fumbled out of panic and had forgotten about his important objective.

'I made a mistake.'

If he had returned to his senses faster and dealt with things faster, he could've killed Lucifer right here.

It was just an excuse that he'd been confused by Satan's sudden appearance. He could have dealt with the variable and killed Lucifer at the same time.

"Damn."

However, Kang-Woo hadn't done that. Instead, he had made a mistake because he had panicked out of confusion.

Kang-Woo frowned aggressively.

'I haven't failed yet.'

As long as Lucifer was not an idiot, he would take his time to make even more thorough preparations. However, Kang-Woo did not think that his plan had been a complete failure since Lucifer wasn't aware of a critical fact.

'His rage is directed toward Satan.'

The fundamental misunderstanding hadn't been cleared up. Rather, it had deepened.

Kang-Woo narrowed his eyes.

Satan was on Earth, and Lucifer had escaped to Aernor.

'How should I manipulate them?'

Kang-Woo was sure he'd be able to use them, but the details were not coming to him at the moment. It would be impossible to plan anything if Lucifer didn't take any action.

'He'll be back.'

Kang-Woo was sure of it. There was no way Lucifer was just going to run with his tail between his legs. He would be back after making ample preparations.

"And..."

His rage would be directed at Satan.

"...Not bad at all."

It would take more time and effort, but considering that was the consequence of Kang-Woo's mistake, it was a cheap price to pay.

"Lilith."

"Yes, Master Kang-Woo."

Once Kang-Woo called her name, Lilith appeared.

He slowly turned around and asked her, "You saw everything, right?"

"Yes," Lilith replied with a nod. "I will torture all of the cultists and find Satan's location."

"No, you won't be able to."

The cultists had not even known that Satan was one of the Aspects of Evil, so there was no way they would know where he was.

"Then..."

"What I killed was just a fragment of Satan. His main body should be alive somewhere."

Lilith's eyes lit up. She giggled, making a wicked smile.

"He will likely make his move first, then," she remarked.

"Someone is going around impersonating him, so there's no way he would do nothing about it."

After all, Satan had been thoroughly humiliated. Kang-Woo wasn't sure why Satan couldn't move his main body, but he was sure that Satan would make some sort of move in retaliation.

"What if he does not make a move?" Lilith asked.

In that case, it was simple.

"Then we'll force him to."

It didn't matter what method they used.

Kang-Woo slowly took off the red demon mask that was covering his face. A chilling wind tickled his skin.

"How many survived?" he asked.

"About 739 Demon Cultists survived. They are all running away."

"Capture those of the cardinal rank and above and brainwash them. Be it with black magic, beauty trap, torture—it doesn't matter. Make them submit and spread them throughout the Demon Cult."

Kang-Woo needed agents inside the Demon Cult to figure out Satan's movements.

“May your will be done, my king.”

A chilling smile appeared on Lilith's face.

Kang-Woo began to walk slowly.

Boom.

Balrog approached him, knelt on one knee, and reported, [All of Lucifer's subordinates have been subdued.]

Kang-Woo looked at the demons who were behind Balrog. They had been subdued by Vaal Zahak's Undead army.

Now, they were looking up at Kang-Woo in fear.

[W-We surrender!]

[W-We swear our a-allegiance to Lord Satan!]

They desperately begged while bowing.

Kang-Woo turned and looked down at them, but he turned away soon after.

Balrog said, [As for the number of survivors—]

"No need to tell me."

Kang-Woo walked past Balrog as if he weren't interested.

It was a different story if they were Demon Cultists, but there was no need for Kang-Woo to know how many of Lucifer's subordinates had survived.

He put away the red mask in his hand and commanded, "Kill them."

[Yes, my king,] Balrog replied with a nod.

If there were a way for Kang-Woo to go to Aernor from Earth, there might be a use for them. However, he couldn't, so they were of no use to him. It was better to kill them and then turn them into Undead if he wanted to use them as soldiers.

'Those that betray once are bound to betray again.'

Crush!!

[Arrgghh!!]

[P-Please spare—!]

Lucifer's subordinates screamed.

Nevertheless, Kang-Woo ignored them.

With Lucifer's torn arm in hand, he walked over to Satan's dead fragment. There was a gloopy black liquid on the floor.

Kang-Woo sighed.

'This won't nearly be enough.'

He thought of the remaining condition for the Demonic Soul. To fulfill the condition, he needed to absorb the body of a prince of Hell with the Authority of Predation.

Kang-Woo had thought that he'd be able to fulfill that condition after eating Lucifer.

'This is the biggest disappointment.'

Painful regret swept over him once again.

His plan could be executed again as long as Lucifer still mistook him for Satan, but that was a different issue. Kang-Woo hadn't been able to fulfill the remaining condition for the Demonic Soul, which was the biggest disappointment.

"I guess the price is cheap, considering the mistake."

The mistake could have led to irreversible consequences.

Making a mistake in a battle between demons meant death, so failing to fulfill the condition for the Demonic Soul was the cheapest price he could have paid.

"Tsk," Kang-Woo clicked his tongue.

There was no point in making a fuss over spilled milk.

'I should eat these at least.'

He sighed and used the Authority of Predation.

The Authority of Predation covered Satan's fragment and Lucifer's arm.

'Fucking hell, I doubt I'll even get a single stat point from this.'

No matter how much Kang-Woo tried to forget about his mistake, he couldn't help but feel disappointed.

Crunch.

The Authority of Predation consumed Satan's fragment and Lucifer's torn arm.

Riiing.

[Activating the Trait 'Prince Slayer'.]

[Absorbing the soul fragments within the consumed parts of Satan's and Lucifer's bodies.]

[A weak Divinity has been detected in the two soul fragments.]

[Raising the quality of the soul fragments compared to when they were still part of the souls of the princes of Hell.]

[Attempting Predation on the soul fragments deemed SSS-rank.]

[Successful!]

'Hm?'

[The passage connected to the deep end of the Ten Thousand Demon Core has been 100% completed.]

[All conditions for Demonic Soul have been fulfilled!]



'Wha—?'

Whooom!!!

Dense demonic energy exploded out of him.

The demonic energy from his heart enveloped his entire body.

[Commencing the Demonic Soul awakening.]

"..."

Kang-Woo's mouth fell open.

Chapter 215 - Demonic Soul

Darkness fell. Dense demonic energy leaked out of his skin and covered the surroundings.

The scarily dense demonic energy within his Ten Thousand Demon Core, which was located in his heart, writhed. He could feel it instinctively.

'Demonic energy from the deep end.'

If the Ten Thousand Demon Core could be separated by floors, it would belong to the middle floor. The demonic energy from the middle floor spread through his body.

He moved his finger, but there was no reaction.

'What is a Demonic Soul?'

It was more ambiguous than the Ultimate Demonic Body.

While thinking about that, Kang-Woo monitored the changes within his body. Experiencing it for himself was far more effective than imagining it.

The demonic energy moved on its own, spreading throughout his body. The changes had begun.

'Ah.'

It was hard to explain how it felt. A chill ran down his spine, and the hairs on his neck stood on end.

He felt as though he was extending or going up—like he had climbed up to the peak of an endless mountain and was looking down. The things that he had thought were a given all this time no longer felt like it.

'What's happening?'

It felt different from when he'd achieved the Ultimate Demonic Body. He did not feel an explosive rise in power or changes in his physical body like back then.

'Maybe it has nothing to do with getting stronger.'

This was different from a rise in combat ability. It had nothing to do with gaining the power to subdue and trample his enemies.

'This is...'

It did not take him very long to find the correct word.

A certain word passed through Kang-Woo's mind as he was curled up in the darkness among the dense demonic energy.

'A vessel.'

This unknown power known as the Demonic Soul had turned him into a vessel—an object used to contain something.

Riiing.

He heard the familiar chime and raised his head.

A blue message window appeared from within the darkness.

[You have successfully awakened the Demonic Soul!]

[A vessel capable of holding Divinity has been formed!]

[Demonic Energy has risen by 2.]

[Demonic Energy stat has reached 140!]

'A vessel capable of holding Divinity...'

Kang-Woo had an idea of what the role of the Demonic Soul was and the effects that it had.

'I guess this is why it's the road to becoming a Demon God.'

First, it had been his body that had changed. Then, it had been his soul.

In both changes, there had been one goal... Divinity—the power of gods and the power that allowed them to exist. It was something that went beyond the laws of physics and made it possible to manifest miracles.

'And...'

It was the power to interfere with the system.

"..."

Kang-Woo slowly opened his eyes to see the world around him. It was the same world, but it felt different. That was a confusing way to say it, but it was hard to find a better way to say it.

He moved his finger, drew out demonic energy, and used an Authority.

The passage to the deep end of the Ten Thousand Demon Core had been fully formed. It was as if a colossal water pipe had been connected to an endless sea.

He could circulate demonic energy as naturally as when he had been in the Nine Hells.

Slash!!

Black blades flew out from his fingers.

He turned his hand, and droplets of darkness dripped from his fingertips like blood.

Then, one of the droplets fell onto the ground.

CRACK—!!

Black blades rose from the ground in a twenty-meter radius from where the droplet fell.

This was Field of Blades. It was a skill he had already learned, but it produced completely different results when he used demonic energy from the deep end of the Ten Thousand Demon Core.

"It's been a while."

The tips of his mouth went up.

The sensations and feelings he'd had from the days when he ruled over all demons came back to him.

[A-Aaahhh!] Balrog gasped.

He was thrilled.

As a Familiar of the demon king, Balrog's soul was connected to Kang-Woo's, so he could feel Kang-Woo's power. He realized that his master had fully returned to his state from when he used to rule over the Nine Hells.

Balrog violently kneeled and slammed his head onto the ground.

[You have returned, my king.]

"What are you talking about?"

Kang-Woo smirked.

It was funny.

"I've been here all this time."

[...]

Balrog remained silent.

He felt ashamed for using such an expression. It was stupid. After all, Balrog knew who Kang-Woo was and what he was capable of.

Kang-Woo had not reached the pinnacle of the Nine Hells and all demons simply because he was strong. During the Final War, Bael had been stronger than the demon king. Despite that, the one to come out victorious had been Balrog's master, the demon king.

He had suffered numerous losses throughout the battle spanning a thousand years, and many of his subordinates and comrades had died.

'But...'

The demon king had won in the end.

He had not backed down. He had not submitted. He had not compromised, and he had not yielded. He had gladly accepted a challenge that he had no chance of winning at the time.

[A-Aaahhh.]

Balrog trembled, and tears dripped from his eyes.

He shuddered, overwhelmed by the boundless faith, trust, and obsessive reverence that he had in and for his king.

The demon king was right—he hadn't returned; he had always been here.

[My kiiiiiiiiiiiiing!!!]

Balrog rushed toward Kang-Woo and hugged him with both his arms.

[Sniff!! I, Balrog, am honored to have been given the chance to serve you!!]

Due to their overwhelming difference in height, Kang-Woo's head got stuck in Balrog's armpit.

"Fucking hell! Get off me, dammit!!"

Kang-Woo struggled to get free from the horrible scent.

He glanced at Balrog with a tired expression. Balrog's eyes were sparkling in a way that did not match his five-meter figure.

'Stupid muscle pig.'

That was the best way to describe him.

Nevertheless, Kang-Woo did not hate him. They'd spent too much time together for that to be the case.

[You should have absolutely no problem facing Satan and Lucifer now.]

"No, I don't think so." Kang-Woo shook his head and narrowed his eyes. "Those guys have Divinity."

[...Divinity?]

"Yeah."

A being with Divinity wasn't necessarily powerful in terms of combat prowess. Having more Divinity meant that they had higher chances of having high combat prowess, but unlike stats, it didn't always translate into strength.

An example of that was Tirion, God of Heroes. Kang-Woo was sure he'd be able to beat him if he were forced to face him in his current state.

'But...'

That didn't mean that he could take the fact that Satan and Lucifer now possessed Divinity lightly.

They had not possessed Divinity in the Nine Hells. If they had, there was no way that he wouldn't have noticed it when he devoured them with the Authority of Predation back then.

'They acquired it here.'

Judging by the situation, both demons had gone back to a distant past by at least a thousand years compared to the point in time that Kang-Woo had returned to. During that time, not only had they recovered their bodies, but they'd also reached a higher point than back in the Nine Hells.

'What could have happened?'

He couldn't figure it out. A thousand years was short from a demon's perspective.

For tens of thousands of years, the princes of Hell had not been able to surpass the limits of being princes. The only one that had been able to go beyond his limits was Bael.

However, it was different now; both Satan and Lucifer had acquired Divinity. They had been able to go beyond the wall that had stopped them from growing for hundreds of thousands of years.

'How?'

He couldn't imagine how they had managed it.

Kang-Woo's thoughts were in a jumble. He clicked his tongue and shook his head.

'The important thing is that I shouldn't take it lightly.'

He raised his hand.

FWOOSH!!!

Yellow flames rose.

He still felt awkward using Mammon's Authority.

The Demonic Soul was a vessel.

'An empty vessel that hasn't been filled.'

Unlike what he'd hoped, his combat prowess had not risen.

'More...'

He had to grow even stronger.

Desire and thirst burned his throat.

Riiing.

['Final step to becoming a Demon God' quest has been generated.]

[Information]

[\*Condition 1: Demonic Energy stat reaches 150.

\*Condition 2: ???

\*Condition 3: ???]

"Why so fucking many?"

There had been two conditions before, but there were three this time. On the bright side, one of the conditions had been revealed, and it was the final step to becoming a Demon God.

"Final, huh?"

For some reason, he didn't get the feeling that it was the final step.

Kang-Woo recalled when he'd created Inferno. There had been an advanced Demon God quest marked with question marks.

"...Well, I guess it's better to have it than not."

It was true that he was strangely expectant.

After all, it was an incredible feeling to become stronger and capable of doing things that hadn't been possible before. All demons longed for it, even at the cost of their eternal life.

"Oh, right."

Kang-Woo looked at his right middle finger.

The ring was wriggling as if it were alive.

'I remember it saying that digestion would commence once I achieve the Demonic Soul.'

He still had many questions regarding the Key of the Demonic Sea.

'It ate a Hell Armament.'

Something he hadn't been able to consume with the Authority of Predation had been eaten by his equipment. It'd be stranger if he weren't curious about it.

He opened up the information window for the Key of the Demonic Sea.

[Equipment Information]

[Equipment Name: Key of the Demonic Sea

Rank: Transcendent (Imprinted)

Type: Growth \*The equipment will grow stronger whenever certain conditions are fulfilled.]

[Equipment Status]

[\*Digestion in Progress: Currently in the process of digesting Greed. Suspending all abilities other than basic effects.]

'Hm?'

Kang-Woo frowned and poured demonic energy into the Key of the Demonic Sea.

'It's not transforming.'

He frowned.

Without help from the Key of the Demonic Sea, he couldn't use his trump card, Inferno.

"Ngh."

He could still fight against a prince of Hell without Inferno. However, he was quite displeased to see that the trump card he'd practiced for so long was sealed.

'I guess I'll have to stay low-key for a while.'

Kang-Woo thought of the things he had to do.

'Reach 150 in my Demonic Energy stat.'

His Demonic Energy stat had already become so high that it wouldn't rise unless he fought against the princes of Hell and consumed them.

'Or consume a ridiculously high number of demons.'

Whatever the case, he had no way of raising it at the moment.

"Tsk," Kang-Woo clicked his tongue.

He had obtained many things despite having let go of Lucifer, but his head hurt from thinking about everything that he would need to do from now on.

"Let's go back."

He looked up at the blue sky and the warm sun as he walked.

It had been two years since his return to Earth and seven years since the Day of Calamity. He had finally recovered the power that he had amassed during the ten millennia he had spent in Hell.

Chapter 216 - Oh Kang-Woo Instruction Manual (1)

Click.

The door to Oh Kang-Woo's room opened. Kang-Woo, who was reading a Guardians mission report that he received from Gaia in his room, turned his head.

An innocent-looking woman was smiling and looking at him. Her pure image turned immediately to one of a lustful enchantress just from a simple smile.

"What's up?" Kang-Woo asked.

"I have something to report," she said.

Kang-Woo turned his chair and faced Lilith.

She continued, "I finished brainwashing three cardinals, so I sent the first batch back to the Demon Cult."

"Already?"

Kang-Woo looked at her in surprise. It had been only a week since that disastrous fight against Satan and Lucifer had ended. The three were cardinals of the Demon Cult, so he hadn't thought that they would fall under submission so easily.

A deep smile appeared on Lilith's face.

"Fufu. Master Kang-Woo, you know how good my honey-trapping techniques are."

"... You even used the honey trap?"

He couldn't understand it. In Lucis's case, Lucis had the same sense of beauty as a demon, but that wasn't the case for the cardinals. Even though they had accepted demonic energy into their bodies, they were still normal human beings.

No, even if they had become more demonlike after accepting the demonic energy, their values and tastes shouldn't have become that different from a human's.

'At least that was the case for me.'

Kang-Woo frowned.

"Yes. Fufu. My looks seem to be very effective even on humans."

"...?"

Kang-Woo thought, 'What kind of nonsense is that?'

"I created a clone of myself and locked the cardinals away in tentacles for three days straight."

"..."

"Aah, to think they would fall so easily with just a clone... Humans are so simple." Lilith stuck out her long snake-like tongue and licked Kang-Woo's cheek. "But still, my real body and feelings are only directed toward you, Master Kang-Woo."

"... Urpp."

Kang-Woo quickly covered his mouth.

Most of the captured cardinals were old men full of wrinkles. Imagining what they had to go through made him want to puke.

'I'm glad I left things entirely to Lilith.'

He might have seen something horrifying if he had wanted to check things out and see how they were doing.

"So, did you get anything out of them?"

"I still have not gained any information regarding Satan's exact movements, but"—Lilith stroked her chin—"every cardinal that was brainwashed was sent to the same branch."

"Which branch?"

"A branch in Russia. It is the biggest branch that we have seen. There are at least ten thousand cultists in it."

"Ten thousand, huh?"

It was certainly the biggest branch of the Demon Cult they'd found.

"If it's that big, perhaps it's their headquarters and not a branch?"

"No. Based on the information I received from the cardinals, it does not seem to be their headquarters either."

"I see."

He nodded.

'Does that mean Satan is in their headquarters?'

He still didn't know for sure.

He said, "For now, keep track of Satan's movements while focusing on that branch."

There was no way Satan would remain still—he was definitely going to make a move.

'I must wait.'

If Kang-Woo rushed things, there was the possibility of Satan running away like Lucifer did. He couldn't let that happen. He would kill Satan once Satan fully came out of hiding.

"Is that all for the report?"

"Yes. I will let you know immediately once I learn anything new."

"Good work."



"Fufu, anything for you, my king."

Lilith laughed.

Kang-Woo groaned. This was why he couldn't come to hate Lilith despite everything that she had done to him.

'She's not only extremely capable but also loyal.'

It would be weirder if he hated her.

Kang-Woo laughed bitterly and turned around.

He asked, "Oh, you didn't forget about tomorrow, did you?"

"No, of course not. I also contacted Balrog earlier."

Kang-Woo had decided that he could connect the people he had met on Earth with his comrades from Hell.

In other words, a get-together.

They would just be spending time together while eating and drinking.

"I'll see you tomorrow, then."

"Hmm?" Lilith tilted her head, and the tips of her mouth went up. Her hair started to turn into tentacles.

"W-Wait."

"My, my. It would truly be a shame to go back so soon."

"Save me."

"You know that rewarding your subordinates for their accomplishments is the duty of a king... do you not?"

"Gasp."

Click.

A long tentacle stretched out and locked the door.

\* \* \*

Chop, chop, chop.

The sound of ingredients being chopped on a cutting board was heard. The ingredients were cut uniformly as if a machine had cut them.

"Ngh..."

Han Seol-Ah looked at the closed door.

'I wonder what they're talking about.'

Lilith had entered the room, and she wanted to know what she was talking about with Kang-Woo.

"Haaa."

She sighed. She sadly lowered her head and kicked the ground while wearing slippers.

'I've barely been able to talk to Kang-Woo lately.'

After the appearance of a prince of Hell named Mammon, Kang-Woo had become even busier than before. Due to his Guardians work, training, and many other things that he needed to take care of, their chances to talk had plummeted.

'It's a bit...'

Lonely. Or at least, that's what she felt. Although they lived under the same roof, she felt like they were drifting apart.

"..."

Seol-Ah put the ingredients she'd just cut into a pot. The kimchi stew, which she could now prepare with her eyes closed, was boiling and emitting a delicious aroma.

She sat down in a chair and fell into thought, thinking about Kang-Woo.

'I wonder what Kang-Woo thinks of me.'

They'd been living together for two years. It was enough time to make even enemies fond of each other.

Not only that, but she had been interested in him from the beginning. It would be weird if she wasn't—he'd saved her from a life that would have been hell. Despite that, he had never asked anything of her and had just wanted her to stay by his side.

On one hand, she thought that falling in love with someone just because they had saved her life was like some cheesy 80's TV drama, but he'd done so much for her that it would've been weirder if she hadn't fallen for him.

'No.'

She shook her head.

She didn't have feelings for Kang-Woo just because he had saved her and pulled her from a life of hell. She pictured him; his eyes were sharp enough to look slightly fierce. He did whatever needed to be done without hesitation. He gave off the feeling that one could trust him and that everything would be okay as long as one stayed by his side and followed him.

'But...'

At the same time, his eyes sometimes looked too dark. He sometimes looked so miserable that he was on the verge of breaking down.

They were two completely different appearances.

It was as if he were forcing himself to move forward with rusted joints that barely moved.

On one hand, she trusted him, but she also wanted to protect him.

She had been sure of such feelings for some time. She wasn't sure if Kang-Woo had felt it, but she had sent him signs so that her feelings would be obvious to him.

Thanks to that, they were as close as family.

"But..."

She wasn't able to close the gap between them any more than that. It felt as if one more step would seal the deal, but that step couldn't be taken.

Seol-Ah pouted and angrily kicked the cushion at her feet.

"H-He even asked me to marry him."

Her face turned red. She recalled the first thing that he had said to her while grabbing her hand on the day they had met.

At first, she thought he was quite a peculiar person, but after hearing about his past, she understood everything. He'd met a person for the first time after spending ten millennia in Hell.

'I-I guess it's kind of like... destiny?'

He'd been locked away in Hell for ten millennia, and the first person he had met after crossing dimensions to Earth to protect it from the Demon of Prophecy, Satan, was her.

If that wasn't destiny, then what was?

Bubble! Tsss!

"Kyaa!"

She unwittingly screamed after hearing the pot bubble over. Seol-Ah ran toward the stove and turned off the fire.

"Haaa, haaa. C-Calm down."

She put her hand on her chest, bit her lip, and tried to get herself together. She controlled her breathing and turned around to look at the door again.

It was still closed.

Although it had been an hour since Lilith had entered, they still hadn't come out.

Seol-Ah suddenly began feeling anxious. She recalled what Cha Yeon-Joo had said to her a few days ago, "That idiot will never realize your feelings if you don't become more assertive."

'Assertive...'

Seol-Ah clenched her fist.

She'd never dated a man, so she wasn't sure about what to do. But, she wanted to at least take the challenge.

Click.

"Fufufu. I will see you tomorrow then, Master Kang-Woo~!"

At that moment, Lilith walked out.

"Oh?"

Her eyes met with Seol-Ah's, and a deep smile appeared on Lilith's face.

Seol-Ah's body stiffened.

Lilith was staring at her as if she knew everything. She walked toward Seol-Ah, grabbed her shoulder, and whispered in her ear.

"Winning the demon king's heart will not be easy," she said in a bittersweet tone. "I have tried for a very long time, but... I failed."

"Ah..."

Lilith wiped her wet eyes and gave a bright smile. "Please tell me your secret if you manage to do it."

"U-Umm..."

Seol-Ah hesitated because she did not know how to answer. Her relationship with Lilith was still awkward. No, even if they were close, it would be hard to answer. It was obvious that they were rivals aiming for the same man.

'Ms. Lilith spent a thousand years with Kang-Woo.'

Jealousy boiled within Seol-Ah.

She took a glance at Lilith's appearance. Lilith looked both pure and lustful at the same time. Although they were both women, Seol-Ah couldn't help but be impressed by Lilith's beauty.

She had seen Kurosaki Yurie in the news in the past, but she looked more beautiful than back then.

'I remember her saying that her real form is even more beautiful.'

It was hard to imagine a more beautiful appearance than that.

'She failed to win Kang-Woo's heart even when she's this beautiful...'

Seol-Ah's self-confidence vanished.

"Then, I will be rooting for you." Lilith waved and turned away. Although she had said that, she seemed sure that Seol-Ah would fail.

As Lilith walked out of the house, Seol-Ah anxiously bit her lip.

Clack.

"K-Kang-Woo?"

"..."

When she opened the door, she saw Kang-Woo sitting on the bed.

His eyes looked blank, and his cheeks were hollow. He looked like a soldier who had come back from war. He was even moving weirdly, like a broken watch or a broken wooden doll.

'He must be tired.'

It was natural, considering how busy he had been lately.

Seol-Ah's face was dyed with disappointment. It did not seem to be the right time to have a talk with him.

'I wonder how I can... win Kang-Woo's heart?'

She sighed and quietly closed the door.

## Chapter 217 - Oh Kang-Woo Instruction Manual (2)

A vast and beautiful field of vegetation was surrounding a big lake.

People were sitting around a mat covered with all sorts of luxurious foods and drinks. They were glancing nervously at Balrog and Lilith. No, to be more precise, they were warily staring at Balrog, a five-meter-tall giant.

"Fufu, I believe this is my first time officially greeting all of you together. It is very nice to meet you. My name is Lilith. I have supported Master Kang-Woo for a very long time in Hell," Lilith said with a smile on her face and a glass in her hand.

Kim Si-Hun, Cha Yeon-Joo, and Tian Wuchen looked at her in confusion.

"So... you're a demon within the body of Kurosaki Yurie?" Yeon-Joo asked.

"Yes, that is correct."

"Then what happened to Kurosaki Yurie herself?"

"She is... asleep for the moment." Lilith placed her hand on her chest. "She has yet to come back to her senses after having fused with a demon, but we will naturally be able to share a consciousness over time."

"Hmm..."

"A demon and a human sharing a consciousness..." Wuchen mumbled, looking troubled.

He couldn't help but feel sorry for Kurosaki Yurie, whose body had been taken over by a demon, but blaming Lilith didn't seem right.

Not only had she not taken Kurosaki Yurie's body because she wanted to, but they also had nothing to do with each other in the first place. Kurosaki Yurie also hadn't lost her consciousness completely, so although it didn't feel right, he couldn't say anything in protest.

"Then, have you all, just like Kang-Woo..." Gaia asked nervously while turning to Kang-Woo. She was the incarnation of Gaia, so from her perspective, it wasn't easy to accept demons.

Kang-Woo said in a serious voice, "They haven't freed themselves from demonic energy like me, but they will be of help in defeating the Demon of Prophecy."

"I... see."

Gaia nodded in confusion. Kang-Woo, who had abandoned the body of a demon and accepted the energy of the God of Heroes, aside, she wondered if she could really trust pure demons like Balrog and Lilith.

'Maybe Kang-Woo is also being deceived?'

She couldn't help but have such a thought.

[There is no need to worry.]

Gaia heard Balrog's voice.

[I have offered my soul to my king. I am willing to do anything for him.]

He sounded confident.

Gaia could feel his unwavering will. She clenched her skirt and opened her mouth to say, "Do you still swear allegiance to Kang-Woo... even though he's no longer the demon king?"

[Hahaha!]

Balrog laughed.

[He certainly has lost his seat as demon king after losing against Satan, but at least for me, he will always be my king.]

"..."

Gaia remained silent.

Balrog's loyal tone did not seem to be a lie.

Gaia smiled faintly.

"Okay. I will trust you, Balrog."

[Kekeke. You seem rather calm, unlike before when—]

"Kyaa! Sh-Shh! Please be quiet!"

Gaia's face reddened.

Kang-Woo laughed as she became embarrassed. He said to everyone who had gathered around the mat, "I've gathered you all here today to introduce everyone to my two subordinates who had been with me in Hell, as well as to relieve all the fatigue that has accumulated all these months. We haven't been able to have a gathering like this since the establishment of Guardians, come to think of it. Please just think of this as an outing and enjoy yourselves."

"Thank you for arranging a meeting like this, hyung-nim." Si-Hun smiled.

He seemed to be happy about being here with Gaia and Kang-Woo.

Kang-Woo smirked and grabbed his chopsticks.

"Seol-Ah did her best to cook all these, so say thanks to her."

"Wow! As expected from you, sister-in-law! How did you prepare so much food?! It's also to die for...!" Kang Tae-Soo exclaimed.

"Ah, I-I just made them because I wanted to!"

Seol-Ah's face reddened, and a smile blossomed on her face.

Echidna grabbed a kimbap with her chopsticks while sitting on Kang-Woo's lap, which had pretty much become her exclusive seat at this point.

"Kang-Woo, aah."

"Hm?"

The kimbap approached his mouth.

Kang-Woo smirked and opened his mouth. The cheesy taste of the cheese kimbap suited his palate very nicely.

"Is it good?" Echidna asked.

"Yup."

"Hm! Hm!" Echidna snorted as if she were waiting for something.

Kang-Woo grabbed a kimbap and fed her just as she had to him.

"Munch, munch. It's so good. You're the best, Seol-Ah."

"Fufu. You helped out this morning too, Echidna."

"The ones I made exploded," Echidna said while pouting.

Seol-Ah couldn't handle how cute she looked, and took her from Kang-Woo and hugged her.

"KYAA! How can you be so cute?!"

"Seol-Ah, I can't breathe."

Echidna struggled as if she were being suffocated by something big.

They were like sisters, or maybe a mother and a daughter.

"Fufufu, the mood is better than what I had expected."

Lilith approached Kang-Woo with a smile.

Flinch. Kang-Woo trembled a bit. He recalled the trauma from the previous day. Cold sweat dripped down, and his face paled.

"Here you go, Master Kang-Woo. Say aah~"

"A-Aah."

He wasn't sure if he was groaning in fear or accepting the food, but a kimbap entered his mouth. He chewed like a robot.

"Kuh..."

Si-Hun gulped while looking at him in envy.

'Huh, why?'

Did he have feelings for Lilith?

"H-Hyung-nim"

'What?'

"Ahem. I-I'm just doing this to go along with the flow."

'What flow?'

"Say aah."

'The fuck did you say?'

Si-Hun approached him while blushing. He turned his head as if embarrassed and grabbed a kimbap with his chopsticks.

'Don't be getting red on me, dude.'

Kang-Woo's expression paled even more.

"Uhh, I'm getting tired of kimb—"

[Huhu. You seem to have no idea of the king's preferences, human.]

'Stop making shit any more complicated and screw off.'

He felt as if he was about to get gastric reflux as Si-Hun and Balrog joined in after Lilith. He reached out to Seol-Ah, who was hugging Echidna, but it seemed she couldn't see him anymore.

'Darling...'

The distance between Heaven and Hell was but a meter, but Si-Hun and Balrog were grabbing hold of his hands so that he could not get away.

"...What do you mean?" Si-Hun asked.

[I mean exactly what I said. I had heard that you had also sworn allegiance to my king, but... you are still lacking.]

"Nonsense."

"Why are you acting like that, guys? We came here to get along, didn't w—"

[Well, I guess it is a given, considering the difference in time that each of us has served the king. Hahaha! You have not had the time to find out everything there is to know about the king.]

"Hah, you talk as if you know everything about Kang-Woo hyung."

"Excuse me? Can you hear me?"

The atmosphere intensified.

Si-Hun and Balrog were glaring at each other.

Rumble.

Their clashing energies shook the ground, emitting enough power to easily slaughter an average archdemon of the Ninth Hell.

[I will give you a lesson on what kind of food the king likes!]

'But you don't know.'

Balrog used his giant hands to stab something with a chopstick—it was the sashimi set that Yeon-Joo had brought. More specifically, he stabbed the head of a fish that came with the set used to cook spicy fish stew.

[The king enjoys the heads of beings like this!]

'I really don't.'

[See? Look how happy he looks!]

'I'm really not.'

[Hehehe. Please, have a taste, my king.]

'This isn't how this thing is supposed to be eaten, dammit.'

He pushed away the fish head.



A fishy smell spread through their surroundings.

"H-Hyung-nim! Please try this instead!"

[My king!]

"Ah..."

He wished both of them would just fuck off. Kang-Woo covered his face with his hands and buried his head between his knees.

\* \* \*

"K-Kang-Woo..."

Seol-Ah expressed disappointment as she looked at Kang-Woo running from Balrog and Si-Hun.

'I wanted to do it too...'

She twirled the kimbap around with her chopsticks.

Lilith approached her and asked, "Hoho. How did things go yesterday?"

"U-Umm, I haven't..."

"Hmm. You lack courage. I honestly wished for you to succeed."

"..."

Han Seol-Ah remained silent and carefully opened her mouth.

"Uhm... Are you fine with that, Ms. Lilith?"

"I'm sorry? With what?"

"If... umm... things w-work out between me and Kang-Woo, you would be..."

She couldn't easily express herself.

Lilith giggled.

"I do not mind."

"Pardon?"

"A king is supposed to have multiple lovers."

"..."

It was a way of thinking that she couldn't easily accept as someone born and raised in Korea.

"Fufu, I was just joking."

"Oh... R-Right?"

"Yes. I will be honest with you." Lilith smiled bitterly while looking up at the blue sky. "I think it would be great if anyone could comfort the king."

"..."

"Have you heard anything about what Master Kang-Woo experienced in Hell, Seol-Ah?"

"N-No."

She shook her head.

With deep, sunken eyes, Lilith said, "He acts as if it does not bother him anymore, but... he has been hurt beyond your wildest beliefs."

"..."

"Fufu. Despite his cold manner of speaking, he is a very affectionate person. Do you know why the king had declared war on the princes of Hell?"

"No..."

"It was because of that massive ball of muscles over there."

"Mr. Balrog?"

Lilith nodded while making a bittersweet smile. "He made every single prince of Hell his enemy—all to save that ball of muscle. That is how warmhearted he is. So... he has likely been hurt a lot."

Lilith's last sentence carried an inexplicable amount of emotion.

Seol-Ah remained silent. She felt envious and was frustrated by the fact that Lilith knew a Kang-Woo she didn't know.

"Fufu. In that case, I hope you manage to succeed at least today." Lilith got up and waved.

Seol-Ah stood up while looking at her walk away.

'I don't... want to hesitate anymore.'

She realized she'd begun the race way later than Lilith.

Seol-Ah took a breath before turning around.

'I'll probably fail.'

After talking with Lilith, she realized how difficult it would be to capture Kang-Woo's heart.

'She's so beautiful and thinks about Kang-Woo so much, yet...'

If Lilith hadn't been able to capture Kang-Woo's heart, Seol-Ah didn't think she even had a chance.

But...

"I at least... want him to know my feelings."

Seol-Ah walked toward where Kang-Woo had escaped, her eyes shining. As she walked into the forest, she saw Kang-Woo taking a break and leaning against a tree.

"Kang-Woo."

"Yeah? What's up?"

"Th-there's something I want to tell you."

Seol-Ah closed her eyes and felt her head spinning.

'H-how should I tell him?'

She'd received love confessions numerous times, but it was her first time making one.

'First...'

She reached out and gently grabbed Kang-Woo's hand.

"Hm?"

"I... I-I-I-I-I..."

Her eyes were spinning, and her head was jumbled.

'How should I use what Kang-Woo likes...?'

She just let her lips move by themselves.

"I-I want to make kimchi stew for you for the rest of my life."

'You idioooooot!!!'

She had proposed to him out of the blue.

No, it wasn't even a proposal—it was closer to a joke.

Seol-Ah wanted to scream in embarrassment.

'He'll think I'm a weird woman, right? He'll wonder what in the world I'm talking about, won't he?'

All sorts of negative thoughts swirled in her mind. Just as she was about to turn around and run away at full speed out of embarrassment...

"Sniff."

'Hm?'

"Waaaaahh. I'm... so fucking glad I was born. Waaaaahh!" Kang-Woo was moved to tears and collapsed on the ground. "I'll make you happy for the rest of my life, darling."

"..."

Holding her hand, he looked up at her with sparkling eyes.

What Lilith had said to her the day before crossed Seol-Ah's mind.

"Winning the demon king's heart will not be easy. I have tried for a very long time, but... I failed."

'Huh?'

It had been a piece of cake.

Chapter 218 - Watchers of Light

"They still haven't made any movements at all?" Oh Kang-Woo frowned while looking at Lilith's report.

"Yes," Lilith replied.

"Hm..."

'It should be about time they made a move.'

Lucifer or Satan. Kang-Woo had been sure that one of them would make a move soon, but unlike what he had expected, neither had.

'I need to raise my Demonic Energy stat.'

He had to reach 150 in Demonic Energy to surpass the strength he had in the Nine Hells and become a Demon God.

His growth had already reached a limit. From now on, if he wanted to raise his stat, he needed someone at the level of a prince of Hell to make their move. His irritation was soaring from the fact that things were not going according to his expectations.

'Should I attack that giant branch?'

That was an option, but after thinking about it for a while, Kang-Woo shook his head.

'Let's wait a bit more.'

Just because it was a branch with more than ten thousand members didn't mean there was necessarily someone at the level of a prince of Hell. For example, there were many cardinals in the African branch, but there wasn't anyone close to the level of a prince of Hell.

'I don't know how many of those Aspects of Evil there are in the first place.'

Mammon and Satan...

Those two were likely Aspects of Evil, but he wasn't sure if they were the only ones.

'I hope there are more.'

For Kang-Woo to get a more constant influx of demonic energy, it would be better if there were many beings at that level. Even if they weren't revived princes of Hell, as long as they were at that level, he would be able to get some Demonic Energy stat points from them.

'I'm not sure if anyone but a prince of Hell can be an Aspect of Evil, though.'

Besides gods, he had never met anyone at the level of a prince of Hell other than beings from the Nine Hells.

Kang-Woo leaned back on his chair and fell into thought.

Whoom.

The crystal orb given to elite members of Guardians lit up on his desk.

He reached out and grabbed it.

[Ah, hyung-nim!]

He heard Kim Si-Hun's voice.

"What's up?"

[I heard that Gaia just received a revelation.]

"A revelation?"

[Yes. I think that you should come.]

"I'll be right there."

Kang-Woo stood up, his eyes shining sharply.

'A revelation, huh?'

The last time Gaia had received a revelation, a goddess from another world, Benigoa, had come to their world.

'I wonder if it'll be another god?'

For the moment, Earth was like a country that had declared bankruptcy.

The gods of Earth had no way to protect Earth, so they were asking for help from wherever they could.

'Thanks to that, my stat rose by three.'

A god from a faraway world, or a god from a world closely related to Earth like Aernor or Huan... it did not matter. He would use and take whatever he could since the gods of Earth were powerless to defend the world they were in charge of.

"Tsk, useless bastards."

Although their job was to defend Earth from otherworldly forces, they were begging for help from other worlds.

He had never seen or heard of such pathetic gods.

"Will you be heading straight to the Hall of Protection?" Lilith asked.

"Yeah."

"I will accompany you."

"No, stay here."

He shook his head.

'Just in case.'

Although he was able to hide traces of Lilith's demonic energy thanks to the effects of Ruler of Demonic Energy, there was no need to push it.

"In that case, I will be standing by to move at a moment's notice."

"Let Balrog know, too."

"Yes, my king."

He put the crystal orb on the floor, and a white gate appeared.

Fwoosh.

He walked in while feeling the sensation he had long become accustomed to.

He saw Si-Hun.

"Where's Gaia?" Kang-Woo asked.

"Over here."

Si-Hun guided him while making a worried expression.

Kang-Woo followed Si-Hun, and when Kang-Woo spotted Gaia, she was looking upward and trembling in her wheelchair. She looked like a possessed shaman.

He could understand why Si-Hun had been worried.

"Aah... ahh." Gaia, who had been trembling for a while, panted heavily. "Haaa, haaa. Th-Thank you for coming."

"Of course. Did you receive a revelation from Gaia?"

"No." Gaia shook her head. "It wasn't from Lady Gaia this time either."

"Was it about a god from another world coming again?"

She shook her head once again. "No. The revelation said they would send support for the events to come, but... they are not a god, unlike before."

"Then what are they?"

"They apparently asked for support from the... Watchers of Light from the continent of Aernor."

"Watchers of Light?"

"I'm not sure who they are, either."

"..."

Kang-Woo frowned.

'If you're gonna give a revelation, at least make it more detailed.'

It seemed like they were asking for help from basically everywhere they possibly could to see what stuck. It was an irresponsible course of action that could end up causing more damage than help.

'We have to be the ones to clean up their shit.'

He once again sighed at how incompetent the gods were.

'You call this a world?'

He wasn't sure who the origin of all this chaos was, but the gods were borrowing power from other worlds seemingly at random.

He couldn't help but sigh.

"Are they coming to the Hall of Protection?" Kang-Woo asked.

"No. The, uhh... Watchers of Light have something they need to investigate on Earth, so they will be going to Africa first."

"Africa...?"

"Yes. You remember the place where we found traces of a large-scale battle, don't you?"

"Oh."

Of course he knew—it was the place where Lucifer and Satan had clashed.

"Let's go right away."

Kang-Woo turned his body without hesitation.

\* \* \*

The grassland had been destroyed by an intense battle.

A group of five people wearing white clerical clothing with angel wings drawn on the back walked out of a blue Gate.

The blond man at the front looked around.

"This place must be..."

"Earth, I believe it was called."

"The distribution of mana is significantly lower than in Aernor."

The group wearing white clerical clothing continued their investigation with sharp eyes.

"Apostle Ludwig, have you contacted the apostles of—"

"Lord Raphael has already contacted the apostles of Earth."

"Is there a need to help them? The retainers of a broken goddess will be of no help to our quest of eradicating evil."

"Do not be like that. They also serve the light. The thicker the darkness, the more the light must illuminate one another," Ludwig said in a firm voice.

"I-I apologize."

The apostles quickly lowered their heads.

Then...

"Nice to meet you."

Three people—Kang-Woo, Si-Hun, and Gaia—appeared from a white gate.

Ludwig bowed and smiled. He behaved courteously and spoke politely. "Nice to meet you, apostles of Gaia. I am Ludwig, a Watcher of Light."

Gaia bowed and replied, "My name is Gaia."

"Oh... Have you taken the name of the goddess you serve?"

"I have abandoned my real name."

"... I am impressed." Ludwig nodded. "I have heard from Lord Raphael that Lady Gaia is currently..."

"She is currently unconscious," Gaia remarked.

"I see." Ludwig made a somber expression and sighed. He teared up. "To think that such a generous goddess would be put in such a state... As one who serves light, it is truly heartbreaking."

"Thank you for your concern, but we have many heroes who have gathered with the goal of protecting this star."

"Hahaha, how dependable."

Ludwig smiled brightly—it was as if his smile were illuminating the surroundings. The warm atmosphere he emitted melted away all forms of caution.

'Watchers of Light, huh?'

Kang-Woo narrowed his eyes and scanned them.

Angel wing patterns were on the backs of their clerical clothing.

'They don't seem to be angels.'

In that case, they likely served the angels.

Kang-Woo took a step forward and asked, "What is a Watcher of Light?"

"Ah, my apologies. It seems we were short on explanations. We are devotees serving Lord Raphael."

'I knew it.'

They had something to do with the angels.

Kang-Woo nodded and slowly scanned Ludwig.

'... I can't really tell.'

It was his first time seeing beings with the power of angels. He couldn't feel how strong Ludwig and the other Watchers of Light were.

'Well, I'm sure I'll find out sooner or later.'

First, he needed to be sure that they couldn't see through Ruler of Demonic Energy and feel the concealed demonic energy. If they couldn't, then it would be better to form an amicable relationship with them than to antagonize them.

Kang-Woo said, "I heard that you have come here to investigate something..."

"Ah, yes. We have been searching for traces of Lucifer."

"Lucifer?"

"Yes." Ludwig nodded. "That is the name of the evil demon currently at war with Lord Raphael. He suddenly disappeared not long ago."

"Are you saying this Lucifer is currently on Earth?"

"We are not sure, but I can definitely feel his presence here."

Gaia's and Si-Hun's expressions hardened after hearing that Lucifer, a prince of Hell, had come to Earth.

Kang-Woo was the only one who frowned in confusion.

'That son of a bitch didn't go back to Aernor?'

He narrowed his eyes and recalled that Lucifer had disappeared through a blue Gate while tearing off his own arm.

'No. I'm sure he went back.'



After that, he had likely concealed himself in a place where angels could not find him.

'Well, I guess it isn't bad news.'

He didn't mind if the angels found Lucifer. He could always make Raphael and Lucifer fight and then just take advantage of the result of that fight.

"As beings that serve the light, let us do our best to eradicate evil."

Ludwig extended his hand and smiled.

Gaia nodded and grabbed his hand.

"Thank you for caring about otherworldly matters."

"Not at all. Even if this is another world, evil must be eradicated."

"Ah... O-Of course."

For a moment, Gaia turned to Kang-Woo but then naturally nodded. She probably concluded that it would be wise not to let them find out that Kang-Woo used to be the demon king of the Nine Hells.

"We will also help the best we can," Kang-Woo said while also shaking Ludwig's hand.

'This isn't bad at all.'

As long as they weren't able to tell that he was a demon, he couldn't care less if they felt animosity toward demons.

'He also seems like a good person.'

Ludwig seemed gentlemanly. Since he was an apostle of an archangel, Kang-Woo could understand his excessive hostility toward demons.

'He could become a reliable comrade.'

"Oh, we are also investigating something else besides Lucifer's whereabouts. A being known as the Demon of Prophecy... Lord Raphael has bestowed us with a method to find the demon after collaborating with the gods of Earth."

'Nope, I guess we'll never be comrades.'

Kang-Woo had felt an unknown sense of displeasure from the moment Ludwig spoke. His smile was obviously a mask to hide his filthy and disgusting intentions. Kang-Woo couldn't even imagine how many atrocities he had likely committed in the name of eradicating demons.

'Damn follower of a fallen angel.'

Intense anger spread through his body. He clenched his fists, and his body trembled.

It was hard to contain his disgust.

'As long as I still have eyes to see with, I won't let you do as you wish!'

Chapter 219 - Pure White Executioner, Ludwig

"The Demon of Prophecy...?"

"..."

Gaia's and Kim Si-Hun's expressions understandably darkened.

The Demon of Prophecy... the master of the Demonic Sea, who possessed 666 Authorities. It was the being who had destroyed the Gaia System and allowed otherworldly beings to invade Earth. He'd killed a protector and had mercilessly murdered the outstanding hero Reynald.

He was the master as well as the origin of all evil... Satan.

Since they were hearing about him from someone of another world, they couldn't help but be surprised.

"I-Is there anything you know about the Demon of Prophecy?!"

Si-Hun grabbed Ludwig's shoulders while making an excited expression.

Expression heavy, Ludwig shook his head.

"Lord Raphael had mentioned that he hadn't known about the Demon of Prophecy before conversing with the gods of Earth. After hearing what that evil being has done... it was truly horrifying."

He was shaking his head as if he didn't even want to think about it.

He continued, "I heard he also killed the apostle of Lord Tirion, God of Heroes."

"Ah..."

Reynald...

The group let out an exclamation after hearing that name.

Kang-Woo, who had cried when Reynald died, frowned.

Si-Hun, who had a deep trauma regarding that demon, asked in an excited voice, "Are you saying that you will be able to help us find Satan?"

Ludwig nodded. "Yes. Ah, before that... Lord Raphael had mentioned that there is a chance Satan is not the Demon of Prophecy."

"What?"

"Wh-what do you mean?!"

Gaia's, Si-Hun's, and Oh Kang-Woo's expressions hardened after hearing those shocking words. Among their expressions, Kang-Woo's paled especially.

Ludwig said, "Lord Raphael had said that the Satan he knew did not possess the Demonic Sea. In the worst-case scenario, Satan may not be the Demon of Prophecy, but his retainer—"

"That is impossible," Kang-Woo said firmly.

"Why do you think so?" Ludwig asked.

"I had clashed with Satan in the past. Back then, he had said himself that he had acquired the Demonic Sea. There is no doubt Satan is the Demon of Prophecy."

"Oh..." Ludwig nodded. "I see. If Satan himself said he has the Demonic Sea... then he must be the Demon of Prophecy."

"..."

There was a short silence.

Kang-Woo said quietly, "But how are you planning to find the Demon of Prophecy?"

"With this."

Ludwig extended his arm. Brilliant light gathered in his hand, and a pure-white sword appeared.

"This is the holy sword Ludwig."

"Ludwig...?"

"Yes." Ludwig nodded. He turned his head and smiled toward Gaia. "Just like her, I have abandoned my real name. This sword is my life and reason for existing."

Ludwig caressed the pure white sword.

"This sword can only be used by a pure soul untainted by evil. It has an outstanding ability to find all that is demonic. We will be able to know the exact location of the Demonic Sea as long as we use this sword."

He touched the sword very proudly.

Si-Hun took a step forward. "Then let us use it right n—"

"No. I unfortunately cannot use it immediately." Ludwig shook his head while making a bitter expression. "It seems the sword still has not become accustomed to this world. It is not maintaining its light."

"When will you be able to use it?"

"In about a week, I would guess," Ludwig said with a smile on his face. "In the meantime, could you all tell me more about Earth? I'm ashamed to say this, but... I am honestly very interested in the existence of another world."

Ludwig's eyes shone.

A smile appeared on Gaia's and Si-Hun's faces after seeing how innocent he looked.

"Hahaha. I will be your guide," Si-Hun said.

The two walked toward the gate that led to the Hall of Protection, and the four Watchers of Light followed them.

\* \* \*

"I had a great time sightseeing. Earth's civilization is... haha. It's hard to even find the right words. It is impressive."

Ludwig smiled.

Tall buildings that reached the sky and a city covered in gray... It was a civilization so advanced that the capital of the Arnan Empire seemed almost barbaric in comparison.

"I will introduce you to some of the foods on Earth as well next time," said Gaia.

"I will be looking forward to it. In that case, we will be going back to the grassland."

"Are you talking about Africa?"

"Yes. We have to find traces of Lucifer there."

Ludwig nodded without hesitation.

Gaia opened her mouth and said, "It's already very late. How about you spend the night in the Hall of Protection and continue tomorrow?"

"No. We cannot rest while carrying out the important mission of eradicating evil."

"Will we be able to help you in any way?"

"That is alright," he said firmly. His sharp voice completely shut Gaia down, causing her expression to harden. But soon, Gaia regained her smile.

She said, "I understand. If you're being so adamant, then I guess it can't be helped. We will give you a communication crystal, so please contact us if you need anything."

"Thank you very much."

Just as they were about to go their separate ways, Si-Hun suddenly stepped forward and handed Ludwig a small pendant—it was of a cross embraced by the wings of an angel.

"This is..."

"You were looking at it closely earlier, so I bought it in secret. It's a gift to commemorate your visit to Earth."

"Wow," Ludwig exclaimed with shining eyes. "Thank you very much! I thought it was a beautiful pendant, but you shouldn't have..."

"It was nothing at all."

"No. It truly means a lot, at least for me. Thank you so very much, Si-Hun."

The two men shook hands.

Gaia smiled at how well Ludwig and Si-Hun were hitting it off. It seemed as if she was thinking that Si-Hun, who did not have many people whom he could call friends, had finally made a good friend.

"I will contact you once we find traces of Lucifer."

Ludwig bowed respectfully.

A white gate opened, and Ludwig passed through it along with the other four Watchers of Light.

They saw the grassland they had first arrived at on Earth.

Ludwig said while looking over the grassland, "They were very nice people."

"Yes. It is truly a relief that the apostles of Gaia are cooperative."

"Hahaha. They also seemed quite skilled."

Ludwig smiled. "We will certainly be able to make use of them in our battle against the demons."

"Ah... I-I see." The apostles replied in bewilderment.

Ludwig nodded energetically. "Yes! I was quite worried at first whether they would even qualify as bait to lure out the demons, but they have exceeded my expectations."

"Mmm."

"L-Lord Ludwig."

"Yes?"

One of the apostles cautiously said, "Wouldn't it be a problem if we, umm... used the retainers of Gaia in such a manner? Gaia is an upper god..."

"Oh, you're right. I must have misspoke." Ludwig smiled and gently touched the pendant he'd received from Si-Hun. "Sacrifice... yes, that's the word. Sacrifices are necessary to eradicate all demons in this world."

"..."

"I am sure the members of Guardians would also be honored to lose their lives in battle against the demons. Yes, I am sure of it."

"I-I see."

"Do not forget, everyone," Ludwig said in a firm voice to the other priests. "We must use any means necessary in order to eradicate the demons. Even if countless lives must be sacrificed... Yes, even if the Earth were to be destroyed, we must eliminate the Demon of Prophecy, Satan. You all know this, do you not?"

"O-Of course!"

Satan, the Demon of Prophecy that a god had foretold, was not a threat to just Earth. Raphael had said that there was a high chance that he would aim for the angels of the continent of Aernor after destroying Earth.

'I cannot let that happen.'

To lessen Raphael's worries, they had to kill the Demon of Prophecy at all costs—even if they had to drive every single one of Gaia's retainers to their deaths.

"Hahaha! What a relief. There is no need to worry. It is a noble act to sacrifice oneself for the eradication of demons. Their souls will receive true salvation once they cross through the gates of Heaven."

A smile appeared on Ludwig's face. His beautiful blue eyes—which resembled the sea—sparkled with pure-white madness.

The apostles trembled while looking at Ludwig, and they remembered his other name.

Pure White Executioner.

\* \* \*

'FUUCCKK!!'

Silent curses bounced around in Kang-Woo's head. It felt as if his mind was burning to a crisp. He was grabbing his head while sitting in a dark room.

'Dammit.'

He anxiously bit his lip.

'I can't believe they have a way to locate the Demonic Sea.'

He still wasn't sure if the holy sword would be able to nullify the effect of Ruler of Demonic Energy. There was a chance that the holy sword was just very good at detecting demonic energy and would not be able to find the Demonic Sea, which was completely concealed through Ruler of Demonic Energy.

'But...'

Kang-Woo's eyes shone sharply. He couldn't take that chance.

'I have to do something.'

He had a week before the holy sword Ludwig was used, and he had to take measures before that.

"..."

The gears in his head turned in silence.

'Should I transform into Satan and attack them?'

It was a decent idea, but he had done the exact same thing when he had attacked Guardians' secret vault and in the incident with Reynald.

'I can't do the same thing over and over.'

One was bound to be caught if they left too many traces.

Someone was bound to think something was off if he kept using the same pattern. In other words, they would become suspicious from the fact that Satan seemed to appear at the most perfect times.

'Not good.'

Doing the same thing would only raise suspicions, especially when Ludwig had posed the possibility that Satan may not be the Demon of Prophecy.

"In that case..."

As he was thinking, he remembered something that Ludwig had mentioned.

"This sword can only be used by a pure soul untainted by evil."

Kang-Woo's eyes shone.

'Yes, that's it!'

The tips of his mouth went up.

If only a pure soul could use that sword...

'I just have to corrupt him!'

Pure-white things were meant to be dirtied.

Chapter 220 - How To Corrupt A Saint (1)

"Yeah, I have that option."

Oh Kang-Woo nodded.

Of course, Raphael's apostle Ludwig, who had suddenly appeared in their lives, was already a corrupt individual. Kang-Woo did not even have to do anything for that to be the case.

"Yup. He's already corrupt. I'm sure of it. Mhm."

He'd had a bad feeling about Ludwig ever since he heard Ludwig laugh. It sounded like the laugh of a villain masking his villainy.

It was also extremely suspicious how he quickly got along with everyone despite having appeared out of nowhere.

'How dare he get all friendly with Si-Hun?'

Ludwig was definitely trying to take advantage of Si-Hun, who was kind-hearted.

"Like I'd let you."

Kang-Woo clenched his hands into fists, and his lips trembled.

He wasn't trying to corrupt Ludwig; he was just trying to expose what was hiding beneath Ludwig's mask. His goal was to make sure everyone saw Ludwig's true face.

"Yep. Mhm."

Kang-Woo looked up at the sky through his window.

'I'm not the bad guy.'

He could swear by the heavens that he wasn't ashamed of his actions a single bit. After all, he was sure that Ludwig's true face was that of a fallen saint.

"Right, I should get ready."

The weight on Kang-Woo's shoulders felt lighter already.

Kang-Woo stood up while smiling and placed his hand over his ear as he called someone.

- Yes, my king? Lilith answered.

"I have a favor to ask you."

- Fufu, there is no need for favors. Just say the word, and I will do it.

Kang-Woo smirked and opened his mouth.

"First, can you come here right now?"

- Of course.

The call was cut. Just thirty seconds later, the door of his room opened, and Lilith appeared.

'How did she get here so fast?'

It was so fast that Kang-Woo wondered if she lived next door.

'Come to think of it, I haven't seen the gentleman who lives next door in a while.'

He narrowed his eyes and looked at Lilith suspiciously.

Meanwhile, Lilith knelt on one knee and lowered her head in greeting.

"I have done as you have commanded, my king. Fufu. What is it that you wanted to tell me? If it is for nightly service, then let us—"

"No. It's nothing like that," Kang-Woo quickly answered.

He tried to calm down while he organized his thoughts.

'How to corrupt a saint...'

He thought of a way to reveal Ludwig's true identity.

"We're gonna create a dungeon," Kang-Woo said.

"A... dungeon?"

"We have a week, and it needs to be as horrifying and large as possible."

"But..."

A week wasn't nearly enough time. They did not have a large army at their disposal like back in the Nine Hells. They could use Vaal Zahak's undead army for simple labor, but creating a large-scale dungeon in such a short time was almost impossible.

"I'll be joining in the construction."

"Ah, hohoho. That would change things, then."

Lilith smiled brightly.

If the Demon King helped, it was completely doable. He had fully recovered the power he used to have back in the Nine Hells, so it would be a completely different story if he took part in the dungeon construction.

"I will begin making the blueprint. What theme would you like it to be?" Lilith asked.

"Hmm."

Numerous thoughts crossed Kang-Woo's mind.

'This is more fun than I expected.'

He had simply wanted to set the stage to expose Ludwig's true self, but getting involved with the production process itself was quite entertaining. He felt like a kid building a castle with Legos.

'Is this why demon kings never leave their castles?'

Kang-Woo felt like he understood why demon kings never got off of their asses.

He laughed a bit and kept thinking.

A theme that just screamed 'demon king'...

'As horrifying as possible.'

A place capable of making one fall into despair and break their mind...

A dungeon that recreated the worst possible nightmare...

A place that not even the most respected saint could resist being corrupted in...



"Fufufu, take your time."

Lilith smiled mischievously and sat next to Kang-Woo. She reached for his hand and slowly caressed it.

Kang-Woo's eyes lit up.

"That's it."

There was no need to take his time to think about it. The most terrifying and horrifying thing he could think of... a manifestation of a nightmare...

Kang-Woo began, "The theme of the dungeon will be..."

There was nothing better than this.

"Tentacles," he concluded in a firm voice.

Lilith's eyes widened.

"Oh, my king!"

She shyly shook her head with her hands on her cheeks.

\* \* \*

"I had fun today as well. The food on Earth is quite impressive. We can use ice magic to create ice cream, but we do not have a great variety of flavors like on Earth. Was it... mint chocolate? It was very delicious," Ludwig said while smiling brightly.

"That's a flavor people on Earth can't agree on..." Kim Si-Hun remarked while giving an awkward smile.

"What? Is that so? But it was so delicious..."

Ludwig tilted his head as if he couldn't understand it.

Si-Hun smiled bitterly upon seeing Ludwig's innocent appearance.

"About your world, Mr. Ludwig—"

"Please, call me Ludwig."

"Huh?"

"Hahaha. Has it not been a week since you introduced me to Earth's civilization? Once we can figure out the location of the Demon of Prophecy through the holy sword, support will arrive from the celestial realm... and the time I can spend with all of you from Guardians will be reduced," Ludwig explained. He extended his hands and expressed, "So, I would like to make friends from Earth before then."

"Ah..."

After hesitating for a moment, Si-Hun smiled and grabbed Ludwig's hands.

"Okay. I guess this is fate, so let's get along, Ludwig."

"Yeah, let's."

Both people exchanged a firm handshake, and there was an awkward atmosphere.

Si-Hun blushed and scratched his cheeks while avoiding Ludwig's gaze.

'A friend, huh?'

It was an awkward word for Si-Hun. He had never had a friend before because his brother, Kim Yeong-Hun, had made it so. Si-Hun had always lived a lonely life.

'I wonder if hyung-nim would disapprove.'

There was a chance Kang-Woo wouldn't approve of Si-Hun hanging out with a friend like an idle middle school student when he should be using every single moment of his time to train.

"..."

Si-Hun thought about it for a while and shook his head. In the end, he didn't think Kang-Woo would get mad over something like that.

"Let's get ready to go back. Today's the day, right?" Si-Hun asked.

He didn't specify what he was talking about, but the meaning was clear.

Ludwig nodded and replied, "Yup, today. A little more time and the holy sword will completely adapt to this world."

"Then I should gather the Guardians members and—"

"No, don't," Ludwig interjected, shaking his head. "Using the holy sword requires a lot of concentration. The fewer people there are around, the better."

"Mm..."

"And I'd rather not have this be the case, but there's a chance that there might be someone in Guardians with demonic energy. I'm planning on using the holy sword with just the Watchers of Light around me, just in case."

"..."

Si-Hun remained silent and thought of Kang-Woo, someone who had been born a human but ended up having the body of a demon for reasons that were outside of his control.

'It'll be okay.'

Kang-Woo had abandoned his power as a demon. The energy filling him now was the sacred power of Tirion, God of Heroes.

'It'll... be okay.'

Si-Hun suddenly felt uneasy.

He looked at Ludwig and asked hesitantly, "Hypothetically speaking... what will you do if there really is a demon in Guardians?"

"I'll kill them."

"Umm... What if they're not a regular demon and became one due to circumstances out of their contr—"

"Si-Hun," Ludwig said with a smile, "It doesn't matter how they became a demon. Whatever situation they're in or whatever circumstances they have, it doesn't matter. Demons need to die. They need to be torn apart and burned to death—every single one of them."

"...Even if they were forced to become a demon? You know that humans can turn into demons against their will, just from being exposed to demonic energy."

"Yeah, they could've been," Ludwig acknowledged with a nod. Then he continued without hesitation while maintaining his bright smile, "But that has nothing to do with us. Regardless of why they became a demon, they must die."

'Every single one...'

"..."

Ludwig was firm and unwavering.

Si-Hun looked at him in bewilderment.

'It's weird.'

There was something twisted about Ludwig's reasoning.

Si-Hun began, "You—"

"Oh, isn't that Kang-Woo over there?" Ludwig said and pointed toward Baskin Robbins, the ice cream shop they'd just visited.

He saw Kang-Woo entering the shop with Han Seol-Ah by his side. They were carefully holding hands.

"Oh, you're right."

"Who's the person next to him?"

"That's Ms. Han Seol-Ah. She's hyung-nim's girlfriend."

Si-Hun looked at both of them while narrowing his eyes. He felt a bit envious.

"Huh...?" Ludwig uttered, his eyes suddenly widening. "C-Could it be? No, that's impossible. H-How could someone from Earth..."

"...What's wrong?"

"H-Hahaha!! By the gods, I can't believe it!!" Ludwig exclaimed excitedly. He quickly turned around. "I'll get going."

"Huh?"

Before Si-Hun could say anything, Ludwig opened a Gate leading to the Hall of Protection and quickly woke up one of his subordinates standing by there.

"I have to contact Lord Raphael right now," Ludwig said.

He stood in front of the Gate leading to Africa with a very wide smile and then took a step forward without hesitation.

However...

"...Huh?"

Once again, a confused murmur left his mouth.

For the past week, they had been constantly using this Gate, which was connected to the battlefield that had Lucifer's traces on it, but...

"Where... are we?"

"L-Lord Ludwig! Wh-Where are we?!" the priests shouted anxiously.

Ludwig looked up. They were in a giant cave. Endless darkness enveloped them like the abyss.

"Eek!"

One of Ludwig's subordinates raised his hand, pouring white light into the cave.

Squelch.

"Huh?" Ludwig uttered with a hardened expression.

Once the cave was illuminated, they could see hundreds of thousands of tentacles.

Squelch! Squelch! Squelch!

The thousands of tentacles wiggled around, leaking yellow pus and transparent fluid. A horrifying scent flooded the noses of those present.

"A-Aah," they gasped in horror.

One of the priests collapsed, and...

"H-Huh?"

He realized the very floor they were on was made of tentacles.

"R-Run aw—kurch!! Ugh!!"

Crack!

A tentacle shot out and entered the priest's mouth. It traveled down his esophagus and wriggled around his stomach.

Bash!

"Mmmph! Mmph!!"

The tentacle burst out of his stomach.

"Aaaaahhh!!"

"R-Run!"

Blood-curdling screams filled the cave.

Ludwig looked grimly into the darkness and muttered, "Just what is... this place?"

Riiing!

[You have entered the SS+ rank dungeon 'Lilith ♡ Demon King Love Houswhythefuckdidyounameitlikethisfuckitsalreadyset.']

A blue message window popped up.