

# Mystical 211

## Chapter 211: Gathering 1

After all, the Behemoth Gate provoked First Sister Senior, killed Second Senior Brother, and killed Great Elder. Back then when the White Cloud Gate nearly fell apart, they had also played quite a role in that.

If he really did end up adding another layer of that nature to their relationship, he wouldn't be able to get over the roadblock in his own heart.

Sitting in the plane, Garen rearranged all the relationships in his head from ground up. At the same time, he twiddled with a dainty gold-colored seal in his hand. This was the Antique of Tragedy that was causing Fenistine all that bad luck. With his current level of power and influence, all he needed were a few words to get it back.

The seal itself was just a very simple Antique of Tragedy. He absorbed all its potential points in one go, and it gave him 4 points of potential in stock. However, since the Golden Sword Throne was becoming extremely slow, this was still a considerable reward.

Now he had 15 potential points in store. Too bad his body had reached its limit, so he couldn't use those points.

Even this thing had been relegated to nothing more than a toy in his hands.

With this trip, he had more or less dealt with the Behemoth Gate. No matter how forceful Black Orchid was, she could no longer come out to muddle things up when her condition was so bad. Although there was a storm blowing through the country right now, as long as he had the help of the Nightmare's group of Sirens, he could find an escape route overseas even if something went terribly wrong.

Now there were the Celestial Circle Gate, the White Cloud Gate, and the Sirens. The three gates had practically become a coalition in both attack and defense, their combined power expanding to almost ridiculous levels. They had more or less become a large-scale martial group that transcended countries.

Even if he wasn't getting sufficient input, it was still more than enough for him to protect himself.

"Everything is prepared and ready. This might be the final fight." Garen tilted his face towards the airplane window, a hint of anticipation and excitement in his heart.

Perhaps he himself didn't know why he wasn't the slightest bit worried about the upcoming conflict, but that feeling of relief that he would soon understand it all was already filling his entire body up to the brim.

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Brrr...

Outside the glass window of the wide airplane lounge, a blue military plane with stripes gradually lowered onto the ground and landed steadily on the runway, rapidly decelerating.

In front of the huge floor-to-ceiling glass window, two extremely eye-catching men were watching the landing plane through the glass.

Of these two men, one was wearing a black suit with a pitch black tie, holding a sword in his hand wrapped in black cloth. His long hair fell over his shoulders, and he was even wearing a black eyepatch over one eye. It was Andrela, who had rushed over here long ago.

The other person had a seductive looks and an enchanting figure, wearing long white androgynous sleeves and pants, with long hair tied into a ponytail. If it weren't for that flat chest, no one would think he was a man.

Nightmare leaned their whole body onto Andrela's shoulder, their beautiful eyes watching the decelerating plane lazily.

"Garen's so slow, and he arrived so late."

"He had more things to handle than we did, it's perfectly normal," Andrela replied calmly. "With this trip, I'm the weakest one here. This might be my biggest challenge. If I can get past it, I will surely be able to improve further, and attain the same level as you guys."

"And then?" Nightmare played with their companion's hair, their interest piqued. "Then you can take the captain's seat in bed? True, I was always the one on top, it'd be good to change it up once in a while."

Andrela was speechless.

"Don't you have anything to do? Is it okay for you to be hanging around my place all the time?"

"I got it all arranged nicely." Nightmare smiled. "Oh my, Palosa's here too."

Before they even finished their sentence, a regular little old man walked soundlessly out of the crowd nearby. He looked just like the old men selling lunch boxes on the street, with his white-grey robes and dusty face. He held a cane in his hand, and slowly limped over to them.

Palosa walked slowly until he was within ten paces of the two, and stopped. He narrowed his eyes and stared at Nightmare, surprise flashing through his eyes.

"I'm not late, am I?"

"No, the last one will arrive in a moment." Nightmare straightened up, holding a golden pocket-watch in their hand to check the time. "It's 3.14 pm. The weather now is pretty suitable for going out to sea too, so we can leave today."

"That's good."

Palosa walked up to the rows of seats and sat down, then proceeded to close his eyes and rest while steadfastly ignoring everyone.

For a moment, all three of them fell silent.

Most of the people in the airport weren't regular people. The ones walking to and fro were either military officials, millionaires, or other even more powerful people. There were only a few people here and there, but once in a while there would be someone hurrying past, surrounded by a group of bodyguards.

The three of them were actually pretty inconspicuous compared to the rest. They didn't have policemen, guards, or even a female companion. They were no different from other regular citizens.

"Since we're going there this time, there should be quite a few people arriving, right?" Andrela asked Nightmare softly.

"Not quite a few, there are a ton. Some people want that secret treasure no matter what, while we're partly in it out of curiosity, and partly in it for the revenge. There are others too, who probably want reduce the Confederation's power. There are surely many elites heading there." Derision flashed across Nightmare's face. "I bet many countries will send their elites over. That secret treasure, huh... If it really is that useful, then any person, group, or country would find unimaginable uses and research values in it. No power would be willing to let it go."

"True."

As the two were talking, a man with short purple hair and red eyes walked out of a distant entrance. He was wearing a black suit and a large wool coat, looking just like any regular rich leader. He even had two fully-armed female soldiers in black uniforms next to him.

"Here he is, with two female soldiers to boot. What a textbook example of a military general, tsk-tsk," Nightmare exclaimed.

"We're all here, so let's go. The ship's ready, too," Andrela said softly. "This time we have to get our revenge and our treasure. We can finally end it all."

Palosa seemed to sense something too, opening his eyes to look at Garen calmly. He stood up, and walked to Nightmare's and Palosa's sides.

The three of them watched Garen striding towards them.

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A few thousand nautical miles off Smoke Island, on a deserted patch of sea.

The deep blue seawater roiled under the blue sky and white clouds as a large white ship sailed slowly towards Smoke Island.

The ship was fully armored, with a sharp spike on the helm. There were swathes of navy soldiers in white uniforms running across the deck sporadically, hurrying to adjust the ship's direction.

On the helm, a stout man with white skin was stepping on the banister with one foot, staring into the distance.

The large man wore the white navy uniform with two white-gold medals on his shoulders. His chest and nipples were bared, revealing a large tuft of black chest hair.

How long more to that What's Island?" he asked, his words garbled by the toothpick in his mouth.

"We can reach by nighttime. Probably..." a solemn-looking blonde female adjutant said hesitantly beside him.

"How many people are coming this time? Anything worth notice?" the large man asked, spitting out his toothpick.

"This time we've confirmed the validity of the secret treasure, and all the countries think it's very valuable. No fewer than thirty powers are joining in this hunt. The ones we should watch out for are Fivestar Continent's King of the North Pole, Gyard, and Mare, the Spearmaster. There's White Peacock from Stonecliff Continent, and King of the Gun, Nikon. Then there's the Card Clown, and the Three Great Generals from our Weisman. That, and the legendary Immortal Palace." The female adjutant finished

explaining, and added, "Seven powers in total, but we can't be sure if any of them will join forces. After all, we don't have any skilled telekinesis users, so we can't find any traces."

"Seven powers? That many?" The large man rubbed the stubbles on his chin. "They all look like formidable fellows..."

"They are indeed. These people and powers coming here are almost all the strongest characters from their respective countries or continents. They don't usually come into contact with each other, so they're the apex fighters of their respective areas, dominating without opposition. But this time they're gathered in one place, or rather, all the elites from around the whole world have basically gathered here," the female adjutant said calmly. "Those who dare to alight on this island all have absolute confidence in themselves. This is no longer a fight between a single country or continent."

"Isn't that even better?" The large man's smile was excited. "With all these delicious fellas gathered in one place, would our three generals still have to fight each other? Opponents as far as the eye can see!"

"General Milo, please beware. These aren't people you can take lightly, they're all people who can conquer a country or even a continent. They're the cream of the crop, chosen from countless others. If it weren't for the appearance of the Black Smoke Pot, there's no way so many of them would show up. After all, contacting the dead is a small thing, but being able to transcend life and death, to achieve immortality, that's the real deal!" The adjutant reminded him exasperatedly.

"Relax, do I seem so reckless?" Milo chuckled.

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At the same time, far away at the shore of Fivestar Continent, Port Bolivia.

A huge black cruise ship was advancing slowly, spitting out a long column of white smoke that reached for the sky. The cruise was a few hundred meters long, and a few hundred meters wide. At the entrance to the ship, many passengers were neatly lined up to board the ship.

"Don't worry, I'll be back in no time. This is an international meeting held by the company, it's just a little longer than usual, otherwise it's the same business as usual."

A man in a white overcoat hugged his wife, and then kissed his daughter's little face, his own smile warm and gentle.

"Papa, you gotta bring Yawen back a toy, okay." The little girl was just five, with red lips, white teeth and fair skin that made her look unbelievably innocent and adorable.

"I'll remember for sure." The man pinched his daughter's face fondly. "Alright, I'm off."

"Be careful on the road, give way should you get in trouble, don't pick any more fights than you have to. Your safety comes first," the wife advised him worriedly. Her complexion was unnaturally pale, her beautiful face like white-jade porcelain, without even a hint of color.

She stepped up to kiss her husband's lips lightly, and then put a large white fox fur coat onto his shoulders.

"I know, I know," the man repeated. "Don't worry, I'll be back soon."

He stepped onto the boarding plank, squeezing into the crowd flowing into the ship. He turned around occasionally to look at his wife on the shore, holding their daughter's hand and waving non-stop.

"Go home!" he yelled loudly.

The wife nodded hard, but had no intention of turning around.

Looking at the wife's figure, for some reason, the man's eyes suddenly grew moist.

"Allie... I won't let you die before I do..." he murmured under his breath.

In that moment, unwavering determination flashed past his eyes. He turned around and disappeared into the crowd, striding towards the ship.

"I will survive and return to you... For I am the God of Spear, Mare!"

## Chapter 212: Gathering 2

From the northern sky of Smoke Island, groups of tiny black dots in the distance congealed to a massive group, slowly moving inland.

The group of dots resembled flocks of black birds soaring against the blue sky, completely uniform, lacking differentiation.

Every single black dot was a fighter aircraft. Not regular aircraft, but strange pieces of machinery with odd shapes. From the bottom of their fuselages spouted two additional boat-like long boards, which betrayed their identity as a next-generation seaplane.

The aircraft flew past the airspace swiftly and, after a while, was trailed by a small plane.

Behind this aircraft following closely was a black hot air balloon with a black, rectangular wooden boat dangling below.

There were a group of men in black scattered in the boat. All of them were equipped with thick black leather shirts, goggles, hats and scarfs.

"Boss, is it true that the Black Smoke Pot is able to increase a human's life span? And we can even use it to communicate with the dead?"

One of the men in black shouted as he asked the men in black who stood at the very front.

No one would be able to be heard clearly under such a windy conditions without shouting.

"They said that it has been proven! I've sent people to verify it's validity. The Black Smoke Pots that appeared in the past did indeed have such an ability!" The man in the lead answer loudly. No one could

see his face as it was hidden under the thick shirt. Only his strong body figure could be made out with that get up.

"Have you prepared the bear skin and fox skin that will be traded later?" The leader asked loudly.

"All done! You won't be humiliated!" The underling replied loudly as well.

"Donze! Is it true that your mum has given birth again recently?" The leader shouted.

"Yeah. It's the sixth child! How about your mum!" Donze shouted back.

"My mum isn't as great as yours!"

"No no! My mum is definitely no match to yours!"

"Don't say that. My mum definitely can't give birth..."

"Back in the days, my mum..."

A group of people were standing behind feeling helpless. How embarrassing! They had seen people one-upping one another with everything except their mothers' ability to give birth...

Fortunately they were in the sky. If they were at the ground...

They might have embarrassed the whole northern community!

"Is this the legendary King of North Pole?" The young guy and girl from the very back of the hot air balloon were staring at the people who were at the front.

"It's him... That two doofuses are the strongest in the North Pole..." Another girl replied as she sighed.  
"Although I really don't want to admit it, only the two of them are qualified to participate in this battle."

"I have a bad feeling about this..."

"You'll get used to it." The girl patted on the guy's shoulder.

Below the balloon, on the patch of ocean.

Similar to the white fish swimming in the sea, there were multiple white yachts cutting across the water on the blue sea at high speed, leaving white trail wakes behind them.

The wake created by the yachts cutting the blue sea was clear and obvious.

"Hoo~~~!"

A person on the yacht who had a loose hair and naked from the top of his waist shouted very loudly, and strangely as well.

"Haha! It's those idiots from the North Pole!" There was a wretched man, dressed like a clown standing on one of the yachts. He was also naked from the top to the waist and there were strange lines of patterns of red, blue and green painted onto his black skin. His makeup was no different than the jokers on a poker card.

The joker raised his head and looked up at the hot air balloon at the top of his head. His virid eyes glowing with the intent to kill.

"Prince! Let's give them a big present!"

"Roger!"

On the yacht, a golden hair girl with a twisted smile took out a rocket launcher out of nowhere aimed at the sky.

Pew!!

The rocket flew soared upward and went after the hot air balloon, leaving a trail of white smoke and bright light.

"Big fireworks! Big fireworks!! Hehehe~~~" The prince was licking his wet lips as he looked at the sky with anticipation.

Kaboom!

The rocket suddenly self destructed as it flew half way in the air.

The prince was stunned as he looked at the pieces of steel debris falling from the sky.

"It's raining! It's raining!!" She started shouting in a high pitch. Her naked upper body was continuously burnt. She motioned her hand so fast that it became blur as she swatted off all of the debris to the other yachts nearby.

"You're so bad Prince. Haha!" The joker laughed loudly as he drove the yacht away to avoid the debris sent in their direction.

As the members on the yachts did not want to be outdone by each other, they started to use the powerful steel balls as a toy and shoot at each other.

Bam!

One of the steel balls hit the yacht's bow and punched a hole through the sturdy steel plate.

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Smoke Island.

The small, green island was like a piece of jade sitting quietly on the blue ocean.

The island was surrounded by white smoke as if there was a white blanket covering the whole island. The island could only be seen faintly under the blanket of smoke.

The evening sun radiated its faint red light and dyed the whole sea in red.

A black shadow slowly came up to the surface of the sea near the rocky beach on the Northern part of Smoke Island.

With the splash of water, the figure emerged from the water.

It was an oddly black colored, giant submarine. The circular cover on the top of the fuselage cracked open and four human figures emerged, landing firmly onto the rocky beach.

"This is it." One of the black figures said. "The full moon is tomorrow, and I wonder how many top fighters from each country are coming. How exciting..."

"As long as it doesn't affect our main objective." An old man's voice came from another black figure. "We must obtain the Black Smoke Pot at all cost! I will let you do the arrangement, Flamingo."

"Sure." The third black figure nodded his head. "Sylphalan is acting up again. We are likely to be attacked since the reputation of the Immortal Palace is too well known. Hence, according to the layout of the island, I suggest we head out to the southern territory of the island first."

"Southern territory?" The man with an old voice asked curiously. "This small island is separated into two territories?"

"The Smoke Island is much larger than you think. It's very unlikely for anyone to run across the whole island with full speed within a day. We couldn't determine its size because of the smoke." Flamingo explained. "The island is separated in the southern territory and northern territory. Crossing between each is only doable at 11.40pm as the smoke is too thick to navigate in. Furthermore, there are too many unknown dangers ahead of us as well."

The first black figure nodded in agreement: "This means that the war will be separated into two places and we won't be in a lot of pressure. However, how would you know that they won't pass through the smoke?"

"No one would take a risk in a fight among equals since the most dangerous thing is not of natural conditions but humans." Flamingo calmly replied. "We have made a name for ourselves, the Immortal Palace on the Smoke Island 50 years ago and became the world's strongest and mysterious terrorist group. It's a burden for being so well known, especially in this circumstance."

"How should we divide the Black Smoke Pot when we got it?" The old voice asked again.

"Free for all," Flamingo replied.

"Alright."

"You have no problem with this right, Sylphalan?" Flamingo looked at the last black figure.

"Can't die from this..." Sylphalan replied with a coarse voice. He took down his hood and revealed a face filled with scars.

"Alright then. Let's move out."

As soon as Flamingo finished his sentence, four of them instantly disappeared from the beach and formed 4 black lines, moving inland.

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"The Smoke Island has a forest terrain, a rocky terrain and a lot of other complicated terrains that have yet to be explored." Andrela was noting down on a small notebook as he spoke eloquently.

The four of them were on a big military ship heading towards the Smoke Island.

The military ship was surrounded by a large amount of smaller battleships. All of them were blue with a stamp of the Federation's military insignia.

Andrela looked at the remaining four people and said with a smile on his face: "It seems like the terrain in Smoke Island can change at any time. It's constantly surrounded by smoke, vision is ineffective, compasses have no effect and other signal instruments are unable to send out any signals as well. Hence, we can only rely on our sense of direction. This environment suits a certain someone to unleash his true strength so we have to be extra careful."

"Assassination? I am a practitioner of Assassination Fist Technique. Let's talk about other things." Palosa sat on the deck with his knees as he said calmly. "What should we take note of the most?"

Andrela started smiling again.

"Alright, I will talk about what we should take note of the most." He stopped as he saw Garen and the King of Nightmares attracted by his topic.

"The King of the gun, Nikon, who is that old man we saw previously, is most likely the best gunner. There is also the King of North Pole..." He started to give out the intel of the strongest people.

"Then who is the most dangerous?" Garen asked as he lean against the guardrail. "Excluding Sylphalan of the Immortal Palace."

"It's me." Andrela started to smile crazily.

"?"

The few of them were stunned as they looked at Andrela in confusion. He was not an arrogant person so it was rather weird for him to say so.

"I have brought along the latest highly explosive purple bomb. I have brought 15kg of them and could blow this ship we're currently on up into the sky."

"You don't have to be so determined." Garen stared at him as he frowned. "I have a grudge against Sylphalan and the King of Nightmares has a grudge against Flamingo. In addition, all of us have an interest to the Black Smoke Pot. This is the reason why we are here. You don't need to bet your own life on this."

"No no no..." Andrela waved his hand. "I know my own situation. I am different from you. I can feel that I have already reached my peak and improving my current self is nothing but a dream. I can only break my limit and achieve a greater strength if I risk my life! Life? A life without pursuit is meaningless to me."

"You have reached your extreme limit." Palosa sighed.

"Perhaps. However, I am still currently not qualified to go into the extreme limit." Andrela smiled as he replied back.

Chapter 213: Gathering 3

Garen sighed and silently walked to the side of the ship.

He knew that Andrela was gentle on the outside but crazy on the inside from the first time he interacted with him

"It all depends on you since you have already made the decision." The King of Nightmares shrugged. She was currently in a young and cute teenage girl form, which looked exactly like Andrela's younger sister Aisis. "Alright let's not talk about these. Drela, do you like my current form? Do you want to do something exciting tonight?" she held her purple skirt as she turned around in a circle. "It's your biological sister~~"

Andrela didn't react at all and said. "Regrettably I do not have such a fetish."

"Don't you feel that it's very exciting?"

"Not in the least."

"Do you want me to transform into..."

"You do not need to transform into my mother..."

Both of them were flirting with each other as if no one was watching them.

Palosa went to his room to rest, leaving Garen alone on the deck as he looked far to the distance.

As the body of the boat rocked with the motion of the waves, it gave off a sense of insecurity.

Far away at the horizon of the blue sea, there were a group of grey shiny dolphins occasionally jumping out of the ocean as they cut open the sea at high speed, leaving a trail wake behind.

He placed his hands onto the cold black handrail as he gently touched the surface of the rough paint which was somewhat worn and torn.

The cool and salty sea breeze blew on his face and entered his neck.

"Sylphalan..." He murmured. Ever since he met the real Sylphalan which was during the Argent Mirror incident, he no longer had the desire to know the truth about the old man.

"What happened? What are you thinking about?" An unfamiliar voice came from behind.

"Nothing, just feeling a little bit emotional," Garen replied calmly.

The person who stood on his left was a middle aged man with a curly moustache and a cigarette in his mouth. His overall image looked like an old aristocrat in Europe on Earth.

His hair was combed to the point where it was shining. In a black tuxedo, he was fiddling a small and unique silver pistol in his hand as it kept producing a clicking sound.

"Major General Nikon. We all have our reasons. What's yours? Why did you participate in this operation?" Garen looked at the famed master who was known as the King of the Gun.

"About that... It's just a small matter. I've been wanting to visit the Smoke Island because I heard that it has a very good scenery."

Garen laughed as he knew he had wanted to avoid the topic.

"Let's change the question then. How do you view this operation? What are the odds of us winning?"

"The odds? That depends on the objective." Nikon had his mouth shut tight. "Each objective has their own chance of success."

Garen shrugged and stopped asking questions as it was a waste of time.

The fleet was slowly and firmly heading towards the Smoke Island. As the sky turned black, the surface of the ocean started to turn into dark blue and the sparkling reflections of the moon could be seen on the ocean's surface.

After gathering on the deck, the five of them went back to their respective rooms and did not see each other again as they were preparing their minds for what was to come. The big battle was the next day and it could be a life or death situation if there was any slight negative impact on their state of mind.

The fleet took the opportunity to speed up during the night and soon, the highly dense white smoke of the Smoke Island could be seen with the naked eye.

Poof!!

The gas kept discharging from the Chimney.

Garen stood still in his room and could faintly see the highly dense white smoke of the Smoke Island through the ship's window.

He could not see more than two meters ahead of the ocean's surface with his naked eye.

Woo!!~~~

An ear piercing alarm suddenly rang.

"What's going on?!" A man asked loudly as rushing footsteps could be constantly heard from the corridor.

"The ship had collided with something!"

Boom!!

An explosion was heard as the body of the ship started to vibrate.

Garen knew the situation was dire and quickly pack the necessities such as food and water and opened the door.

Boom Boom!!

Another two explosions and vibrations occurred as a strong burning smell filled the air.

Sailor after sailor zoomed past him towards the deck as he opened the door.

"What's going on?!" Garen simply grabbed one and questioned him.

"Captain! The ship has collided with a mine! We are currently fixing it!" The sailor's face was filled with black mechanical oil as he sweated profusely.

Garen let go of the sailor and shoved everyone out of his way as he made way to the deck.

As there were already fire on some part of the deck, the sailors were already trying to put it off with a fire hose.

Palosa was already on the deck whereas Andrela and the King of Nightmares just came out from behind him.

The four of them grouped together and as Garen was about to open his mouth, he saw a red flare flying to his direction.

His face changed and without thinking any further, he jumped out of the boat and into the water.

Boom!!!

The ship that spanned at least a hundred meters across exploded. The ship's body broke into half from the middle like a paper boat torn into half and sank into the sea in a matter of seconds.

Boom boom boom boom!!!

The constant bombardment incessantly created fountains of displaced water from the sea. The white water spurted up high above and poured down drizzling noisily.

Garen was floating in the cold sea. As he swam for a few meters, he felt a numbing sensation at the top of his head, as if something had pierced onto his skin.

"Not good!" He kicked the water with all his might and jumped up to at least ten meters above the sea.

Kaboom!!

A huge amount of water spurted upwards from where he originally was in the water.

Bright red lights strobed from the black ships on the pitch black sea. They were either flashes of returning fire with their canons, or otherwise light from fires still burning on the deck.

The Federation's fleet was ambushed by an unknown fleet.

At the other side of the sea in the distance, another fleet lit up a countless amount of red strobes; they had opened fire.

Garen swam quickly in the ocean as his shirt had been torn to pieces due to the shock. The suitcase in his hand was mushed as it had been hit by the shells.

He quickly swam towards a life buoy that had been thrown into the sea and hung himself by the life buoy with his shoulders.

The water splashed as he jumped out of the water from the life buoy and gently landed onto an undamaged ship.

"Return Fire!!" Nikon was roaring nearby. "Fucking return fire!! Kill all of them!! These fucking Weisman Bastards! Sooner or later I will cut you all up and feed you to the dogs!!"

Boom!!

Before he finished his sentence, this ship had taken damage.

A bright light flashed in front of Garen's eyes and both his ears starting ringing loudly. It was as if there was an alarm clock ringing continuously beside his ears. In a blink of an eye, the fire in front of him had covered his whole vision.

A fire broke from the deck nearby him and exploded, releasing a torrent of flame similar to a red lotus.

The deck's explosion ruthlessly tossed into the ocean again.

"F\*ck!!" Garen quickly pointed his toes and ran on the surface of the ocean for at least ten meters before landing on debris left behind by a sunken ship.

He couldn't hear anything and he could see a piece of bright red afterimage in his vision and he couldn't see anything clearly at all. Garen knew that he was powerless as this was a battle between two fleets. He had no choice but to sit and wait for it to play out.

After some time, His eyes and ears started to recover. Garen rubbed his temples as he scanned his surrounding.

The whole ocean was disastrous as the Federation's large fleet had completely disappeared as it had turned into millions of pieces of debris floating on the surface of the ocean.

A few lucky surviving sailors were holding onto the life buoys as they gathered at larger pieces of debris. However, only a few people could find their sense of direction due to the pitch black conditions during night time. To make things worse, there were waves that would topple over the debris and some would occasionally drown into the cold sea.

"Augustus!! I will kill you no matter what!!" The King of the Gun, Nikon's roar could be heard from a distance.

Chirp!!!

Suddenly, a sharp chirp that sounded like a bird could be heard from the Smoke Island which was far away. It was as if it was a response towards Nikon's anger. The chirp obviously sounded provocative and contemptuous.

"Everyone get to the island!!" Palosa's voice suddenly popped out from the middle of the sea and everyone could hear it clearly.

Swoosh!!

Four streams of water rose together at the same time as four human figures jumped up and sprinted on the water and headed towards the Smoke Island.

As Garen was about to head out, he realized that his hand was rather light. The suitcase was no longer there. His shirt was ragged and the left side of his shirt was completely torn apart.

He quickly reached in his hand and fumbled.

"My Golden Sword Throne!!" His facial expression changed slightly. The Antique of Tragedy, which were Golden Sword Throne and the Golden Seal, were placed in this very pocket. He brought them anywhere so that he could absorb the potential at all times. He didn't expect to lose them from the series of explosions.

"Garen!" Palosa's voice came from the distance.

Although Garen was slightly unhappy about it, he still got up and stepped onto the surface of the sea and sprinted towards the Smoke Island.

The Smoke Island's Southern Coast.

There were three figures in white fur overcoats looking at the five people that were sprinting towards the Smoke Island.

"It's Flamingo. That damn clown. How dare he push the blame onto us when he's the one who had sunk our ship!" The tall man with pointy hair said angrily.

"Let's leave here immediately. Flamingo's underling had assumed that we were the ones who did this. The Clown Queen had perfectly copied my Bombardment Technique." Another black figure said calmly.

"Isn't that good? They can have a good match with Flamingo's underling! They had just formed a team and now they wanted to be the very best? We definitely need to make them suffer more." The last man laughed.

"It's time to leave." The man in charge turned around and walked into the island. The other man followed suit, leaving behind the last man who was yelling here and there and being ignored.

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On the other side of the hidden rocky spot.

A team of clowns that were dressed up strangely were looking at the five figures sprinting towards the island.

These clowns were all wearing thick attire and hats and all of them looked the same on the outside. No one could differentiate who's who as their body figures were hidden within the thick dress up as well.

"Hehe... Let's move out." The clown who stood at the front said in such a way that it was impossible to differentiate whether they were a male or a female.

"Hehe...!" The remaining clowns started laughing strangely as well. Their voices were so similar to the first one it was impossible to make out the differences.

All of them brought out a long black rocket launcher from behind and set them up skillfully as they aimed at the five figures who were sprinting towards their directions.

Pew pew pew!!!

The rockets flew towards the five figures and left a trail of white smoke behind.

Chapter 214: Gathering 4

Boom Boom Boom!!

The rockets exploded on the sea. The fireworks were extraordinarily beautiful during night time.

Garen flicked his toe and fired off a water arrow to hit the rocket launcher.

The explosion occurred just right in front of him and he had no choice but to defend himself with one of his hand until the debris stopped flying around.

"How are we going to tackle this?!" He looked at the others and realized that the King of Gun, Nikon had already taken out his small pistol and aimed at where the projectile came from.

Pew!

A red light flashed from the pistol as it produced a faint sound and was completely silent after.

At the same time, a sharp silver ball landed on one of the clowns who were on the hill. They immediately reached out their hands on attempted to grab the ball.

Pew!!

The small ball exploded into countless thin needles in every direction.

Silently, the whole group of clowns collapsed into the ground, pierced by the thin needles.

"Let's go. Their grand performance is no match for my mere shot." Nikon blew the gun's muzzle with a calm expression.

Two of them sprinted out as everything settled down.

After striding on the surface of the ocean for awhile, he finally reached the beach. Technically, he was stepping on the water instead of pedalling with his legs as he ejected himself away from the surface of the water by stepping on the water with enormous power.

He was not an expert in QingGong as he was already drenched from head to toe the moment he reached the beach. He looked very pathetic with his torn shirt drenched with cold water.

As he landed, he saw that Palosa, the King of Nightmares and the others were already waiting for him. It was obvious that he was the slowest on the water.

"You look pathetic!" The King of Nightmares said helplessly. "It's such a pity for the new shirt that I just bought. I had taken a long time to pick out these shirts and it's already ruined."

It wasn't just him. Andrela and Nikon's shirts were more or less the same. On the other hand, Palosa was the only one whose shirt was perfectly clean. He even had the two briefcases with him on his hand. He looked like an old tourist who was about to travel around.

"It's the Three Major Generals from Weisman! They have already arrived!" Nikon gripped his teeth. "This time I will kill all of them myself!!"

"Do you want to move out on your own or join us in our venture?" Palosa asked coldly.

"I have other things to attend to, I won't be going with you." Nikon shook his head. "We shall part ways here."

"Alright."

As Nikon finished his sentence, he sprinted back to the sea and started helping the soldiers to get onto land.

"Let's go as well." Palosa turned around and went deeper into the island.

Garen didn't say a word and followed Palosa behind. Four of them were completely silent throughout the whole journey as they explored the island.

The surface was completely deserted, filled with nothing but black rubble and stone. The smoke that kept coming out from between the stones had reduced visibility to only a few meters.

The four of them left the beach and went into the inner part of the island. It was just like a normal road, save for the mist.

The mists that surrounded them stretched across the horizon, and everything was covered in white.

Palosa found a big stone, squatted down and opened his suitcases to reveal some food and drinks.

"Let's eat something. We're probably going to be staying here for the night."

Andrela and the King of Nightmares sat down separately and took a fried biscuit and mixed it with milk.

Garen took a fried biscuit as well. He surveyed the surrounding environment as he nibbled on his snack..

The surroundings and the sky were completely white, whereas the surface was filled with black rubble. On top of this they could only see three meters ahead of them, as if the four were stranded on a deserted island out at sea.

He grabbed some pebbles off the ground and pinched them gently.

Crack.

The stones were squished into black powder and revealed a honeycomb shaped structure within the stones. The inside of the stones were very hot; about thirty of forty degree celsius.

"The landscape here is very strange and the geothermal temperature is unusually high. The smoke seems to contain some sulfur in them." He whispered.

"Although the Smoke Island has plenty of secrets, we won't be in danger as long as we don't enter the ancient ruins. I heard that there were tourists who got lost in the mist and died falling off a cliff, even though the number of these cases were rare." Andrela explained. "We should be fine as long as we take extra care for the enemies on this island."

He took out a leather paper from his shirt and opened it slowly to reveal a map.

"This is the general layout of the Smoke Island mapped by the older generations. It's not very useful but it can be used as a reference."

They gathered and examined the map carefully.

The map pictured a very long island and was separated into Southern Territories and Northern Territories. These two territories even had locations that were annotated with a small dot and names by the side.

"There are a few popular scenery spots that were marked from one to nine and all of them are different types of statue forests. Which one should we pick?" Andrela asked. "Tomorrow will be the full moon and we need to fulfill the two requirements if we want to enter the ancient ruins."

"The first requirement is to have a telekinesis expert, which is me." The King of Nightmares replied lazily."

"The second requirement is the key." Garen continued the conversation. "The question is, where is the key?"

"It's most likely located at the statue forests. The Three Major General from Weisman who ambushed us just a while ago will most likely head there as well." The King of Nightmares said casually. "I will have them pay for destroying the brand new shirt that I had just bought."

Garen was unhappy as well as he lost the Golden Seal and Golden Sword Throne for no reason. These were Antiques of Tragedy that had valuable potential points embedded in them and they disappeared for good because of the enemy's actions.

'Hehe..."

A playful laughter emerged from the mist, not too far away from them.

"Who's there!" Andrela sharpened his gaze as his hand started to glow silver in color.

With a clank a clown in a red and green shirt slowly emerged from the mist. He wore a red mask and his cheeks were ripped open from the mouth to the ears, as if he had a very huge, bloody mouth. He approached closer as he threw the knife which he was holding away from his hand.

"It's very fortunate to meet someone who had been ambushed by the same people." The clown spoke with a very hideous voice. "We were attacked by Weisman's Three Major Generals as well. Our fleet has been destroyed and we are going to take revenge."

"Oh? Do you know where they are?" The King of Nightmare took out a white pear out of thin air and gently bit into it.

"Of course. Those people are about to obtain the key. Their intel is too accurate." The clown's obvious emphasis was strangely warped. The key was obviously the most crucial item to enter the ancient ruins but he seemed to be celebrating this disadvantageous moment. "What do you say? Do you want to go?"

"You have informed quite a few people, right?" Garen asked softly.

"Of course. How dare they attack people who want to board the island? The Weisman's Government would think that they are unstoppable if no one teaches them a lesson." The clown replied with a sharp tone.

"How many people do you have?" Garen continued his questioning.

"Do you think I would answer that question of yours?" The clown laughed.

"That's true. However, what makes you think that we will trust you?"

"Because you have to. Whoever wants to obtain the key would not miss this opportunity. They are in the North. Walk this way and I will be your guide." The clown smirked as he said. "We all have a common enemy. We will deal with the key after we deal with them."

He lead the way and walked in the direction he spoke of earlier.

Palosa was motionless and no one could make out what he's thinking with that poker face of his.

The remaining two had a smile on their face and did not seem to be moving as well.

On the other hand, Garen squinted his eyes as if he smelled something fishy going on. He started walking in the other direction the clown was leading.

"You're going in the wrong directions." The clown turned his head around and looked at him. "Follow me. It's over there."

"Should I ask you where I should go?" Garen furrowed his eyebrows and continue walking forward.

Shoosh!

The clown rushed back and stood in front of Garen to block his path.

"You can't walk over here. You should follow me instead..."

"What do you mean?" Garen started to become serious. "You better move out of my way."

"Little fella... This road must not be taken... Or else... I will be very angry~~~" The clown in the mask started to laugh strangely.

"Are you going to move away?" Garen started to smell something faint from this directions and his tone immediately went cold.

"If you want to be killed by me, I'm fine with that." The clown's tone started to change as well.

"To die by your hand? Hehe, let me see how do you plan to kill me!!" Garen said furiously and attempted to capture the enemy with his expanded hand.

Boom!!

An invisible aura started to shroud the clown like a greenish black iron claw latching onto his face. The invisible wind pushed the surrounding white mists as it moved towards the sides like a wave.

Hngh!!

The clown screamed in a high pitch. As he attempted to avoid being caught via moving quickly in a strange manner, his sleeves were loosened and revealed a lot of black hand grenades in them.

Kaboom!

Both of them retreated and the fiery explosion exploded in between them as the bright explosion pushed away from the surrounding white mists.

"Divine Statue - East King Hand!!"

Garen's gaze sharpened, became a black figure and instantly rushed out to capture the clown with both of his hands. High pitched noises were screeched from the air as his palms brushed across the air.

A transparent wall was formed in front of him. The wall was created by multiple layers of air vortices and it headed towards the clown like a giant boulder.

The clown screamed as he turned away, attempting to escape.

Splat!!

The clown's body was separated into half and his blood rained down on the surrounding.

Garen's hand was still 2 meters away from his body.

"Couldn't even last one attack." He sighed as he walked slowly towards the clown's head and stepped onto the useless clown's brain.

As he flicked his leg, a silver card flew into his hand.

The card was made of metal and it had a picture of black and white ghost printed onto it.

"It's the clown's card." The King of the Nightmare approached him slowly with a hand covering his nose. "The Clown King had ten underlings with different personalities and each of them has as a different nickname. You must be one of them. I heard the clowns' body were either filled with poison or traps and they're all proficient in poisoning others. It's unfortunate that you'd been torn into 2 pieces before we can see your skill."

He looked at Garen.

"Killing people with airflow through space. Have you reached that realm, Garen?"

Chapter 215: Southern Territory 1

Garen passed the card to King of Nightmares and did not answer his question. "Let's go. It looks like there's something over here." He walked towards the direction that he had determined earlier.

The King of Nightmares and Andrela looked at Palosa.

The latter shook his head and said: "We needn't make this unnecessarily complicated."

"I think it's best for you to follow along. That might turn out to be necessary." Garen turned his head around and said.

Palosa closed his eyes and stayed silent.

"Hmph." Garen didn't want to speak further either and proceeded to walk into the mist.

Andrela and the King of Nightmare were speechless as they looked at the both of them. They ultimately followed Garen.

"Although we've already expected to have different opinions and be separated because of it, I didn't think it would be so soon," Andrela said helplessly. "However, everyone has their own objective, opinions, and style of operation. Since Palosa and Garen both stand at the pinnacle of the martial arts world, it is normal to have a different *modus operandi*."

"I don't really care." The King of Nightmares said as he hung onto Andrela's shoulder lazily as he leaned against him. "It's very boring lately... Drela, I have a suggestion."

"Forget about it." Andrela suddenly stopped.

"Drela, how about we have a wild war when everyone gathers at the middle of the island? Didn't you want to be famous? If we do that you'll be famous internationally~" The King of Nightmare suggested lazily. "I don't care how you want to do it~~"

"Of course you don't care..." Andrela was speechless. "You can just morph into another person. What about me?!" He knew that the King of Nightmares would do it if he wanted to. It's completely normal of the King of Nightmares to knock Andrela unconscious and act in his place during the war if he got excited.

"Furthermore, I don't want to be famous, I just want to... sigh, nevermind. I just can't get through you!"

The trio walked into the thick mist and soon disappeared.

Palosa was still sitting in the same spot with his eyes closed.

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Garen kept walked towards where the smell was coming from in the mist and soon arrived the place where there were blood stains on the rocks. The blood was dark red, betraying the fact that it had been shed some time ago.

He kept walking on and suddenly heard a faint sizzling noise in front of him. It sounded like someone was boiling oil or some sort.

Soon, a bonfire appeared in front of Garen. Within the fire were a pile of corpses, green and red. Black dense smoke kept oozing from the still burning flame.

Garen stood in front of the bonfire and examined the corpses.

"They're the clowns."

The King of Nightmares walked forward, looked and said, "They died pierced by steel needles. It's very similar to Nikon's technique."

"Looks like the clowns were most likely the ones who ambushed us when we were in the sea." Garen squinted his eyes and whispered. "Perhaps they were trying to push the blame onto the Weisman?"

"Let's forget this and go to where the key is. We have to go to the statue forests, be it to open the ancient ruins tomorrow or battling for the keys. We should go there further and see who's in the Southern Territory."

"The Southern Territory and Northern Territory have their own respective keys?"

"Of course," Andrela answered. "One on each side. Hence there are only four people qualified to battle for the Black Smoke Pot."

"I recall from the map that we need to pass by two important places right?" With Garen's memory being photographic, he had already memorized the map he had seen earlier. "They were the gap between the canyon and the edge of the cliffs. These two locations seem to be the best spot for an ambush."

"A map is a map. Do you have any idea how to differentiate the locations within this mist?" The King of Nightmares frowned.

"How did they differentiate the directions here?" Garen squatted down and examined the clown's corpse that was in the bonfire.

The King of Nightmares squatted down and looked at the surface's striations.

"We should just follow the usual method. This surface has consistent striations. We should be fine as long as we follow the direction that these are going. We should be good if we can find a living person."

"We will just have to deal with it." Garen frowned. "Let's go there as soon as possible. We will interrogate him or her if we find someone."

He looked at the surface's striation and walked along it. The remaining two followed tightly from behind.

The rocks in front of them were getting higher and higher. Some of them even had a deep gorge in between and they had no choice but to jump across the gap. The mist between the gaps were getting more and more dense as soon they could not see more than 2 meters ahead of them. The trio could only communicate via smell and hearing to prevent getting lost.

Soon a pile of corpses appeared on the floor. They were soldiers in white clothes without any emblems or indication of nationality. They examined the corpses and couldn't identify any traits from it.

They kept moving forward. Explosions could occasionally be heard from far away, along with faint roars and the occasional gun shot.

The mist had perfectly enveloped the whole area.

"Has the battle to obtain the key started?" Garen looked at the directions where the explosions occurred.

"The key has been out for some time. We just don't know who's holding it. I heard that the keys were brought in from the outside, and the Southern Territory and Northern Territory have two keys each for two entrances to their ancient ruins. However, the ancient ruins are small and hard to find, and no one knows which the Black Smoke Pot is in." Andrela explained.

Garen stopped the conversation and kept marching forward as they moved past the pile of corpses.

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Among the white mist, a group of human figures in clown attire quietly gathered beside the clown's corpse. The corpses were torn into pieces and blood was spilled everywhere. It was a sight of horror.

The lighted torches in their hands faintly reflected the masks on their face.

"White ghost was dead right after he sent us the intel." The clown leader's voice trembled as he spoke, in a weird tone.

"We have underestimated Flamingo."

"We will give up on attacking them and change our target. The deal between us and the Immortal Palace is to reduce the amount of participants that were not qualified to enter the ruins. Since they are qualified to enter, we shall ignore them." The clown leader whispered.

"My queen, do you have any confidence to retreat without harm?" He suddenly turned his head to the right and asked the clown.

"I'm not sure."

"Does that mean you're not confident?" The clown leader paused for a while. "Nevermind. Let's go ahead. All of you separate out and explore the other roads."

"Yes."

All the clowns moved out, and the clown leader was left alone.

He walked slowly to the corpse, squatted down and pinched the corpse's skin.

"What powerful strength... A very cruel technique..." His playful gaze started to become more and more serious.

\*\*\*\*\*

Boom!

Garen slammed his palms onto a man in black's waist, and the opponent flew away like a canon and crashed onto a rock not far away. The sound of multiple bones breaking could be heard and the man died instantly. It was unknown how many bones were broken.

He stood still and scanned his surrounding.

There were a lot of corpses in black shirts on the ground, and all of them had a picture of a white clown on their bodies.

Andreia and the King of Nightmares came from different directions.

Andreia cleaned his blood-stained sword

"These people are the clowns. What use do they have stationing here? To die without a purpose?"

"Perhaps they are trying to obtain the right to participate." The King of Nightmares yawned. "This is meaningless. They are slightly stronger commoners die with the slightest attack. This is not fun at all."

The trio were standing in a narrow gap. There was a tunnel carved in the mountains face in front of them that was only wide enough to allow one person to pass through at a time. The tunnels seemed to be endless, shrouded by mist.

"Shall we go?" The King of Nightmares asked casually.

"Of course." Garen took a big step and entered the tunnel. Suddenly, his facial expression changed and immediately retreated.

Kaboom!!!

A loud deafening sound rang from within the tunnel.

The rage of fire accompanied rubble crashing came down from above and threatened to crush.

Clank clank clank clank!!!

Andrela appeared in front of Garen/ The sword on his hand instantly transformed into a mirror and turned all of the rubbles into pebbles. Even the fire was stopped in its track.

The trio was forced back by the explosion for ten meters or so. The floor clearly had a few scorch marks from the friction created when they were pushed back.

From above, there was a red mushroom like cloud slowly ascending in the area. Strong winds were gusting and blew away the mist in the surrounding to reveal a big land of deserted place filled with black rocks.

"Clown King!" Garen was very angry. He had been stomaching his anger from losing his Golden Sword Throne and Golden Seal earlier. Now he had been attacked by the clowns again and was almost caught in the explosion hidden in the tunnel.

He could have been injured by the explosion if he hadn't realized that the place seemed strange as if someone had set a trap in it.

Although he was not afraid of bullets, it didn't mean he wasn't afraid of being caught by a big amount of explosives.

The King of Nightmares and Andrela were unhappy with it as well and no longer have a relaxed expression.

"Let's go!" Garen pushed away a stone that was flying towards him and continued walking. He started feeling impatient as he was continuously attacked and had to react constantly.

"My make up!!!" The King of Nightmares started crying and started to bring out his comb and mirror to attempt to fix his make up. As he reached into his pocket, he realized that his combs and mirror had been utterly destroyed, "Damn you clown king! Don't let me meet you!!!"

On the other hand, Andrela was quietly patting away the dust was on his body.

The trio formed a line and sped up as they followed the surface's striations and travelled to the first location.

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At the center of the Southern Territories laid a strange place where mist was absent.

There were black statues arranged here. They were either standing, sitting down, or posing in weird postures. They were arranged in such a manner that it formed a dense forest of statues.

At the center of the statue forest was an empty space of land that was surrounded by the forest of statues.

A group of men in black coats were treading with care on this empty land. They stayed close to the stone statues and kept walking and jumping into inconvenient paths and were extremely wary of empty space.

"This is the place guys. Be extra careful. Dale, are you alright?" The golden haired woman who was leading the expedition turned her head around and looked at him with a worried look.

"I'm alright. Let's keep moving. Stop treating me like a fragile flower that's placed in the living room." The middle aged man who was at the very back replied. He was holding a black pipe in his mouth and occasionally took a puff.

"Oh right. What's the situation on the items that we found? Has the result been released?" He looked at a fat bearded man who was just beside him.

Chapter 216: Southern Territory 2

"No. I have never seen these items before. It looks like something from Ancient Endor, but I couldn't match it with anything from that time period." The big bearded man said helplessly.

"White Eagle, do you feel better?" Dale Quicksilver turned her head around and looked at the last person in the team. He was no other than the closest partner and assistant, White Eagle.

At this point in time White Eagle had seemed like a drunk person. His face was pale, his eye sockets deep and his usual bright golden hair was unreflective. The only thing that remained positive was his sharp gaze.

He raised his head and looked at his old friend Dale Quicksilver. "I'm still alright." His voice was unbelievably coarse. "It's just that I may have spent too much energy. The few men in black previously were rather troublesome."

Dale Quicksilver nodded her head and didn't say anything further.

The group kept walking forward and soon the detective pulled out a small metal piece out of the human stone statue and passed it to the big bearded fat man.

"Have a look at this."

"The big bearded fat man took it and examined it in detail for a long time. Ultimately he shook his head helplessly.

"I'm sorry... This is way beyond my knowledge."

Lady Si Lan looked at the big bearded fat man helplessly. He was an identification expert that they specially hired. However, the items they encountered along the road was unknown to him and only a small portion of items that he identified were vaguely described.

Whenever they encountered something the first thing he would do was apologize.

If this kept on, no one would know when they would be able to find the opponent's trail. One must realize that these stone pieces were clues left by the people who kidnapped the two children.

These clues were purposely left behind. If we couldn't find the remaining clues, I'm afraid Silvica and Eve...

"If only Sir Kelly was here. There's too little research going on in the Ancient Endor's culture." She sighed.

"Yes. If only Kelly was here..." Dale Quicksilver stopped her sentence midway as she lowered her voice.

This trip to the island was actually baited by a mysterious man. Detective Dale's daughter Eve and White Eagle's son Silvica were kidnapped by a mysterious man. If they wanted to save them, they had to go on the island.

The enemy obviously had an unspeakable motive so they had no choice but to follow his demands.

In addition, the clues that would guide them forward were those black small rocks that were placed there beforehand.

"They purposely come up with a riddle for us to guess." Dale Quicksilver stopped walking with a calm expression. "This may be a game, a game where we don't have any choice. The opponent's strength far surpasses ours, so they get to set the rules. We have no choice but to follow them. Do not panic. If we do, we won't have any chance to win anymore."

"But Eve and Silvica..."

"Relax. The kids will eventually go through some rough training as well." Dale smiled as she tried her best to not sound worried.

"Don't worry Dale. I have a sword here so we still have the ability to protect ourselves." White Eagle comforted.

"That's true..." Dale nodded.

"Let's rest for a bit." The detective sat on a stone statue's leg.

Everyone started sitting down without paying much attention to their surroundings.

"Nineteen years ago, my parents were burnt to death on this island..." The White eagle sat down as he took out a small exquisite copper necklace out of his shirt.

The pendant had the same style as a pocket watch. He opened the pendant to reveal a black and white picture.

"This is my father." he gently stroked the surface of the glass that was protecting the picture. "Never in my dreams would I think of a time I would be stepping on this island again..." He had a complicated expression on his face as he grabbed the white sword tightly in his hand.

Pew pew!!

Suddenly, two ear deafening gunshots rang from afar.

"Let's move!"

The team quickly got up and moved towards the source of the gunshots.

They passed through the stone statues and soon arrived at another empty field that was multitudes larger than the previous one.

There were already a few teams standing in the empty field. Each of them stood at the corners. There were a pile of corpses in black shirts, obviously the receiver of the gunshots that had pierced the air earlier.

Dale looked closely and saw that there were a total of three teams on the empty field, and they stood tall and clear.

Two of the three teams were confronting each other and the atmosphere was getting tense by the second.

There were two teams on the left comprised of werewolves, whereas there were three tall men with white coats standing on the right.

The werewolves looked unhappy as they stared at the three men in front of them. Although the werewolves outnumbered them, they were obviously holding caution.

"The leader of the werewolf clan sir Bedega secretly came to the island. Looks like you have brought quite a number of clan members as well? Are you guys trying to get your hands on the Black Smoke Pot?" One of the strong and tall men covering himself with a white shirt laughed. His black chest here was moving about with the wind and it looked strangely funny.

"The Weisman's Major Generals had also secretly come to the island? If you can come here, why can't we?" The black werewolf who seemed to be the leader replied with a cold shoulder. "Furthermore, even the clown king from the poker organization has come here himself. The grand occasion this time is much more stronger than the last time. Do you want us to give you a hand?"

"Capturing the clown king is the Weisman's Major Generals' mission, so you don't need to concern yourself with it." The leader of the Three Major Generals said calmly. "We will also take this opportunity to kill that traitor Ghetta.

"I don't think you can fully understand the overall situation even if you, The Glorious Chancer are the one who's going to face it, right?" The leader of the werewolf clan said. "The clown king and the Immortal Palace have formed an alliance, and he is now considered as one of the Immortal Palace. It won't be easy for you guys to deal with him."

"Is that right?" The Glorious Chancer's face slightly twitched and didn't say another word anymore as if he was in deep thought.

Dale Quicksilver and her team had entered the area without drawing anyone's attention. These people were obviously the calefares on the island so it wasn't worth people taking precaution against them.

This meant that those experts who were very cautious would measure their strengths. They would simply ignore them if they were no threat to them.

Soon after their arrival, more and more people started to gradually gather here.

This was the entrance of the ancient ruins in the Southern Territory. To open the ancient ruin entrance, one must slot in the key into one of the stone statues. Even if you had obtained the key, you had to come to this place if you wanted to enter the ancient ruin.

Waves of powerful figures started to enter the empty field. There were elites from the Federation, special forces from the Tulip and a few unknown groups with unknown backgrounds. What was strange was that these people were injured and came in small numbers. Furthermore, they didn't seem to be in good shape as well.

"Looks like they have been ambushed as well." Dale Quicksilver whispered to Si Lan and White Eagle. "The Weisman's Three Major Generals and the leader of the werewolf clan are currently on the field. The clown king shouldn't have the guts to appear. Even if he is one of the Immortal Palace, he won't come out without any forces. Although the situation looks very tense, this is the safest place to be at the moment."

"The Weisman's Three Major Generals have been open towards their actions. As the strongest team in the field, they should be able to control the situation." Si Lan nodded in agreement. "White Eagle, are you still able to hold up?"

"I'm fine..." White Eagle's veins started to become visible on his face, as he held the white sword tightly in his hand. There were black runes flashing faintly on the sword's body. "I still can resist it..." He grit his teeth as he whispered.

The three of them looked at White Eagle with concern as he might not be able to suppress his negative emotions.

This sword is the legendary Rune Blade that had a mysteriously terrifying power. They wouldn't have been able to arrive on this island without this sword. However, enough strength and will is required to be able to hold the Rune Blade.

White Eagle made up his lack of strength with his unfaltering will. If not for this, he would have not been able to sustain it at all.

"So we will just camp here? Until tomorrow?" The fat Identification Expert whispered.

"There's no need for that. The key should be here by now, with the Three Major Generals or the leader of the werewolf clan. From now on until the next full moon, everything depends on the participants' skills. However, to be able to obtain the key from the Three Major Generals and the leader of the werewolf clan..." Dale Quicksilver shook his head. "When they appear here in the flesh, they are also sending a message to the clown king that if he wants to the key, they are right over here. You'll have to come and get it yourself if you're brave enough!" She paused for a while. "At the same time it's also an announcement to the others. The key is with them, and as long as if you're not afraid of death, you're free to try and get it from us!"

"That's crazy!" Lady Si Lan gasped. "This place is filled with elites from all over the world. Even the special forces from Tulip have arrived."

"This is the behavior of the Weisman. They are able to behaved so because they are trying to take over the world." Dale Quicksilver nodded. "Now we just have to see if there's anyone brave enough to attack. We don't know who was the one who kidnapped Eve and Silvica so everyone please observe carefully."

At this moment, a group of men and women with red shawls over their heads quickly entered the district. A woman with red eyes, who seemed to be the leader, glanced around and finally set her attention onto the Weisman's Three Major Generals.

"The Glorious Chancer, it's good to see you again." The girl placed her right fist on her chest and greeted him with a bow.

"Elysha, are you here for there key as well?" The Glorious Chancer asked calmly. His had a small black moustache just above his lips which gave him a rather stern look.

"The real battle starts after the entrance of the ancient ruin is opened. It's too early to say that yet." The red eyed girl replied.

"That depends. Only those who have the key on their hand has the right to use the Black Smoke Pot. Even if you're the first to arrive to the Black Smoke Pot, you will not be able to use it." The leader of the werewolf clan butted in. "Elysha, has the Demon Hunters Alliance decided to participate in this fight?"

"You should consider yourself lucky to be in the White Lion Camp. I will kill you without any hesitation if you were from the Black Lion Camp." The lady said with a calm tone.

"You can always try." The werewolf leader couldn't help but to laugh.

The situation had gotten more and more intertwined. The Demon Hunters Alliance, Werewolf Clan, Weisman's Government and the clown king were four power houses and obviously the current major players. Each of them has the strength to annihilate all of the others present.

Some had decided to retreat after witnessing such a dire situation.

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Carefully, Dale Quicksilver and the others retreated from the immediate area to avoid being noticed.

From afar, leaders from the Three Major Generals, the Werewolves, and the Demon Hunters negotiated for a while, all becoming increasingly tense as time goes by.

The Werewolves and the Demon Hunters drew their weapons facing each other.

Phewwweee!

With the sound of a whistle, all the werewolves charged at the Demon Hunters in a fan-shaped formation.

Bullets wheezing, growls, howls, and other sounds mixed into one another, forming an orchestra of bloodshed and severed limbs as the Demon Hunters and the Werewolves fought.

The Werewolves were ferocious and brutal. In their fury, they can enlarge themselves by more than half of their original size. Coupled with their accelerated healing factor and their astonishing defense, killing them would prove to be difficult unless their heads were lopped off.

On the other hand, the Demon Hunters were aggressive as well. Their weapons were so sharp they were able to slice the limbs off of werewolves easily. Even though they lack power, they made up with their immense experience, establishing them to be well matched with the Werewolves.

One after another, the other parties retreated. Unlike the usual tactics the Demon Hunters used, this team was able to fight the Werewolves one-on-one, demonstrating their elite status among the usual teams.

The red-eyed lady brandished her metallic arm and faced off against the leader of the Werewolf pack. Her red cape darted around him like scarlet fire surrounding him.

Aroooooo!

The leader howled wildly.

"Enough, Bedega!" Among the Three Major Generals, a tall, lean man beside the Glorious Chancer yelled. "There were other elites on this island, do you want all of us to die?"

Unfortunately, it was a little too late.

With the leader's howl, the eyes of all the werewolves flashed red, increasing their speed remarkably.

"Slay them!" The Demon Hunters yelled, procuring a syringe each and injecting a pale red liquid.

The situation soon descended into disarray.

Due to the conflict between the main forces, the Three Major Generals were not able to control the situation, considering their lack of manpower. Some other forces who were nemeses started attacking each other as well.

Dale Quicksilver and his team kept retreating when suddenly a flying machete cut through the air and flew toward them.

"Dodge!"

White Eagle swung his blade at it.

Clank!

The machete split into two parts and fell into the ground near the human statue behind them. At the same time, the main fight had shifted closer, forcing the group into two sides, Si Lan and the appraisal expert were on one side, Dale Quicksilver and White Eagle on another.

In the turmoil, Dale Quicksilver kept trying to follow Si Lan with his gaze, but there were seven or eight people fighting between them. As he turned his gaze upward, a bullet hit a stone statue on top of him.

He could only hear weapons clashing, screaming, robes flipping, and the wind swooshing. Other than that, nothing.

After White Eagle parried several other machetes, he was immediately treated as the enemy and was pulled into the fight. He tried his best to defend Dale Quicksilver while worriedly glanced at Si Lan and the appraisal expert.

"What now!"

"We need to get closer! Otherwise, Si Lan will be in trouble!" Dale Quicksilver clenched his jaw.

Unwittingly, they were forced farther and farther from their original spot, to the point that they have lost sight of the other two.

Dale Quicksilver tried to calm down.

"Need to find a way! I... must!" He stood behind White Eagle with his back against a stone statue, squinting.

The difference between their strength is too huge. Anyone from this bunch of people would be considered elites of the world, even though they look like they were struggling, every one of them could watch out for their own. At most they'll be injured, not dead.

"Something weird!" Dale Quicksilver realized something. Even though the people seem brutal, the movements they employ were mysterious, separating the group as well as blocking them from meeting up.

"They're doing it on purpose!" He realized with a start. " White Eagle! Charge!" He roared.

"Follow me!"

White Eagle rippled his sword.

Zing!

Black runes lit up from the rune blade, vibrating as if they were made of ink.

It sounded like an uncountable amount of people chanting together.

The blade was soon illuminating with black radiance. Three other rune blade shadows appeared out of thin air, circling White Eagle and Dale with increasing momentum, like a fan at its maximum speed.

Two sparring 'opponents' didn't react in time and got slashed by the spinning blades, stumbling back awkwardly.

"Where are you going?"

A strange piercing voice came from straight ahead.

A levitating red figure came into sight, colliding with White Eagle forcefully.

Poof!

The shadows vanished as White Eagle grunted and retaliated with the red figure.

"You again!" He groaned and tried to disengage to no avail.

It was then that Dale Quicksilver realized the red figure was the weird clown who intercepted them before.

"The red clown!"

The clown had two bright red daggers on his hands and stabbed at White Eagle furiously, but his face was wearing the eerily calm grin the whole time, as if this was all an intricate dance routine he was used to\*.

"Spiralling Smog."

He shrieked as green haze burst out of his body, covering a huge area centering him.

White Eagle and Dale Quicksilver were immediately enclosed by the haze, choking them both.

"We need to meet up with Si Lan!" Dale Quicksilver screamed at White Eagle.

"No! He's still here!" White Eagle paused to regain his equilibrium, but a red silhouette dashed on his left, leaving a burning wound on his arm.

Psst!

Dale Quicksilver was cut on his back as well.

"What can we do? Dammit!" White Eagle tried to suppress the anger in him. The situation is getting worse and more dangerous than ever. If even they were so badly hurt, then where Si Lan is... unimaginable!

\*\*\*\*\*

"Gah!"

Si Lan yelped and stumbled backward, clutching her chest. Her black outershirt was sliced open, revealing the white corset she was wearing underneath.

The opponent's attacks were so unnaturally accurate, it was obvious that it was planned.

Right now, she's trying to hide next to Yoke the appraisal expert in the crevice between two statues at the same time the clown in red costume was closing in on her.

"Yoke, I'll hold him off, run when you can!" Si Lan whispered as calmly as she could. Her usual politeness and seriousness was slightly shaky, as she herself had worried written in her eyes.

"What about you?" Yoke wasn't so sure about the plan. "I can't leave you here!"

"Just go, I have my own way to escape." Si Lan pretended to be confident in her plan, but she knew, it would be over for her.

Since working with her most admired Detective Dale Quicksilver, this was the first time she was in such a pinch.

The enemy in front of her wasn't just a normal criminal. He was from the top assassin syndicate in the world, the Joker Squad of Poker Organization.

What she couldn't believe was the clown in front of her slowly took off his mask, and revealed a badly scarred face of a woman.

"Si Lan Reybier, it's been so long, you're grown up to be such a pretty girl..." The woman's voice was dangerous and shrieky, "It's been what, twelve years since Dale Quicksilver and White Eagle forced me into desperation by the Nile River..."

Si Lan felt her throat went dry.

"You! You're Kassidan!" How could she forget? Twelve years ago, when she was just a little girl, she was kidnapped. A huge amount of money were asked. The proprietor of the incident? Scarlet Spider Kassidan.

If it weren't for Dale Quicksilver and White Eagle who passed by and saved her, her weed on her grave would've been as tall as an adult.

"You're still alive!" Biting her lip, Si Lan spat out, "And you even joined the Poker as the Joker!"

"Because of you... I didn't die, I'm stronger than ever..." Kassidan's eyes were wild, "Do you know why I split you guys up?"

She chuckled and clapped her hands twice.

Soon, a dozen strong men waddled in from the hazy surrounding, all of them wearing the Joker mask.

"Unexpected, after chasing Dale Quicksilver's tail for so many years, you're still a virgin? What a shame... dying from this brutality at such a young age. You haven't turned 25, have you? So young... tsk tsk tsk..."

The Scarlet Spider giggled, which soon turned into a nefarious shriek. Her right hand flicked, and a flying knife sliced a large hole into Si Lan's shirt at her waist.

Another flick, the flying knife returned to her hand. Another, the knife darted between Si Lan's legs and nailed itself on the stone statue behind her. Her fair thigh was exposed at the cut on her pants.

"Agh!" Si Lan staggered backward, her back pressing against the statue.

"Such smooth skin... Ah! Ah!" Scarlet Spider started moaning, reveling in her torture. "Now! Deflower her to death! Don't leave any holes undefiled!"

Hurr hurr...

The dozen of men approached Si Lan, rubbing their palms together and surrounding her.

"Si Lan, run!" The appraisal expert, Yoke barged into the circle, blocking in front of Si Lan.

Thud.

He was sent flying and fainted after having rolled on the ground.

"Yoke!" Si Lan's face was white as ash.

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Garen, King of Nightmare and Andrela marched up to the central area of the fog and looked darkly into it.

"Blow it away!" Garen ordered.

"I'll do it!" Andrela stepped forward and brandished his sword.

Shwoop!

Three silver mirrors appeared in front of him. Wind started blasting away at the green haze, unveiling the scene inside the chaotic area.

"Listen up!" King of Nightmare projected his voice. "Give us the Jokers in ten seconds!" His voice boomed at everyone who were inside the green mist.

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"Or else..."

He gestured with his right arm, causing an invisible force to shoot out, slightly bending the space around it. Rocks and boulders levitated and flew about in circles screeching, forming a Telekinetic Tornado about three meters tall and four meters in diameter.

"It's Telekinesis! Please stop!" A deep voice echoed from the central area. "We are the Major Generals from Weisman, the Clown King you were looking for is not here!"

"Why do we even bother talking to these savages! Let's show them who's boss!" A deep female voice came from in there somewhere.

Shrk!

With a glint of red light, a boomerang sliced through the air toward the three newcomers, aiming at Andrela.

The edge of the boomerang had a glaze of toxic blue. In the air, it looked like a red-colored moon, as dangerous as it is beautiful, the air around it became a gust of strong wind.

Andrela parried it with his sword easily.

The boomerang was destroyed instantly, its pieces splintered everywhere. Andrela's movements were relaxed, as if he was just brandishing it for fun.

After his intense training to better himself, he finally reached a level where he can safely say he's one of the top fighters in the world. Even though he still has ways to go before he could compete with the best few, he could already hold himself against these fighters.

In terms of ranking, he's probably one of the top 30.

It was only because King of Nightmares, Garen, Palosa who were all monsters in a race to the top that he looked weak. In comparison, if he decides to join any other organizations, he would be considered their best fighter.

King of Nightmares beside him didn't think too much. His face was dark with fury as he pointed toward where the boomerang came from. "Hmph!"

Fwoosh!

A huge Telekinetic Tornado shot out.

As the green mist had yet to fully disperse, the Tornado quickly disappeared behind it.

A deafening silence, and a sudden detonation.

Boom! Woo woo woo!

A piercing sound of the explosion accompanied by a tempestuous blast spread out from the center of the explosion.

The ground shook, even the stone statues visibly trembled.

Sounds of screaming and shrieking echoed from inside, obviously hit by the attack.

"Let's go in!" Garen marched into the stony maze.

King of Nightmares and Andrela followed closely.

\*\*\*\*\*

Boom!

The Scarlet Spider and the other clowns stopped in front of Si Lan. Everyone looked unsettled.

"What do we do now, boss?" One of them asked in a hushed tone.

"They are specifically looking for us, and they still made such a huge fuss, they must not be some normal goons! Now that the Clown King wasn't here, we won't be able to stop them! Abort! Abort now!" Scarlet Spider quickly muttered.

"Bring this harpy along!" She looked at Si Lan, who was laid down, unmoving, on the ground.

Two of the clowns approached her to grab her.

Thud!

Si Lan flipped, kicking the two in their lower abdomen region. They yelped and staggered backward.

"You b\*tch!" They tried to grab her again.

Woo woo woo!

A sudden blast of wind hit them.

The violent gale brought bullet-like stones and debris, piercing them in their backs. Ironically, Si Lan and Yoke were spared due to being in the shade of their pursuers.

Most of them were down. At least four of them had blood oozing out of all the seven openings of their heads, they were as good as dead.

The green haze finally cleared up due to that gust of wind.

"Kill her!" Kassidan shrieked.

Thud!

Before she could do anything else, a foot appeared on her abdomen and had her sent flying to a stone statue not far away.

A tall and strong silhouette slowly walked beside the Scarlet Spider and stamped his foot on her torso.

The silhouette was of a hulking man, he wore an earring on his left ear, his short purplish black hair moving with the wind. His eyes were red as he looked down at the people.

"Tell me, where is the Clown King?" His leather boots lightly treaded on Scarlet Spider's head, only putting minimal pressure on it.

"This voice!" Si Lan suddenly felt goosebumps running down her spine, and it shocked her out of her spacey state. She stared at the man.

"You! You're Mr. Kelly!" She yelled out of surprise.

The man took a double take and slightly turned his head toward Si Lan.

"Miss Si Lan?"

Stunned, Garen stared at Si Lan and her torn outfit. Mr. Kelly, that name reminded him of the time with Dale Quicksilver when he pretended to be an appraisal expert.

"What is it Garen?" A tall, handsome man appeared beside Garen, and frowned as he cast his gaze on Si Lan.

"It's nothing, I know her." Garen replied calmly.

"No use trying to run!" King of Nightmares shrieked in the distance. "Get rekt Clown King! I'll let everyone have a go at you for a hundred times each! I'll make you go through it until you begged to die!"

Garen and Andrela's mouths twitched.

"His hobby is still... weird."

"You'll get used to it... Let's go see what's happening." Andrela turned and headed off toward the source of the voice.

Garen turned.

"Miss Si Lan, care to follow?"

"O... Of course!" Si Lan stood up in a hurry, but still instinctively pressed her legs together as her thighs showed slightly where it was sliced off.

Garen smiled and approached her and Yoke. Carrying them one on each side, he followed after Andrela speedily.

As Garen dashed through the field, Si Lan's eyes were shut tight due to the wind, she asked loudly.

"Mr. Kelly, why have you come to this island?"

"I have some things to do here. I'm looking for something." Garen answered casually. "What about you? Dale Quicksilver is here too, isn't he?"

"Y-yes. We lost touch a little while ago." Si Lan clenched her teeth. "Was the one chasing after the Clown King your teammate?"

"I don't know him." Garen denied without hesitation. If he admitted to knowing King of Nightmares, that'd be embarrassing.

As they spoke, they have arrived at the central area where the smog had completely cleared up.

There were bodies lying haphazardly on the ground, three people were attacking a lady on a small clearing in the center.

The lady wore sharp golden claws on both her hands. Wherever she scratched at, the person in that direction would evade as soon as possible.

It was then that Si Lan noticed, among the ones attacking the girl, there were one of the Three Major Generals of Weisman, the red-eyed woman leading Demon Hunter, and a strange figure with the clown costume.

"Hmph!" Andrela huffed. "Night, you need help?"

"Nope!" The lady with sharp claws giggled, and scratched furiously, leaving lasting marks in the air. As the three stepped back, she twirled around.

"Got 'em!"

The golden marks left in the air slowly dissipated according to a mysterious pattern, but everyone who watched this scene fell into a trance, feeling drowsy, as if their mind is filled to the brim. Suddenly alert, most of them turned away.

The three attacking King of Nightmares pulled back in aghast, but right then, the clown stumbled and fell backward.

"Run!" Smoke screen burst out of the other two as they transformed back into two clowns. They ran in two different directions.

King of Nightmares grabbed the clown who fell.

"Queen!"

The other two clowns screamed worriedly.

At the same time, the smog cleared up, the Three Major Generals of Weisman had already landed their killing strike and congregated. They also saw the fight in the middle with King of Nightmares and the clowns.

"It is the Clown King's people! They dare show themselves!" The Glorious Chancer scowled. "Who's that being attacked?"

"I think it's King of Nightmares from the White Peacock!"

Gasp!

As the speaker finished his sentence, silence fell after a collective gasp.

King of Nightmares, the person who claimed to not be the strongest, but was said to be the most terrifying. He could manipulate at least 90% of the people to do anything they wouldn't have done otherwise.

It didn't only happen once or twice, but many, many times. Some had been hypnotized to streak, some were even hypnotized to lick the ground in the toilet while propping their buttocks up...

Or hypnotized to see the septic tank as a swimming pool...

The stories are so outlandish, but it always managed to throw people into bouts of goosebumps.

Hearing it was King of Nightmares, not only the normal people, the Demon Hunters, the Werewolves all took several steps back quietly. Even the Glorious Chancer himself frowned.

Because of that, King of Nightmares had numerous enemies and myths about him.

The Archbishop of the Holy Church, Archbishop Hester, who has had very positive public image, had been pursuing King of Nightmares when he was hit with a hypnotic suggestion, causing him to stop mid-fight and jerked off in public.

An old man, eighty-seven years of age... masturbating in front of hundreds of audience...

The old man killed himself after it ended, and King of Nightmares' fame spread around the world yet again.

"Do we need to explain to them about the Jokers pretending to be us..." General Milo asked.

"What is there to explain? Don't disgrace the Weisman Empire!" The Glorious Chancer persisted.

"King of Nightmares, the Clown King is our enemy as well. If you're willing, we'll definitely help in their extermination!" Werewolf pack leader declared.

"The Demon Hunters too!" The red-eyed lady shuddered as she recalled the event with the Archbishop.

Other powers quickly followed suit, as if scared about repercussions if they are the last.

"Who attacked us on the beach?" King of Nightmares clutched the head of the clown, restraining him, and stared at the crowd.

The clearing was messed up. King of Nightmares stood in the center of the crowd and glared without any signs of fear.

No one answered. The leader of the Demon Hunter, Elysha looked antsy.

Garen approached King of Nightmares with Si Lan in his arm, followed by Andrela.

"Maybe we can get information from this joker," Garen glanced at the clown held down by King of Nightmares. "The others called him Queen, so he must be pretty high-ranking."

"Kill me if you can! You can kill me, but you'll never kill the Queen! Hahahahaha..." The clown laughed maniacally.

"Kill you?" King of Nightmares smirked, "There's nothing easier than killing! You won't die so easily in my hands!"

"Tomorrow, before this time, we have one day to find and kill the Clown King." Andrela peeked at his wristwatch and stated.

#### Chapter 219: The Wait 1

"We were attacked by them as soon as we came ashore, and it looks like everyone who entered the island had been attacked. Poker Organization was definitely scheming something in secret. We were all here for the key, the Black Smoke Pot." Garen raised his voice, "I think everyone here wanted the Black Smoke Pot or witness its abilities. No matter what your intentions are, the ruins doesn't seem to be opening yet, so we don't really have conflict of interest here. Killing is unnecessary. I think, Clown King wants us to fight."

"It's true, Clown King's followers have the ability to disguise as other people, it's easy for them to pick a fight as another person." Someone agreed.

Garen stood in the center with the others, surrounded by all the rest of the people.

These parties knew their power is not enough, so they only came to try their luck. Furthermore, these were the ones who managed to breakthrough Clown King's trap through their willpower. Some of them were nameless people who powered on, some others were not necessarily unknown where they came from.

It didn't matter who it was. Anyone who stood there have their own desire - the Black Smoke Pot.

It's the same for the Three Major Generals. They were officially here to capture the Clown King, but in reality they were there for the Black Smoke Pot.

There were rumors of the Black Smoke Pot establishing the connection between this world and the Underworld.

The scene was in a slight confusion. No one party knows what the other parties think, so they were all being extra cautious at each other.

Most people were focusing on the three from White Peacocks in the center. Even if King of Nightmares was intimidating, who would really give up the opportunity to obtain the Black Smoke Pot, having come this far?

Those who were here had already made up their minds to breakthrough every single obstacle to get to it. If there were people who could settle for less, they already had and wouldn't even make it to the island.

"What do you White Peacocks think?" The leader of the Three Major Generals, The Glorious Chancer spoke. "The Clown King had given up on the Black Smoke Pot and plead allegiance to the Immortal Palace. He's here to get it for them. What about you?" He paused, "If I remembered correctly, the White Peacocks hadn't been around for too long, but all of you seem to have unsettled business with the Immortal Palace?"

The three had already silently agreed for Garen to be the leader and the face for the group. Andrela had admitted to be inferior to Garen in fighting ability, King of Nightmares was not even considering to lead.

Garen stepped forward, staring at The Glorious Chancer.

"Black Smoke Pot is not our primary objective. Just as you said, our main focus is Immortal Palace."

The Glorious Chancer nodded. "What if we form an alliance with each other? Our mission was to capture Clown King, this aligns with your focus, I presume you and him also have a score to settle. Our other mission was for the Black Smoke Pot, that was our real mission."

"Alliance?" Garen didn't think the Three Major Generals from Weisman would suggest such an idea, but seeing the sincerity on his face, Garen at least knew The Glorious Chancer really wants an alliance.

King of Nightmares muttered under his breath, "He was trying to soothe the sour relationship between you when Weisman sent the Killer Hunters Squad after you. I think they were even trying to recruit us."

Garen nodded subtly to indicate his understanding. The Red Sand Sword Gate saga wasn't a huge thing now, but it was still something they had to settle.

"What's in it for us in this alliance?" He hollered.

"If you help us get the Black Smoke Pot, and we'll help you when you face off with the Immortal Palace. They are also the scourge to our organization." The Glorious Chancer proclaimed.

"How can I trust you?"

"I have been on this job for twenty five years. I have yet to make a promise I couldn't keep." The Glorious Chancer stated calmly.

Between the back-and-forth of these two, some other teams around them started to shift. White Peacock and Weisman was already difficult by themselves, if they allied, no other teams would even be in the race to the prize anymore.

Some weaker groups started to leave the crowd. They were very aware of their abilities. Now that the situation had gone beyond their control. They might as well pull out before it was too late, after damages had been done.

The rest of the stronger groups which still had some confidence in themselves congregated, becoming larger temporary groups.

Garen and the Three Major Generals all noticed the behavior changes.

"The Northern Territory should be under Immortal Palace's control, the King of the North Pole and God of the Spear have probably allied to resist the Immortal Palace," The Glorious Chancer continued, "If we join in the fight, Immortal Alliance will have no chance of succeeding."

He stared at Garen's face. This young man is only twenty years of age, but the intelligence pointed out he's a rising star who monopolized a whole province. He didn't pay much attention before, but he didn't realize the young man may be even stronger than what they had expected.

He immediately tried to recruit him.

"Weisman welcomes all talents and intellectuals. Top fighters like you three, you can get the best receptions and a position only second to us. Please give it some thought. Right now, the Confederation is not in a good spot, even normal citizen were able to see how bad the situation is. Three elites like you don't need to waste your lives away on a dying tree, why not choose a bigger stage and a better environment?"

Garen and the other two didn't reply directly. After King of Nightmares hypnotized the Queen clown, they already found out it was one of the clowns who originally disguised as the fighters from Weisman to attack them. Knowing that, their hatred for the Joker Squad deepened.

"Let's not talk about this first. Our main objective here is still sussing out the Clown King." Garen steered the conversation away from recruitment. "I don't know why the Clown King sent out so many cannon foddors to attack everyone. But since they've started the attack, they will need to face the consequences." He's extremely upset with the Clown King for the loss of his Golden Sword Throne and Golden Seal. Since that was sorted out, vanquishing him is, of course, the main focus. With a pest chasing after them constantly will definitely be a discomfort.

The Glorious Chancer looked at his watch. "It is currently 7.35 in the evening, almost night time, but this blanket of mist is everywhere so we won't notice the difference in our surrounding. If we want to exterminate the clowns, we still have 24 hours."

He looked around.

"I reckon the Clown King is among us."

"Do we need to clear the space?" Another Major General murmured. "With us and the White Peacocks, we've got the power to exterminate everyone else here."

"We're not in a hurry." The Glorious Chancer shook his head.

Garen temporarily agreed to the alliance proposal, so he approached the Major Generals with Andrela and King of Nightmares. King of Nightmares was training the Queen clown absent-mindedly.

"Repeat after me, 'I am a pig.'"

"I am a pig..." The clown was spaced out.

"I like to eat shit."

"I like to eat shit..."

"I love freshly baked ones."

"I love freshly baked ones..."

Garen and Andrela watched as King of Nightmares trained the clown and felt slightly sick. They know King of Nightmares enough to know they wouldn't say something they were not going to do. They were preparing to really let the clown do the deed.

Si Lan also shuddered, but her priorities lie in finding Dale Quicksilver.

"Mr. Kelly, if you want to look for the Clown King, there's a person who may be useful." She suppressed the urge to continue watching and managed to compose herself.

"You mean Detective Dale?" Garen had a slight frown.

"No need," King of Nightmares stood up, "I already found out the gist." They had a smirk on their face.  
"How dare he spring the bombs on us! And seeked refuge with the Immortal Palace!"

"We'll still be here for the rest of our time, it may be beneficial to find Dale Quicksilver." Andrela have heard of his fame. "Even though we're forming a temporary alliance with the Weisman's, we'll probably still need to fight them when we open the ruins' entrance. Who wouldn't want the Black Smoke Pot that can grant them breakthrough? The truce we're having right now is temporary, it would be dangerous if they've gone all out in attacking us."

Garen nodded in agreement.

"Too bad we don't know Palosa's plan. If he's here, we would have a bigger chance."

"The old guy had different persona at different time, none of us know what state he was in during this recluse. Don't get careless..." Andrela spoke hushedly. "The Black Smoke Pot can only be used by one person, if we got to the end, I wouldn't hold back even if it's you I'm facing!"

"Let's do our best." Garen smiled. A one-use item such as Black Smoke Pot that can communicate with the underworld, as well as help people ascend to higher peaks. Even if Andrela and him were best friends, it would be foolish to give up his path and dreams just because of that relationship.

They are partners, as well as rivals.

Even if he said he doesn't want the Black Smoke Pot, but given the chance, he would not let that chance go either.

The truce they were having, was in fact the calm before the storm.

Garen looked around. "Let's go look for Detective Dale." He took Si Lan in his arm, and stepped lightly on the ground, charging out without a sound.

Everyone else only saw a blur before Garen and Si Lan disappeared. Being reminded of the canyon between their abilities, more elites have almost given up.

The pillar jungle was full of thick stone pillars, each pillar was as tall as a tree with the bottom half carved straight up to the top half which was carved into statues of different poses.

Some of them sad, some happy, some in enjoyment, some in fury. All the statues were doing different actions than the others.

The stone pillars were placed far apart, about three to four meters. Between all the pillars, they formed a maze extending into every direction.

## Chapter 220: The Wait 2

With Si Lan in his arm, Garen dashed through the field with increasing speed, looking for Dale Quicksilver following anywhere that had any signs of fighting.

Four encounters, plenty of followers of the Clown King, but no sign of Dale Quicksilver and White Eagle. They ran for another few hundred meters in the fog, and finally heard some grunting coming from the front.

They approached the sound and greeted with the sight of White Eagle fighting with a clown in red.

White Eagle held a white blade that was glowing some quivering black runes. His face was tense, veins popped, he basically looked like a savage. Even with that, he was quickly losing his ground against the clown.

Dale Quicksilver aimed his gun at the ones fighting but didn't dare to shoot. They were both so quick in their movements it was impossible to aim.

White Eagle and the clown were both agility-type fighters, the light from the sword and the red clown's claw kept finding ways to attack each other, but there were only swishing sound of the wind but not from one for clashing.

Srrt! A slash wound appeared on White Eagle's right arm, but as his eyes were red with fury, he didn't care.

"Mr. Kelly!" Seeing White Eagle in danger, Si Lan looked at Garen anxiously.

Garen nodded and stepped between the two in an instant, his arms outstretched toward the both of them.

Thud! Thud!

White Eagle and the clown got pushed back simultaneously.

Seeing Garen, the clown turned and ran without a word.

Garen squinted and grabbed at the clown's head. His hand was as fast as lightning, only a white silhouette was visible.

"Stop butting in!"

A sudden killing intent came from behind Garen. White Eagle roared at him, charging.

Wielding the blade, White Eagle's eyes were filled with hatred. A slicing air burst out of the white rune blade toward Garen's back.

White Eagle didn't expect to find his parents' killer a dozen years after in the same place! The red clown was the killer who murdered his parents in cold blood! Even though he was being subdued earlier, he was planning to unleash his strongest attack the whole time until Garen interrupted the fight, forcing him to unleash the power earlier than he wanted.

The red clown also repocketed a small ball unwillingly. This ball is an item built specifically to defeat the rune blade. He was waiting for White Eagle to unleash the true power of the rune blade so he could reflect it back with the ball.

"Dammit! If he didn't cut in so early!" The clown glared at Garen for a bit. "Just a little more, I would have killed White Eagle and tie up my loose ends!"

Seeing White Eagle stabbing at Garen, he felt a rush of schadenfreude.

The white rune blade pierced Garen on his back. Black light glowed on the runes on the blade, emitting a mysterious air.

Different from Flamingo's sword, the most distinct feature of this rune blade was its sharpness. Whatever it stabbed, a pierce mark would appear, whatever it hacked at, they would be cut in half.

This is Garen's first sense of crisis since mastering the Divine Statue Technique.

"Ten Thousand Mammoth Retrograde!"

Garen rippled his arm, pushing an invisible force outward.

Boom!

A transparent ripple formed in the air from Garen's arms.

The ripple spread, hitting both White Eagle and the clown, causing them to fall backward onto the ground and slid some distance before stopping.

Garen flexed his back, the tiny pierce wound quickly closed and disappeared.

He turned back to look at White Eagle.

"What are you doing! Mr. Kelly saved you, and you want to stab him!" Si Lan ran over and propped White Eagle up. At that point the veins on White Eagle's face had subsided.

Blood rushed to his mouth, which he spat out immediately. He looked exhausted.

"You're not even a Grandmaster of Combat, and you dared to come to the Smoke Island." Garen shook his head in disbelief. "You guys are too reckless."

"I..." White Eagle didn't know what to say. He had hurt Garen in his excited state. "I'm sorry... I was influenced by the blade."

Garen shook his head, ignoring White Eagle, and turned toward the approaching Dale Quicksilver.

Dale Quicksilver recognized him and withdrew his gun, flashing him a wry smile.

"Mr. Kelly, I didn't think we would meet like this."

"Yeah, same here." Garen shrugged, "Were you here for the Black Smoke Pot?"

"Of course not, we are self-aware people." Dale Quicksilver said. "It may sound a little sudden, but I hope to get your help. To be honest, my daughter and White Eagle's son were both kidnapped onto this island, we were looking for a long time, but we haven't been able to locate them..."

"You want me to help you find the kids?"

"If there's anything I could help you with, please tell me." Dale Quicksilver added readily.

Garen hesitated. Dale Quicksilver was an old friend, it wouldn't be too hard to help him. However, with the time he had left...

Si Lan tied the unconscious clown up and came over. "The one who kidnapped the kids was Clown King. We need to find him, just like Mr. Kelly. So our goal aligns."

"So..." Dale Quicksilver looked relieved. "What do you think?"

Garen thought silently.

"We can't delay here for too long. If we can't figure this out by tomorrow, we'll need to abort."

Dale Quicksilver dropped his head in deep thought, and looked up almost immediately, "Three hours. I can find him in three hours."

"Oh?" Garen stared at him, slightly surprised. "You sure?"

"Of course!"

Garen kept his quiet and led the detective group back, dragging the unconscious clown along. White Eagle kept having the urge to finish the clown off on the way, but he persevered.

In the middle of the pillar jungle was an oval black stone tile, a massive black stone statue was erected in the center of it.

The statue is about a dozen meters in height, posed like a humanoid Lucky Cat\*. Its head was large with a kind facial features, but it wasn't clear whether it's a male or a female. White smoke continually billowed out of its nostrils, ears, and mouth. Wisps of smoke hung around the air, adding to the mysterious calmness the scene brings.

The Three Major Generals of Weisman Empire, as well as the Werewolf Bedega had already arrived and were resting against the statue, planning to wait until the next day in that position.

Andrela and King of Nightmares stood beside the three generals, and made space as soon as they saw Garen with a number of people following him.

Garen didn't speak. He led Dale Quicksilver and the others there and sat down, not caring about anything else. Dale Quicksilver and Si Lan couldn't stay still, they started wandering around.

Some of the other parties had already left, the rest were just people who were trying their luck. With Garen's fame, Dale Quicksilver had no trouble talking to people. There wasn't much info, but he finally understood Garen's influence.

Dale Quicksilver kept his eyes low to cover up his surprise.

"Southern Sky Holy Fist Gate Second Divine Warrior... White Cloud Gate Master? Mr. Kelly had us fooled for so long!"

"What is a 'Divine Warrior'? What level is he?" Si Lan wasn't too familiar with the Martial Arts community, and even Yoke and White Eagle was curiously staring at Dale. They weren't people from that circle, so they didn't know how intrepid he actually is.

"Is he as strong as the people from Golden Hoop?" White Eagle asked after having a thought.

Dale Quicksilver wasn't sure whether he should laugh or cry. "He is one of the strongest leaders of Golden Hoop. Under his management, White Cloud Gate was getting so much attention from the government, a province was basically given to him! What do you think?"

Gasp.

It was then that Si Lan and White Eagle finally understand what 'Divine Warrior' entails.

"Will he, you know..." White Eagle asked worriedly. "There were tons of people who wanted my sword..."

"If he wanted to target us, it would have been as easy as killing an ant... Your blade is powerful, but I don't think he wants it. When he saw your blade just now, he wasn't very surprised, that means he has seen similar things before." Dale Quicksilver analyzed. "Let's not talk about this. We need to focus on finding the Clown King."

"Isn't three hours a little tight?" Si Lan asked, concerned.

"It's alright, I already have some thoughts." Dale Quicksilver replied confidently.

Garen leaned against the foot of the giant statue, watching Dale Quicksilver and the others walk about the area and occasionally stop to check the marks on the ground.

"You think they really can suss out the Clown King?" King of Nightmares asked boredly. "I've already hypnotized those clowns, nothing."

"Let's give it a shot, it doesn't cost us anything, at least we got someone to help." Garen stated.

"When do you want to get the key?" King of Nightmares continued asking, "The key on the Werewolves are easier to get than the ones on those three from Weisman. If we want it, we can get it easily."

"Don't worry. Let's look for the Clown King first." Garen wasn't in a hurry, "Between the Southern and the Northern Territories, only one side could win the qualification to use the item. We'll have to fight at the end anyway. If we've got the keys but were killed by the people from the North, it'd be pointless. At the end, only one person is deserving of the Black Smoke Pot."

"To break limits... I didn't think I'd be interested at first, but now I feel like I wanna fight for it." Andrela muttered.

The three stopped chattering and sat quietly on the ground.

The fog started to become darker. Whatever they can see of the sky was turning gray, and the fog had become thicker.

Some people tried to light a torch, but torches were dampened by the fog, they just won't light up. It got colder, weaker people were starting to feel the chill.

Dale Quicksilver strutted about for a while and stopped. He walked to somewhere quiet and started thinking deeply.

Garen ignored him. He only needed an answer, how Dale Quicksilver came up with that answer wasn't important. His attention was on the white rune blade in White Eagle's hands.

The blade is impressive even though it could only break his skin, but it was much more powerful than the one Flamingo had. However it doesn't seem to have a great range, obviously the makers focused on different aspects of their blades.