

Overgeared 1101

[Chapter 1101](#)

The elves suffered from a severe gender imbalance. Despite their long lifespans, they lacked breeding power and had a very small population. They were one of the smallest populations on the planet. However...

“Black thing...?”

“Your old colleague. I need the flesh of the fallen.”

“Let’s see. I don’t know what you mean.”

Today, the elves were occupying forests across the continent despite their small numbers. Why was this possible? That was simple. It was because they were supreme predators. As it had been revealed a long time ago, the elves were an upper species beyond the vampires and evil eyes. What if they didn’t seek harmony but wielded full strength? What if they retaliated every time they were exploited and betrayed by humans?

“Human, this is the final warning. Get out of the forest right now.”

“Shut up and tell me where the black thing is.”

“I’ll kill you.”

If so, the planet would’ve been divided between humans and elves. Five elves hid in a giant tree while watching the intruder. They shot at the intruder who had repeatedly disregarded the warning. There was no hesitation. After being betrayed once again by the human Kir and after one of the 12 Te fell, the elves awakened. They concluded that it was impossible to be in harmony with humans. The elves’ new policy was that they would rather reign over humans and defend their rights and nature.

“Human beings will have to realize this. We will no longer be swayed by you,” the voices of the elves echoed through the forest. Dozens of arrows turned the man into a hedgehog. The elves’ arrows were extremely fast because they had the blessing of the wind elementals.

“Cough...”The man coughed up blood. The name ‘Agnus’ floating above his head shook as he fell down. He was hit by dozens of beasts that emerged from the bushes. They gnashed, ripped, and clawed at the man, breaking his bones and destroying his insides. Blood poured out and stained the forest red.

“Go back.”The elves killed the invaders and came down from the tree to gather the predators. They looked back as they attempted to return to their original positions.

“It hurts.”The intruder, who they thought was dead, raised himself up. His mouth twisted as he turned his neck in a bizarre direction toward the elves. “It is annoying if you hide in the trees.”

“You... aren’t a human.”

Every life had an end. The notion of creating opportunities from death was contrary to providence. The elves got a chill down their spine and started to step back. As beings beyond death, they felt a strong rejection to it. The elves’ white skin contrasted with the dark hands that emerged from the ground. The

hands grabbed all the elves and beasts in Agnus' sight and absorbed their health, swelling and becoming more powerful.

"Uh... Kuoock..."

The elves with eternal youth started to age rapidly. The beasts had all their health drained, and they died. Meanwhile, Agnus was recovering from all his wounds. This was due to the transfer of vitality from the elves and beasts to Agnus.

"You persevered for a long time because of your long life." The elves, who didn't die immediately like the beasts, delighted Agnus. He approached the elves who were now completely old and grabbed the wrinkled neck of a white-haired elf. "Looking at the color of your hair, it is the same lineage as that black thing. I truly came to the right place."

"K... Kuock..."

"Tell me the whereabouts of the black thing. Then I'll kill you painlessly."

"...Shut up. I... I don't know."

"Really? Then I'll have to set the forest on fire to find her."

There was no madness in Agnus' gold eyes as he literally strangled the elf to death. With only one step left to achieve his dream, he was cautious and calm, unlike before. This meant he was even more brutal. He slaughtered all the remaining elves and turned his attention to the center of the bizarrely tranquil forest.

"Come out, Beniyaru."

A dark elf, the first elf to accept demonic energy—her special body would be a wonderful vessel when combined with the Stone of Life...

Agnus walked into the deep forest while feeling convinced by the information he had received. His dry hands held a portrait of his former lover.

[You have been defeated in a spar.]

[You have been defeated in a spar.]

[You have been defeated...]

Thanks to Grid, Teruchan was able to improve his characteristics and obtain new weapons. Not only did his attack power, defense, and health co-efficient rise, but he also gained the skills '5 Joint Attacks', Bisect, and Crush which didn't consume mana.

"Wow, it is hard to win."

Grid had requested for a duel against Teruchan while waiting for Greed to proliferate, and he suffered a series of defeats. Did he find it unpleasant? Of course not. Grid was so happy that he wanted to cry. The

damn game formula of 'the strongest enemy will weaken the moment they become an ally' was broken. Grid was pleased and grateful for his new colleague Teruchan's outstanding performance.

'The people who can beat him can be counted on one hand, regardless of whether they are players or NPCs.'

As King Maxong had demonstrated, the 'peak of the species' was better than the usual nameless NPC. In fact, Teruchan was a huge level 500 NPC. There were few people in the world who could stand up to Teruchan wielding Failure, which weakened enemies more than 10 levels lower than the user.

'I think Piaro and Mercedes can easily beat Teruchan.'

They were immune to fear and could see through all of Teruchan's skills. The two of them also had high stats, so they wouldn't be too affected by Teruchan's stats. Of course, the racial characteristics of the 'orc' would put Teruchan ahead in strength and stamina.

"Let's stop. I'm so tired that I can't move a finger." Grid reached out in order to declare his surrender.

On the other hand, Teruchan was robust. As expected of the orc lord, he didn't seem tired. "Grid. Gruruk. I would've lost if you had fought seriously."

"Haha, you don't have to comfort me. I'm glad to have lost to you."

Teruchan was very caring despite only being 19 years old. Grid smiled and brought up the information of the God Hands.

[God Hand]

[Rating: Myth

Durability: Infinite

Dexterity: 2,583 Strength: 1,795

An artifact created out of 'Greed' by Grid, who is becoming a myth.

Since it reproduces Grid's hands, all items can be used without restrictions, and it can also act as a blacksmith.

Hexetia, the god of blacksmiths, is amazed by the phenomenal performance and covets it.

* 50% of the owner's net strength and dexterity are applied.

* Can reproduce the owner's unique skills. However, the power of the skills is limited to 30% and the owner's mana is consumed when using the skill.

On the other hand, skills belonging to equipped items can be fully displayed without consuming resources. Buff skills will affect the owner.

* Has the Advanced Blacksmith's Craftsmanship skill.

* Has Advanced Weapons Mastery and Shield Mastery.

* There is a high probability of triggering 'Crush' when attacking.

- * There is a chance to trigger 'Reconstruction' when hit.
- * Defense will increase by 10% in canyon terrains.
- * The power of wide-area skills will increase by 20% in canyon terrain.
- * Decreases the target's defense and magic resistance by 10% when encountering great demons weaker than rank 22.
- * If damage to the extent of destroying it is received, the durability is fixed for a minimum of 5 seconds. There is a 10% durability recovery after this effect is over (24 hours cooldown).
- * There is currently no magic attached to it.
- * Depending on the usage, it is easy to raise affinity.

Conditions of Use: Grid.

Weight: 21]

The new God Hands had a significantly improved performance compared to the old God Hands. Yes, it was only improved. There were no special changes. It was natural. The God Hands were items modeled after Grid's hands. The essence of the God Hands was to reproduce Grid's hands, so there was no reason for any special changes. The moment a change was made, they wouldn't be the God Hands anymore.

'Don't blur the essence.'

Grid reiterated again and again that Hexetia coveted the God Hands. He was very pleased that even a god coveted an item that reproduced his hands. Myth...

He couldn't help realizing that he was reaching the realm of the gods.

'Will I really become a god when I reach the myth rating?'

In the past, he didn't seriously consider this type of question. Now that he knew the reality of the gods, he was seriously curious. In Satisfy, the gods weren't almighty beings. That's why players could become gods as well...

Grid was troubled by the thought.

'I want to increase the quantity of the God Hands.'

There had been limits to controlling the four God Hands. However, the new God Hands were items that made judgments and moved on their own. It was helpful enough to leave them unattended without controlling them.

'I will be invincible if I make 100... Of course, that isn't possible.'

The balance...

It was clear that some penalties would occur using the excuse of the game balance. He had to check how many God Hands he could hold.

'Okay, let's make a helmet and then some God Hands for a while.'

Grid was still using the degraded item, the Cone Helmet. It was uncomfortable, and he wanted to quickly change the helmet. Of course, it was a plan that could only be implemented after Greed proliferated.

'Until then, I'll decide where to use the Water Clan King's Tear. No, it would be better to keep it for now.'

The Water Clan King's Tears...

Previously, it was used to assign Magic Missile to the God Hands, but Grid's current intelligence exceeded 3,000. Even though the second class 'Great Magician' was changed to 'Duke of Wisdom', Grid still hoped to learn Fireball.

'Once Braham wakes up, he'll see my increased power and teach me new magic. I'll keep it in preparation for then...'

The tears of the water clan's king were rare. He used to get one lot every five months, but recently, it was only once a year. It was because the number of times Maxong cried had reduced. He missed his dead daughter, but as a king, he declared that he should take care of his people.

'It is unfortunate but also a good thing. Well, I'll leave the tears for now. If I use and disassemble then, I can't overlook the possibility of them being damaged during the decomposition process.'

Learning new magic...

It was on the premise that Braham woke up, but Grid decided to feel hopeful. He believed that the more his intelligence rose, the more Braham's soul would be restored and that Braham would someday wake up.

'Okay, let's hunt during this time. I have to work hard for Braham.'

It was at this moment when the determined Grid stood up that...

"Hey."

"...?!"

A girl appeared without warning. It was a girl whose presence made even Teruchan freeze. The dragon child—it was the appearance of Nefelina, who was a hatchling.

"W-Why did you a shabby person like you come to this precious place?" Grid was so panicked that he twisted his words.

Nefelina frowned and brought up the main story. "The movements of the different species and the attitude of the great evil's agents have provoked her."

"Huh?" Grid was bewildered by Nefelina's words.

"The being who was deeply asleep."

"...?"

"The woman who can become the vampire king."

“...!!”

“It seems that she is interested in the world.”

What a bolt from the blue? Once the absolute being of a different dimension was suddenly mentioned, Grid became speechless.

Nefelina warned, “I don’t want to lose my current home. You have to soothe her well.”

This was the end. Nefelina left without any further explanation while Grid, who was left behind, became as stiff as a stone statue.

[Chapter 1102](#)

The types of people were very diverse. The more people that were gathered, the more likely it was that there would be conflicts and events. That’s why it was difficult to manage large cities.

For small cities with small populations, increasing the facilities made the people satisfied, which in turn maintained public sentiment and policies. However, large cities already had everything, often causing public sentiment and public security to worsen for odd reasons. The lords of large cities had to constantly devise policies which could satisfy more people, and the implementation of policies consumed taxes. Consequently, the expenditure of taxes caused a decline in public sentiment and security.

“This is a headache. There are a group of people who are constantly instigating trouble.”

“There is no policy that satisfies everyone. Even if the majority is satisfied, the minority will lose money. This means it is virtually impossible to maintain public sentiment and security perfectly.”

“Didn’t Chris manage it well when he was a lord?”

“Chris had many helpers. His colleagues have been with him since the days of the Giant Guild.”

“His skills must be superior to mine.”

“That...”

“Don’t worry about it. Chris—he was a real monster.”

In Reidan, the second capital of the Overgeared Kingdom...

Zednos, who became Chris’ successor, found this task very hard. He found it daunting just to maintain the current status, let alone develop the city. The city’s economy was in crisis due to falling public sentiment and the resulting process. Every time he sat down with the nobles to read and discuss documents, he wondered if he was playing a game or going to work. It was also hard to maintain his ranking as his time for hunting decreased.

He was tired. It was hard, and it wasn’t fun. These were Zednos’ honest feelings. He realized how great Chris was for having maintained his number one ranking for several years while leading Reidan’s progress.

'He is a man of great skill who is much better than me. Grid, who made such a monster look shabby, is almost like a god.'

Chris—the incredible genius Zednos admired—couldn't narrow the growing gap with Grid. At the very least, if he didn't want to just grab onto Grid's ankles, he would have to invest all of his time, leaving his work and the Overgeared Kingdom.

'I didn't know it when he was here. It is regretful.'

Zednos was greatly affected by the absence of Chris and the other members of the 10 meritorious retainers. At least dozens of people were needed to fill in the gap of the 10 meritorious retainers, making him feel there was a shortage of manpower in various fields.

The good news was that the city was peaceful. He would've felt the absence of the 10 meritorious retainers even more desperately if there was foreign aggression. Fortunately, no foreign powers threatened the Overgeared Kingdom. It was no wonder since the empire was behind them.

Didn't even the elves, who were occupying the forests all over the continent, hide in the forest of the world tree when they were suppressed by the empire? The imperial power was still absolute, and the Overgeared Kingdom was the greatest beneficiary.

"Sigh, I'm going to get some air."

Zednos left behind the nobles in the office and took to the streets. These days, his only pleasure was food. His goal was to sample all the famous dishes on the streets of Reidan, where there was a lot of delicious food.

'It is great because I don't gain weight here no matter how much I eat.'

For those who were fond of food, Satisfy's release would've been a blessing. Satisfy provided the perfect taste for players.

"Yum yum."

Zednos headed to the nearest street stall and chose Noe Bread as an appetizer. As the name suggested, it was bread made in the shape of Noe. Noe was popular as the mascot of the Overgeared Kingdom. The surface was crisp, the bread was moist, and the inside was filled with sweet and soft corn.

'In Reinhardt, I was eating Idan's food and didn't want to eat at all.'

Zednos was happy to eat delicious food. It felt like the stress of work was relieved instantly.

"...?"

Noe's front paw... No, Zednos—who had been eating the front paws of the Noe Bread—suddenly became as stiff as a statue. It was because a woman was approaching him. The funny thing was that the woman had a turban wrapped around her face, covering it.

That's right. The only part of the woman that was exposed were her eyes and part of her nose. Nevertheless, Zednos felt she was more beautiful than anyone he had ever seen. This was despite the fact that he saw world-class beauties like Yura, Jishuka, Irene, Sua, and Mercedes every day.

The woman said to him, "You are the strongest human in this city."

"Ah..." Zednos' face reddened. His heart thumped like he had sprinted hundreds of meters. He was fascinated by the woman's glamorous voice. It was the first time in Zednos' life that he had heard such a voice. Zednos' dazed face was projected on the woman's large red eyes, which seemed to contain the sun-filled universe.

"Are you in charge of this city due to your strength?" The unidentified woman—she was having a lot of fun. "Use your authority to give me a carriage. It is good to have a carriage with curtains that block out the sun. Then lead me to the nearest forest."

"...Ah." Zednos was unaware that he was in a 'bewitched' state. He didn't realize that it was dangerous. The bewitchment was a powerful condition that clouded the spirit of the target and caused them to lose their sense of reason. Once bewitched, it was impossible to become sober.

Zednos nodded. "I understand."

Zednos was eager...

He wanted to know the name of the woman. He wanted to see her face. He wanted to serve her. Had he not been born into this world just to meet her at this moment? Zednos earnestly returned to the castle with the woman and instructed the soldiers to prepare a carriage.

Then he woke up after hearing a cry.

"Virtuous Light!"

It was a recovery skill that could only be used by the senior priests of the Rebecca Church. This was what surrounded Zednos' body.

"Zednos, wake up!"

A while ago, the Overgeared members of Reidan's security unit obtained a sudden quest.

[An unidentified woman has appeared and deceived the people. Work with the priests of the Rebecca Church to calm the confusion.]

Had Zednos stumbled onto the quest and ended up accompanying the main culprit of the turmoil?

"Hey! Steady your mind!" The Overgeared members once again shouted at Zednos, who was dazed for a while after being surrounded by a clean light.

"Fly!" Zednos rose into the sky first, deciding that he should distance himself from the unidentified woman. He was confused.

'What is this woman's identity?'

Creating an abnormal state without giving a person time to be aware of it...? He hadn't heard of such a thing before. She could not be an ordinary woman. The actions of Zednos and the Overgeared members were swift. He urgently called out to the soldiers, who surrounded the woman along with the priests.

At this moment, a bombardment came from high above. The entire Reidan Castle shook like it had been hit by a meteorite, and Zednos' and the Overgeared members' vision became dizzy.

"What..."

Everyone turned their attention to the site of the bombardment that caused a cloud of dust to rise. There was a man standing there, not a meteorite. The name above his head was Fenrir. It was a name that the Overgeared members were familiar with.

"A direct descendant...?"

Among the children of Shizo Beriache, Fenrir was a marquis and second in the vampire ranks. Unlike the other family members who inherited only one power from Beriache, he was said to have inherited three.

"You were here," Fenrir said to the beauty, showing no interest in the Overgeared members. His blond hair fell to his shoulders as he gazed at the unidentified woman in a turban. "I was waiting for you to wake up. Now, let's go to my city. There is a lot of work to discuss."

"....?"

The eyes of the Overgeared members were also focused on the woman. They could infer the woman's identity through Fenrir's attitude. They couldn't believe it but her identity was...

"...Marie Rose?"

According to Braham, Shizo Beriache was originally a great demon. She was even one of the highest ranking demons in the 'single-digit' sequence. The last person she gave birth to was Marie Rose, the vampire duke.

"Fenrir, you're still not afraid of the sun."

"Only weak vampires are afraid of the sun. It just stings a bit. Marie Rose, you should be fine."

"I also experience stinging. I hate this feeling."

The red-painted nails at the ends of her white and delicate hands were impressive. The woman took off her turban in one motion, revealing her perfect face and her name. At the same time...

[You have encountered Vampire Duke Marie Rose.]

[Marie Rose's evil influence makes your magic power turbid. All types of spells and skills aren't available.]

[A vampire's gaze will subdue lower species. You will lose your willpower and control over your body.]

[Marie Rose's attraction is absolute. Her charm is so high that there are even high odds of both genders being attracted.]

The priests of the Rebecca Church who were strong against evil beings, as well as Zednos and the Overgeared members, all stiffened in place like statues.

Black hair that waved like silk... Marie Rose swept back her hair that fell to her buttocks and stared at Zednos. It was a coexistence of purity and decadence. Marie Rose's face that had a variety of charms arrowed straight at Zednos' heart.

"You, the strongest human in this city."

"...?"

"I had a separate reason for speaking to you. I smelled something nostalgic from you."

"...?"

Smelled? Zednos sniffed his body. It was covered with the smell of the sweet Noe Bread.

Marie Rose ordered Fenrir, "As I said, I hate the sun. Drive the carriage. First, let's go to the nearest forest. I've always wanted to see the elves."

"Bah." Fenrir grabbed the neck of a terrified priest and placed him in the driver's seat of the carriage. He said he would leave it to a human because he couldn't drive a wagon. Fenrir had an angry attitude.

"...?!"

Suddenly, Blood Thorn—the special move shown by Vampire Earl Elfin Stone in the past—was used. Blood thorns of an overwhelming size were created in the air like spider webs, turning Fenrir into a hedgehog. Fenrir coughed up blood with swollen eyes while Marie Rose warned him with a casual expression, "Don't disobey me."

"..." Fenrir nodded, not daring to do so. He suddenly remembered that Marie Rose's power transcended their mother's. Marie Rose could also give birth to a new direct line. She could always create someone who could replace him. Unlike her mother who was a great demon, it wouldn't be hard for Marie Rose on her own since she had been given a 'gender.'

"Let's depart."

"..."

Marie Rose climbed onto the carriage, and Fenrir—who recovered from his wounds in an instant—sat in the driver's seat. The priest, already in the driver's seat, trembled without knowing what to do. However, Fenrir didn't care about him and hit the horse's butt with a whip. It was at this moment that...

"Stop!" A group of people appeared and blocked the way of the carriage.

"Marie Rose! I rushed over as soon as I received the divine message that you woke up!" A man shouted from the front of the group. He was dressed in the greatest symbol of the continent—a white garment with a sacred pattern in gold thread. It was the pope's outfit.

Three women appeared beside Pope Damian and shouted, "We can't allow you to make your appearance!"

Lifael's Spear, Michael's Sword, and Everiel's Shield—the women were armed with the three divine artifacts that helped seal Marie Rose a long time ago. The ultimate divine power that shone more

brilliantly than the sun dominated the area, healing the status of the Overgeared members and causing Fenrir to frown. Damian was already in full-buff state.

“Go back to your coffin for the peace of humanity!” He shouted again.

Having received the hidden quest ‘Seal Marie Rose’ from the divine message, Damian thought this quest had a high success rate. The divine artifacts of the church had been given to the church directly by Goddess Rebecca and had a history of sealing Marie Rose once before. Marie Rose might be the strongest vampire, but he believed she had no chance against them.

“Keok!” However, Damian stood on the threshold of death before even confronting Marie Rose. Fenrir alone overpowered the Rebecca’s Daughters and threw a blood spear, critically damaging Damian.

“Pope, you are crazy. Don’t you know that Chreshler was exceptionally special?” Fenrir said this, but he was wary of the Rebecca Church’s power which had sealed Marie Rose previously. That’s why he wasn’t careless and targeted the pope, the head of the Rebecca Church.

After several blows, he smashed through Isabel, blocked Rin’s sword, and broke through Luna’s shield to grab Damian by the neck.

“Don’t kill him,” Marie Rose’s voice could be heard from the carriage. It had a rather amused tone. “A nostalgic smell is coming from him. Huhut, I don’t want to be hated, so keep him alive.”

“...?”

Not a single person could interpret Marie Rose’s words. Even Fenrir found it hard to understand. Still, he didn’t ask any questions and left Damian alone. The Rebecca’s Daughters couldn’t restrain Fenrir as he returned to the driver’s seat. It was because of the horror created by the terribly beautiful Marie Rose’s voice. Her strength exceeded the predictions of Rebecca’s Daughters.

Clatter. Clatter.

The carriage carrying Marie Rose passed by. Damian, Rebecca’s Daughters, Zednos, and the Overgeared members—all of them simply watched the carriage leave.

[(Breaking News) Vampire Duke’s appearance!]

[The pope and Rebecca’s Daughters were overwhelmed...]

There were witnesses of the incident. Footage of Fenrir and Damian’s battle at Reidan Castle quickly spread on the Internet. The strong power of Vampire Marquis Fenrir alarmed people. However, unlike with the appearance of the great demon or the orc lord, people didn’t express much anxiety.

Since it was an event in the Overgeared Kingdom, they thought that Grid would resolve the problem again. Rather, they had a good feeling from Fenrir’s appearance and Marie Rose’s tone. Marie Rose’s and Fenrir’s fan cafes were already booming. As a society that was biased toward appearance, people argued that unity should be achieved between vampires and humans.

Additionally, all two billion players wondered what Marie Rose meant by the ‘nostalgic smell.’

“Sniff sniff.” Grid developed the habit of smelling his armpits.

[Chapter 1103](#)

Shay, Sniffer, and Kerb—the notorious group of three PKers—had attempted to hurt Grid several times. Interestingly enough, Grid had a subtle liking toward them. Thanks to them, he managed to seize items that were helping in the fight against Pope Drevigo, gain the ultimate assassin Kasim, and receive direct help from them in the war against the empire.

They were like bluebirds bringing good luck. It was a story of extreme consequences, but the actions of Shay’s party always benefited Grid. There was only one exception. It was the meeting with Marie Rose. Grid, who had fallen into the trap of Shay’s group and entered Marie Rose’s seal, inadvertently unsealed Marie Rose and formed a connection with Marie Rose. Moreover, Grid considered it a ‘bad connection.’

A demonkin with absolute power... How much of a villain must she have been for the members of the Rebecca Church to have risked their lives to seal her? The encounter with her would surely be harmful someday...

Grid believed so. Now that idea had changed. Not all demonkin were evil. He could be friends with vampires. Not to mention, the Rebecca Church wasn’t unconditionally just and divine, let alone Goddess Rebecca. Grid had learned this through various relationships and events.

“Sniff sniff.Sniff sniff sniff.”

The nostalgic smell that Marie Rose mentioned was his body odor. Grid was unaware of it as he smelled his armpits.

‘Marie Rose favors me. Does she want to repay my grace for releasing her from the seal?’

He had met with several of her immediate relatives, including Braham and Noll, and found they were surprisingly pure. They had a cruel aspect since they treated the blood of humans as a staple food, but this was a physiological aspect. It was hard to see their nature itself as evil.

Additionally, they hated Evil God Yatan and the great demons. Their founder—Shizo Beriache—had been expelled due to them, and all vampires received the Curse of Idleness.

Grid was convinced. ‘Contrary to Nefelina’s concerns, there won’t be a situation where I will be hostile to Marie Rose. Rather, it is more likely for her to have a sense of goodwill toward me.’

This fitted with the probability. The moment the Overgeared Kingdom became hostile to Marie Rose, they would be destroyed within a few days. Marie Rose’s strength was comparable to that of an upper great demon. Undoubtedly, he would rather be her friend.

Grid returned to the office after a day of blacksmithing.

“The smell of sweat is too bad. Haven’t you washed?”

He was sniffing his armpits when a voice woke him up from his thoughts. Lael was blocking his nose.

Grid shrugged. “I’m afraid that Marie Rose won’t recognize me if I wash off the smell.”

“Hrmm... Does Marie Rose really like Your Majesty’s smell?”

“...?”

“Weren’t you wearing Malacus’ Cloak when you met Marie Rose? The reason she woke up was the bloody smell coming from the cloak.”

“...”

“It is far-fetched to think she would miss Your Majesty’s smell that was obscured by the heavy smell of blood. The smell that she misses isn’t Your Majesty’s body odor but the blood that is ingrained in Malacus’ Cloak.”

It made sense. Then Marie Rose liked Malacus’ Cloak, not him? Grid was panicking when Lauel laughed. “It’s a joke. Don’t you only wear Malacus’ Cloak when you want to gather mobs at the hunting grounds? The nostalgic smell coming from Damian and Zednos is naturally Your Majesty’s body odor.”

“Shit. You scared me. Why did you make such a joke?”

“It was to raise your awareness. Don’t think too positively about Marie Rose.”

“...?”

“Her presence is too big. You can’t afford it. Your Majesty shouldn’t be involved with her.”

It was surprising. Grid thought Lauel would be more excited about Marie Rose’s appearance than anyone else.

“Why are you thinking so negatively? Even Braham and Noll, who were our enemies at first, are now our colleagues. Meanwhile, Marie Rose has had a fondness for me since the beginning. I think it will be easy to get her as a colleague.”

“Braham and Noll were lacking.”

“...?”

“They were strong but emotionally anxious. Therefore, they unconsciously looked for someone to rely on. They were affected by Your Majesty’s care and affection. Then what about Marie Rose? Braham’s testimony states that she is perfect.”

Being perfect meant there was nothing to regret. It meant she didn’t have to seek someone’s help or affection.

“My guess is that what she feels toward Your Majesty is more of a curiosity than affection. Not only did you unseal her but you weren’t fascinated by her. She must be aware of Your Majesty because she considers you a strange human.”

“...”

“The moment she encounters Your Majesty and resolves her curiosity, her goodwill might disappear. Then she will change straight away. She could eat Your Majesty.”

“No, that’s too extreme...”

“It is based on Zednos’ testimony about the violence she committed against Fenrir. She doesn’t care or respect others. She is a cruel and violent woman.”

“...”

“Don’t be obsessed with her beauty. Think objectively. She is different from the other descendants you have met. She isn’t someone you should hope for luck against.”

Luck...

Grid was very aware of it. He couldn’t deny that he had been able to make friends with Braham and his colleagues due to luck.

“I know it very well.” Grid nodded, rose from his seat, and headed to the bathroom. Then he rubbed his entire body with soap and rinsed it several times until the smell of sweat on his body disappeared. It was an effort to clear up his body odor.

Laue’s expression was still dark. ‘Marie Rose’s intention behind going to the forest must be to meet the elves.’

He didn’t think she would be meeting the elves just to play house. Originally, the demonkin’s and elves’ aversion to each other was great, so Marie Rose was likely to clash with the elves.

‘It is frustrating.’

Laue recognized the elves as a useful political tool. He wanted to support the elves’ activities since their movements were causing losses to all nations apart from the Overgeared Kingdom and the empire. However, Marie Rose would strike at the elves’ movements.

Laue earnestly prayed, ‘Let a great demon fall from the sky. Please let there be a big event that attracts Marie Rose’s attention.’

[You have suffered catastrophic damage!]

[You have died.]

[You are qualified to be a ruler of hell, and you transcend the concept of death.]

[Your health is fixed at a minimum, and you won’t die. Your race has changed into an undead.]

[You have suffered catastrophic damage!]

[Your right arm has been broken!]

“Damn...!”

[You have suffered catastrophic damage!]

[Your left ankle is broken!]

“Dammit!!”

[You have suffered catastrophic damage!]

[Your neck is broken!]

“Dammit...!”

[You have suffered catastrophic damage!]

[Your skull is shattered!]

The undead was a race that transcended death and suffering, but it had a deadly weakness. It was the lack of durability of the body itself. The immunity to breakage was very poor.

[Your body is completely damaged and has stopped functioning.]

[Your soul has been sent to a new body in Baal’s sanctuary.]

[Your soul has suffered a devastating blow during the transfer.]

[You have lost 38.1% experience.]

[The item ‘Soul Absorption Cloak’ has been dropped.]

“Dammit!!”

It was the fourth day already, and he had died every day. He even died twice yesterday and received the penalty of having his game access limited. It would be the same today. Agnus knew this, but he didn’t give up. He resurrected in a new body and ran out of the incubator, heading toward the portal again.

“Pathetic. You can’t handle an elf despite gaining so much strength from the great Baal. A human’s weak nature doesn’t go anywhere,” someone’s mocking voice rang out.

Agnus turned his head and saw a big frog with a crown on his head. It was a comical appearance. However, the name ‘Cepardea’ above his head was dyed in black.

“I was given a lot of strength? He only gave me necromancy and commands.”

Cepardea was one of Baal’s Four Heavenly Kings. He was one of the strongest existences in hell who could kill Agnus with a single swipe of his tongue. However, Agnus feared nothing in the world and growled at Cepardea.

Cepardea, who threw up in an exaggerated manner like in a hilarious skit, inflated his chin. “You are incompetent. Originally, those who contracted with Baal gained absolute swordsmanship, magic and wisdom to see through all things. You aren’t able to fully receive them because you aren’t competent enough.”

“Shut your stinky mouth.”

Agnus didn’t have time to waste dealing with the frog. He had to go back and challenge the dark elf again. It would be hard to find her if she hid her tracks. Agnus ignored Cepardea and reached for the portal. Cepardea’s long tongue flew and stopped in front of Agnus. The end of his rolled tongue contained an old book.

“Stand in idleness.”

“...?”

“The descendants of the exile will come close to you. Once you open the book, they will be forced to go back to their coffins.”

“Descendant of the exile?”

“The vampires. It doesn’t matter if you are trampled on by the elves, but you can’t disgrace Baal and show any gaps in front of the vampires. Do you understand?”

“Bah,” Agnus snorted and took the Book of Idleness. He hated the frog, but he had no reason to refuse.

A new quest was created for all players part of the Yatan Church. This was a quest to reseal the vampire duke Marie Rose, who had just woken up. It was an absurd quest with a rating of SSS+, but there was a huge number of five million players who had joined the Yatan Church. There were no shadows on the faces of the Yatan members who were on the way to the quest destination. No matter how high the difficulty of the quest was, they were convinced they wouldn’t fail as long as they had a large group of this magnitude.

“Aren’t vampires demonkin? In fact, they are hostile to Rebecca. Then aren’t we on the same side? Why should we seal her?” Rose, the 1st ranked black magician and Yatan’s Eighth Servant, remarked.

Having participated every time a great demon was summoned and then made a big profit from it, Rose was now one of the strongest players in the world. She was confident that she wouldn’t lose to anyone apart from the five best players, including Overgeared King Grid.

The person who asked Rose’s question was Yatan’s Fourth Servant Frodo, who was walking beside her. He was the successor of Silvenas, who died during the Vatican raid, and was much stronger than Silvenas who had been beaten by Agnus. “Vampires are descendants of the exiled Beriache. They are a clan that harbors hostility toward the Evil God Yatan. It is absolutely right to punish their leader.”

“However, won’t the Rebecca Church act even if we don’t? Isn’t it better to encourage the Rebecca Church to seal her?”

“The current pope isn’t worth a penny despite receiving the support of the templars. He doesn’t have the power to seal Marie Rose.”

“...?”

Weren’t they beaten by the pope? Then perhaps this was a quest that couldn’t be cleared? Rose noticed it and questioned inwardly, ‘Does the great change in the world include the destruction of the Yatan Church?’

She decided that she should break away from the front lines, but unfortunately, it was too late. By then, she was already in front of a large forest.

“Let’s go,” Frodo urged Rose and the Yatan Church players. Then...

“It is up to here.”

Knights armed with red armor appeared and blocked the path of the Yatan followers. There wasn't a single person who didn't know their identity.

“The Red Knights?”

Why were the knights of the empire here in the Gauss Kingdom? The Yatan followers were baffled by the sight.

“You will be considered an enemy as soon as you step into the forest, and you will be executed.”

A completely unexpected figure emerged. The man at the center of the Red Knights was a player, and his ID was 'Zibal.' He was one of the top five players Rose considered to be above her. This was the majesty of the magic machines.

“Why are you...?”

“My new master is welcoming a precious guest.”

He didn't mention that his new master was the grandmaster. From the Rebecca Church to the Yatan Church, the Four Heavenly Kings of Baal, and the grandmaster, the emergence of Marie Rose had a profound effect on the world.

Of course, to Grid...

“Husband, didn't you spray too much perfume today? It is like you are trying to erase the smell of another woman.”

“Irene, don't misunderstand. There is a reason for this.”

“Don't get me wrong. I will respect and support you even if you have thousands of concubines.”

“No, I can only do it once a month anyway. What are thousands... Huh? Irene? Where are you going? Irene!!”

[Chapter 1104](#)

Zibal had served Prince Edan—the traitor who killed former Emperor Juander and then got killed. People naturally thought that Zibal had been driven out of the empire. Yet he was working with the Red Knights...? It was surprising that a traitor was still present in the empire.

“Weren't you in a position where you would be executed for guilt by association...? It seems that even the great empire appreciates your ability.”

The imperial family hadn't told the world about the grandmaster. The people only knew that Imperial Prince Edan had rebelled, and the emperor had been replaced in the process. It was the same for the Yatan Church. The damn Edan stopped their deal in the middle, so the Yatan Church couldn't figure out the details. Consequently, the Yatan followers naturally thought the Red Knights in front of them were part of the empire.

“Didn’t the new empress declare that she would aim for world unity? I know there was a proclamation of no more one-sided military intervention. Yet it seems the empire hasn’t changed since the days when it occupied other countries’ territory with force. Rather, it just became more insidious. Is it different for our church? How about using this chance to establish a relationship with our church?”

Rose still had room to act. Yatan’s followers were gathering here from all over the continent. It was Rose’s judgment that with the ever-increasing troops, she could easily break through the Red Knights and complete her mission.

“I don’t care if you curse the emperor or the empire. You have to step back here.” A knight pointed her sword at Rose. Her name was Susan. She was a great beauty, but unfortunately, there was a terrible wound on her forehead.

“Oh...? Isn’t this reaction strange? Is the rumor false that the loyalty of the Red Knights to the emperor and the empire is as deep as the sea?”

“Filthy Yatan’s Servant, do you intend to mix my words forever? Turn away or die.”

“Your tone is as ugly as the scar on your forehead. It is clear you haven’t learned anything.”

“Did you choose death?” Susan’s sword stretched out in a straight line.

Other rankers couldn’t respond to the sword that was as fast as light, but Rose responded fully by opening the Diamond Shield. Rose was a top-rated ranker and had been thoroughly prepared from the moment she saw that Susan’s name was gold. However, Susan’s skills were better than Rose expected.

‘Destroying the Diamond Shield in one strike?’

Susan’s sword shattered the shield. Rose recovered it and fired it up again at a much faster speed than before. This time, Rose determined it would be hard to block and gritted her teeth in preparation for the pain. Frodo, who was standing by Rose’s side, swung a spear and blocked Susan’s sword.

“She is a bad opponent for you. Step back and provide cover.”

“I understand.”

“This filth can’t stop me!” Susan swung her sword more vigorously. Her plan was to wipe out the Yatan followers in front of her, but it was surprisingly difficult. Frodo had a very high level of creativity. “A Servant?”

“That’s right. You are a single-digit knight.”

The battle started to expand to the scale of a war. Thousands of Yatan followers, including Rose, cast black magic to cover Frodo while the Red Knights rushed into the Yatan followers and started wiping them out. There were only 20 against thousands, but the knights were worthy of their high reputation.

‘No, isn’t this more than what I’ve heard?’ Rose’s expression darkened. It was because the Red Knights weren’t only masters of swordsmanship but also magic. They easily blocked the black magic because they were casting protective magic and buff magic extremely quickly.

‘Why do the Red Knights know magic? Furthermore, it is the first time I’ve seen these spells.’

Rose stepped back a bit further. Her judgment was excellent for someone who reached this position.

'The average skill difference is too big. I will lose half my troops before reinforcements even arrive.'

She didn't know the identity of the 'master' of Zibal and the Red Knights. If their master was above the level of the empire's dukes, then the odds of success were low for the Yatan followers even if the reinforcements arrived. There was also something she couldn't overlook.

'What if their master is Marie Rose?'

What if they had a cooperative relationship? The Yatan Church would be destroyed by the Red Knights and Marie Rose. Rose thought up to here and used Fly magic. She was going to flee. The quest? She would give it up for now. Since she was armed with items obtained in exchange for summoning the great demon, death was the worst variable that must be avoided.

'I don't feel good. Tsk, I just lost time.'

Rose's body rose in the air. She was confident that she could retreat while Frodo and the other followers were focused on the enemies. It was a misjudgment.

"Keok...!"

What was this? Had a meteorite fallen from the sky? Rose, trapped on the ground, was thrown into confusion by the shock that she couldn't handle. Her vision flashed red as her face was buried deep in the ground.

'This... What is it?'

A huge shadow covered her. It was like a mountain.

"...What..."

She didn't know what happened to her. Rose was unable to control her chaotic spirit and barely turned her head. Then she saw it. A giant pillar had penetrated her body and the ground at the same time, and a white giant was now pulling it out very slowly.

"Do you know who I hate the most?" Zibal's voice rang out from behind her. He leaned on the shoulder of the magic machine retrieving the spear and pointed a finger at Rose. "People as selfish as you."

"Kkuk... Cough..."

"Do you know how many people suffered every time you helped Benoit summon a great demon?"

"It... is sophistry. I'm just doing a quest... Cough, cough. I just did it. The emergence of the great demons are an inevitable story. Cough. If it wasn't me, then someone else... Cough, cough. You would've done the same thing."

"Right. I would've done so. Even so, would someone else be as shameless as you?"

"...?"

"The time when the Overgeared Kingdom declared they would kill you... I got goosebumps when I saw you appear on TV while crying."

“What...”

“A rat should die. You shouldn’t have complained about your pain if you harbored the slightest bit of guilt for the millions of people who died because of you.”

“Are you crazy? I was just doing a quest. Why should I feel guilty? Moreover, I’m a person. I have the right to complain if I’m offended.”

Rose secretly took a potion and started casting magic. She was counting the time in her heart, waiting for the moment when Zibal’s magic machine stopped working. Zibal shook his head. “Your quest caused people to die. Did you take their position into account at all?”

“Ah... I see. This is really heartbreaking. What’s up with you? The pain of the dead? I have goosebumps. Aren’t you overly immersed in the game? Are you an otaku?”

Rose, who had been making an unfair expression, suddenly smiled. She appreciated Zibal due to the magic machine. Without it, she wasn’t afraid of Zibal. Furthermore, the operating time of Zibal’s magic machine had now been reached.

“Black Hole!”

This was Rose’s ultimate magic. It was the ultimate black magic that dealt powerful damage to all targets in range and also dealt five or more debuffs. The entire space designated by Rose started to distort. At the heart of it was Zibal. Rose imagined Zibal screaming in pain...

“...?!”

The white giant—the magic machine—swung its spear and knocked the black hole back. Zibal laughed at the shocked Rose. “Isn’t your thinking still premature?”

The day that Edan died, Zibal escaped from the imperial palace with the grandmaster and accepted the grandmaster’s offer of cooperation. Zibal couldn’t miss out on the biggest performance in this changing world. This was the result. He had developed further with the help of the grandmaster.

“W-Wait a minute. I’m actually sad. I always feel sorry toward those who have been harmed by me. I just couldn’t speak honestly because I was ashamed!” Rose yelled, looking really sad as she wept like a chicken pooping. She seemed to be speaking the truth.

Nevertheless, it was useless. Raider’s spear pierced Rose’s body once again, and she turned to gray ash. It was the end. Suddenly, a huge explosion occurred in the direction of the forest. The explosion was a mixture of fire and demonic energy, and it blew away more than half of the forest.

Zibal’s expression stiffened. ‘The conversation didn’t go well?’

Grandmaster Zikrefector, who identified himself as an incarnation of the seven malignant saints, told Zibal many truths. He said his purpose was to meet the ‘expelled gods’ and deprive the ‘fallen gods’ of their authority. This meant he was disliked by both the fallen gods and the great demons. He insisted that he should gather strength to fight against them.

Then Marie Rose, the vampire duke, woke up. Zikrefector had high hopes for Marie Rose. Since she hated the great demons, if she lent him her strength, it was likely he would achieve his goals. That’s why he

followed her whereabouts. However, would Marie Rose, who was fundamentally a demonkin, work with Zikfrector? Zibal had doubts about it, but he still came here.

Then Susan cried out behind him, "Zibal! Leave this place to us and go help Master!"

"Son of a bitch."

Why was she sending the weakest one? Zibal clicked his tongue and rushed into the forest as a high difficulty quest emerged.

Roaring flames destroyed the forest. There were three people at the center of the shockwave. They were Vampire Duke Marie Rose, Vampire Marquis Fenrir, and Grandmaster Zikfrector. Marie Rose's red eyes stared at Zikfrector. "You're very strong. I'm reminded of Chreshler when I look at you."

"I'm a bit different from him. My body might be human, but my soul isn't human."

"You talk in a roundabout manner. It is a nasty habit."

"I am the incarnation of the seven malignant saints."

"...?"

"I am the soul of the sixth evil Zik, who was filled with the sin of sloth and reached the end of his reincarnation cycle."

"..."

"I dream of revenge against not only the fallen gods but the great demons who joined them. My long-cherished wish is to pull down the gods who sinned against the seven of us and to tell the truth to the world."

"Hey, don't talk nonsense," Fenrir interrupted. He thought Zikfrector's words were so ridiculous they were a lie. It was a very normal reaction.

Zikfrector ignored him and stared only at Marie Rose. "In order to achieve my cherished dream, I must find the whereabouts of the expelled gods. Finally, I found a place that is closely related to their whereabouts."

"Then investigate that place."

"That's right. Still, it isn't easy on my own. I need a man who could win the favor of the gods and avoid their doubts. Or the cooperation of people with overwhelming power against a great demon."

"So, the latter is me," Marie Rose said, feeling intrigued. She spoke on the assumption that Zikfrector was telling the truth, "Then does a person who belongs to the former category exist?"

"Yes."

"Who is it?"

“That...” Zikfrector shut his mouth as he was about to answer. Marie Rose’s and Fenrir’s gazes were already headed toward a different place.

A black portal was opening in the sky. This was a portal with the smell of hell. It was the appearance of a hell gate connecting hell and this world.

Fenrir reacted furiously. Those who could freely open a hell gate were uncommon even in hell. Who would be able to do something that a single-digit great demon couldn’t do easily? Only one person came to mind.

“Baal...!!”

The absolute monarch of hell...

Both Marie Rose and Zikfrector had hard expressions while Fenrir expressed the name with extreme hatred. They started gathering magic power as they focused their gazes on the hell gate.

“Who are you?”

A man with green hair emerged from the gate of hell. It was Agnus. He growled out when he saw Marie Rose, Fenrir, and Zikfrector, “Where did the black thing go? Tell me before I tear off your limbs and kill you.”

“...Baal’s Contractor?” Marie Rose’s eyes sparkled. One of the biggest reasons why she woke up was her annoyance at Baal’s Contractor. “Fenrir, remove that bastard’s heart and erase Baal’s imprint.”

At the same time, in the capital of the Overgeared Kingdom, Reinhardt...

Great Sage Sticks came to Grid and declared, “Mother is looking for you.”

Grid knew Sticks’ age and was surprised. “Your mother is still alive?”

“...”

“The world tree. He is talking about the world tree,” Lael explained on behalf of the speechless Sticks.

[Chapter 1105](#)

“...!?” Agnus was startled as he faced Fenrir. He sensed Fenrir’s strength and thought it would be dangerous if even a bit of Fenrir’s blood and vital breath wrapped around his body.

‘Vampire?’

A death knight appeared and confronted Fenrir. Agnus’ death knights were those who dominated their respective eras. They suppressed the high-ranked players and played a sufficient role against a number of boss monsters. Yet this death knight was helpless in front of Fenrir.

Fenrir caught the death knight’s skull and cracked it with just his grip. The sword wielded by the death knight slashed at Fenrir’s chest, but Fenrir’s attack pierced the death knight’s ribs one step ahead. The death knight lost its power and did little harm to Fenrir.

A pillar of blood surged and completely destroyed the death knight’s skull. The death knight resisted Fenrir despite losing its head, but Fenrir wasn’t someone who could be hit by a blindly wielded sword.

Fenrir destroyed the death knight easily and leaped at Agnus once again. Then a new death knight appeared and blocked Fenrir's path.

"Resistance is meaningless so don't bother," Fenrir stated.

Agnus ignored him and looked at the notification window.

[You have encountered Vampire Duke Marie Rose.]

[You have encountered Vampire Marquis Fenrir.]

....

...

"..."

Agnus now realized the frog's foresight. He never dreamed that he would meet the descendants of the exile so soon.

'Damn, why now...'

Agnus glared at Marie Rose like he was going to kill her. "Has the black thing already been hunted by you?"

The black thing—the dark elf Beniyaru—was very strong. She was close to level 500 and had mastered all types of archery, elementalism, and black magic. In particular, she showed a much greater attack power than a typical elf. There was a reason why Agnus had lost to her seven times. Yet even she couldn't handle these people.

Fenrir alone felt similar to her, and Marie Rose was several times stronger than Fenrir. Additionally, the person called 'Zikfrector' seemed unusual.

"Answer me. I asked if you have killed the black thing." Agnus' eyes were filled with confusion and anger. This was the final piece of the puzzle to revive his lover. He struggled to maintain his sense of reason when he thought it might be gone. His eyes filled with tears. He wanted to smash the entire world to pieces and scream until his throat was torn apart.

"Why...! Why...! Kuaaaaah!!!" Agnus lost his temper and summoned all his death knights before rushing at Marie Rose. He wasn't afraid despite knowing there was no chance of success at all. He wasn't brave. He just had nothing to lose.

"Die! Die! Die!!"

He didn't arrange his power. Agnus used all his skills to launch a barrage of attacks at Marie Rose. However, his body didn't listen to him.

"...?" Agnus suddenly realized that his limbs were bound. Thorns spread through Agnus' blood like a spiderweb and also bound his death knights.

"This is the full extent of Baal's Contractor...? By the way, the current pope is also at this low level."

Marie Rose, the one who caused the bloody thorns, stared at Agnus with an expressionless face. Would she get revenge on Baal if she tried to hurt such a trivial guy? It felt like Baal wouldn't blink at all. The question arose, but Marie Rose still glanced at Fenrir. "Finish it. This will be a slight blow to Baal."

She didn't have a tremendously big desire to destroy the Yatan Church and the great demons, but by doing so, she would at least be loyal to her mother. Marie Rose had no intention of seeking revenge by searching for those who expelled her mother from hell, but she had no reason to resist the opportunity for revenge.

At Marie Rose's command, Fenrir shoved his hand into Agnus' chest.

"Cough!" Agnus bent over as he coughed up black-red blood. As he felt the pain of his flesh being dug into and his intestines and bones being pulled out, he looked back on himself.

In the past, he had just cried while being unable to help his lover who was being abused by the powerful. He was now unable to resist the violence that was being ruthlessly wielded by the powerful. It was the same. Agnus was terribly helpless. He had vowed to change, but he hadn't changed.

"K... Kukuk! Kik! Kikikik!" He learned how to resurrect his lover. Now, he only needed to hunt one elf. Agnus regained the madness that he had recently lost. "Kahahat! Kek!"

"...!?" Fenrir flinched with surprise while pulling out Agnus' heart. It was because Agnus seemed like he was going crazy as he bit his tongue, seemingly to commit suicide. Simultaneously, Agnus' body quickly weathered. His blood evaporated, and his skin and flesh rotted and disappeared into dust. It was the same for his heart. Only a bit of flesh and bones remained as his body rattled due to the thorns in his bloodstream.

"A foolish move!"

Agnus was so determined to protect his heart that he became an undead...? It was amazing that he could make such a judgment in the midst of the pain and fear of his heart being torn out when he was alive. Fenrir couldn't handle the soaring anger, and his elbow knocked against Agnus' skull, which only had half its skin remaining.

"...Kikik." Agnus laughed. Lich Mumud floated above his head.

"Buy me some time," Agnus commanded, and Mumud cast a spell again. What was the use of this lich? Fenrir ignored Mumud, but Marie Rose's expression was firm.

The light of Mumud's magic power exploded. For the first time, Fenrir was significantly wounded and coughed up blood, scattering the thorns in the bloodstream that bound Agnus and the death knights.

"Amazing magic power." Grandmaster Zikrefector's admiration permeated the chaos of the forest.

As Fenrir's screams echoed, Marie Rose's gaze was fixed on Mumud.

"What did you do in your lifetime?" Even Marie Rose was amazed by Mumud's magic power.

It was said that he was the genius magician who transcended Braham in his life. The one who was already dead—he was helpless in front of Marie Rose. Marie Rose flicked her finger. A mass of blood flew and blew up Mumud and the death knights. It was the end.

“Zikfrector!” Zibal arrived inside the forest and found Zikfrector standing amidst the fire. He was agitated because he misunderstood that Zikfrector had angered Marie Rose. “Are you oka...?”

Zikfrector was about to reply to Zibal, only to suddenly become like a statue. His always expressionless face was filled with dismay and fatigue. Marie Rose and Fenrir, who was gritting his teeth in shame, showed similar reactions.

They were all staring at the book in Agnus’ hand. It was a book that described the original sin of a god. The book was written by the culprit who gave Shizo Beriache and Sixth Evil Zik the sin.

“Sloth...!”

Fenrir and Zikfrector hurriedly reached out, but they were too late. Agnus was already opening the book.

“Kihahahahat!”

Madness raged through the forest. Marie Rose, Fenrir, and Zikfrector—who barely turned away from the laziness due to his disciplined mentality—collapsed at the same time.

“Everything is annoying. Sleep... Snore.” Fenrir gave up and already started snoring.

“Baal’s readiness is great...” Zikfrector inserted a dagger into each of his thighs to prevent his eyes from closing.

Marie Rose shook her head and started casting a spell. “I will postpone the story for the next time.”

Marie Rose’s magic was cast, and she and Fenrir disappeared from the forest. It was a teleportation that was fast enough to violate common sense. Agnus’ blood-red eyes turned to the leftover Zikfrector. “Kik, kikik... I’ll tear off his limbs and kill him.”

“...”

It was a declaration that originally couldn’t be made. The Curse of Idleness was frightening. In the distant past, Zik committed the sin of neglecting his colleagues because he couldn’t overcome the Curse of Idleness. In the war against the gods, he had fallen asleep alone without helping his dying colleagues.

Step, step, step. Agnus stepped slowly toward Zikfrector who was falling asleep. The sight of Agnus holding a sword while only bones remained was reminiscent of a scene from a horror movie. In front of him...

“Stop.” The sweat-soaked Zibal blocked his way. Zibal, who had checked on Zikfrector the moment he fell asleep, said to Agnus, “This person shouldn’t die now. I don’t know what mistakes he made against you, but let it pass this once.”

His eyes were full of compassion as he gazed at Agnus. He already knew about Agnus’ past and the wound that Agnus held.

“Kuk... Kukuk...” Agnus’ expression distorted. The gaze that Zibal sent him—Agnus hated that gaze the most in the world. “Go and die.”

Agnus' sword and Zibal's sword collided in the air. Agnus was tired, and Zibal had exhausted his magic machine summoning skill. Both were fighting in the serene forest with no witnesses.

"Agnus! What is the point of this fight? You know that we can't compete in our current states!"

"Shut up! Shut up!"

"Shit! Calm down, you crazy asshole!"

"Kyaaaak!"

"Hiiiik!"

To be honest, Zibal was scared of Agnus. The deranged person came at Zibal like a zombie, making him shudder with the creeps. He just hoped the Red Knights would come after cleaning up the situation outside. At this moment...

"Tornado."

A powerful storm struck. It wasn't intended to hurt Agnus or Zibal. The magic only made Agnus and Zibal separate.

"...?"

Agnus and Zibal's eyes turned to the source of the magic. A blonde girl could be seen.

"Stop... Stop it." It was a girl with a sad expression. Her name was Euphemina.

"You, why do you keep following me?" Agnus' face twisted like a demon as he shouted, only to close his mouth. It was because an arrow was suddenly fired. The arrow pierced Euphemina's heart.

"Ah..."

Agnus felt something inside him snap.

[Chapter 1106](#)

A slow and sluggish tone...

Lean flesh without muscles...

Only walking a short amount before needing to gasp...

A fragile heart that couldn't even trample on a single ant...

People hated every aspect of me. Between those who ignored me and those who mocked me for being pathetic, I always felt guilty. I thought I was wrong. I thought my existence was a nuisance.

Then I met her.

"You're not wrong."

She told me.

You are cautious, not slow. You aren't weak. You're just different from others. The reason you can't hurt an ant is that you know how to be considerate and respectful.

"You aren't guilty. It is the other people around you who are mean."

She was my lighthouse. She was my only home. I relied on her arms, and she protected me. Even when those beasts humiliated her, she smiled and assured me that she was fine. A hundred times, a thousand times...

No, she would've been a million times more scared and pained, but she...

"Ah..."

He couldn't reach again. His arms and legs were too slow, unable to stop her from flying from the window. His dull mouth couldn't speak, and he couldn't apologize to her—the one who was sad. Like his heart, the arrow was already piercing Euphemina's heart. Her appearance resembled that of his former lover falling from the window.

"Ahh...!"

He already knew. Reality and the game were different. Death in a game was trivial and different from death in reality. In the first place, they were different. Even so—

Even so, why was he...

"Kuaaaaak!" Agnus' scream echoed in the burning forest. He recalled the end of his former lover through the collapsing Euphemina and completely lost his mind.

"Human... I won't forgive you." It was the person who fired the arrow at Euphemina. The voice of the dark elf Beniyaru, whom Agnus had been searching so desperately for, permeated Agnus' ears.

"You...! You!!" Agnus' eyes filled with hatred was drawn to Beniyaru. At this moment, Agnus was blaming himself, not someone else. Why did he keep repeating the same mistake? Why did he give her leeway? Even though he knew there shouldn't be anybody sacrificing for a trash like him, why?

He was a plague. No one should come close to him.

"Die!" Agnus roared like a beast as he flew to Beniyaru. However, Agnus' current status was less than that of a normal player because he had reached his limits facing Marie Rose and Zibal in succession. Beniyaru escaped from his slow attack and fired an arrow that shattered Agnus' ribs.

Stagger. Agnus' unseemly body bent forward. Beniyaru's dagger aimed at his face.

"Agnus!!"

Agnus pulled out the dagger stuck in his forehead and growled at Zibal, "Get lost!"

He wanted to be alone. There was no need for a new relationship. He just wanted to resurrect his old lover and atone for her life. As his vision flashed red, he recalled a skill he had always ignored.

[Assimilation]

[Part of the ego of the 1st great demon, Baal will descend to your body.]

At this time, your class will be converted to Great Demon' and control of the flesh will be transferred to Baal.

Skill Trigger Conditions: Enter a new contract.

Skill Duration: 2 minutes

Skill Cooldown: Reset every time 3,000 human lives are taken.]

Agnus had to turn away from it. He felt a great reluctance to give others control of his body. Who in the world would transfer their body to someone else? It was only a very stupid or crazy person. Furthermore, there was a bigger problem. The real problem was the contents of the 'contract' needed to activate the skill.

(Slaughter 100 humans every day for the rest of your life. Your level will drop by one every time the contract is violated.)

Harming 100 humans every day wasn't an easy task. In particular, the stronger the opponent, the easier it was to harm him. Therefore, he didn't have time to run and hunt humans every day. Of course, a solution existed. He could slaughter the relatively weak. Visit a small village and destroy it or drop a spell at a hunting ground where novice players gathered. He would take 100 lives in an instant.

However, Agnus didn't have the hobby of bullying the weak. In particular, he was extremely reluctant to harm innocent children. It wasn't because he was particularly kind, but it was the nature of humans. This was the decisive reason why Agnus turned away from the Assimilation skill.

Now things had changed. Agnus lost his temper and was no longer bound by his previous conscience. He had lost everything because he was weak. Even the last dignity had been trampled on. He had the right to pay back the same thing to the world.

Agnus awakened in a negative manner and shouted, "Baal!"

[Assimilation has been used.]

[Baal, the absolute ruler of hell, is laughing cheerfully.]

-Eung~?Agnus, what is this?! didn't know you would make this choice?

"Don't be sarcastic!"

-Kukukuk, I'm not being sarcastic.I'm trying to compliment you.Very well done.In rare cases, you make the right decision.

[Part of Baal's ego has entered your body.]

Clouds filled the sky. They were red clouds like blood. All the plants in the forest quickly rotted, and the area was blackened. The nasty air not only harmed the hurt and collapsed Euphemina but also Zibal and Beniyaru. Every breath of poison they took in caused blood to flow out.

"What..."

What was happening all of a sudden? The confused gazes of Euphemina and Zibal turned to Agnus. They could see that Agnus' entire body was covered in demonic energy. The blackened whites of his eyes made his cold, gold pupils stand out even more.

"Kukuk, kuhahahat!" Agnus laughed loudly. The piece of Baal's ego that had descended to Agnus' body pulled out a horn rising from his forehead and held it like a sword. At the same time, Beniyaru fell. There was a big hole in her chest. The horn that Baal pulled out and held had suddenly pierced her chest.

"Fallen? Can this be called fallen when you are hiding like a rat in the forest?" Baal ridiculed Beniyaru as he narrowed the distance to her. He held Beniyaru's hair in a vicious grip and whispered in her ear, "Keep this in mind, elf who is as timid as an adolescent boy. The only duty that the fallen must commit is revenge, destruction, and chaos."

Bang!

"Well, you won't have a chance to do that."

"..."

Beniyaru was beaten by Baal's fists, and she flinched. Her bloodied and bulging eyes were so horrendous that Zibal couldn't bear to look. Euphemina, who had been stunned because of the critical hit to her heart, finally shouted, "Agnus, calm down! I'm fine!"

"Hrmm."

Baal's gaze turned to Euphemina. "You are her." Step. Step. Baal smiled as he approached Euphemina. It was a really refreshing smile, but his fingertips were turning into daggers. "The one who often showed ridiculous goodwill to my toy."

"Agnus...?"

The dagger was inserted into Euphemina's delicate neck. Her blue eyes lost their light, and her small body collapsed like a broken doll in Baal's arms.

"My head is ringing. Stop shouting. Now, now. Calm down. I'm going to make your dream come true from now on," Baal said to himself as he threw away Euphemina who was beginning to turn to gray. Then he inserted the dagger drenched with Euphemina's blood into Beniyaru, who was still lying against a huge tree.

Suddenly, a black-gold hand covered his face. The dagger struck the hand, but there were still three more hands remaining. Every one of them unleashed a sword technique. Link, Kill, Pinnacle—it was a familiar swordsmanship to Baal's. It was from his previous contractor.

"Kuhahat! This is fun!" Baal noticed who appeared and was excited. He turned his head to the sky as he blocked the three sword techniques from the God Hands with a dagger. Lightning was falling.

"Agnus!!"

"Pagma's Descendant!"

The Enlightenment Sword and Baal's dagger collided and caused a shockwave. Grid's eyes that peeked through the gaps in his hair were full of anger and hatred. "Son of a bitch! What did you...! What did you do to Euphemina?"

The reason that Grid flew here was due to the world tree's request. He was asked to save Beniyaru. The first sight that Grid saw after arriving here was Euphemina's death. His colleague faced a lonely death while he was caring about others.

"XX!" Grid swung the Enlightenment Sword again. He was a transcendent—a player. Grid judged that Agnus, who was relatively weak in melee, could easily be overpowered. Agnus easily blocked Grid's attacks with a small dagger. The black flames and red lightning that exploded were easily extinguished by the demon energy.

'So strong?'

Time was fair to everyone. As he grew and developed, other people would also grow and develop. Grid was naturally aware of this. Still, wasn't there something called a gap? Grid wasn't convinced this was due to Agnus' growth, considering he had yet to even summon his death knights and lich.

"Blackening!"

Did he get a special skill like Bentao's Mockery? Grid thought as he gathered his demonic energy. Although he was filled with great anger, he was surprisingly sober. He decided to rescue the seriously injured Beniyaru and end the fight there.

"...?"

The demonic energy created by Blackening was destroyed like it was a lie. Blackening stopped, and the skill effect didn't occur. Baal grinned at the baffled Grid. "It is stupid to rely on demonic energy in front of me."

"...?"

"Hahat! You haven't even noticed? Unlike Pagma, you have a stupid side."

What was this nonsense? The frowning Grid, who didn't understand Agnus' ridiculous babble, belatedly realized something. With white skin and long fangs as well as eyes which had blackened whites, Agnus' appearance was different from usual. It was reminiscent of Grid in his Blackening state...

[Fighting energy has reached the maximum!]

"...!?"

His fighting energy was already full...? This was the fastest speed ever.

"Who are you?!" Grid got goosebumps. The feeling of cold sweat flowing down his back was unpleasant.

Baal replied to the trembling Grid's question, "I sit on the throne of hell."

"It is fun to watch the pretensions of the gods and the humans."

"Ah~ I'm a very free person."

This would be enough for an explanation. What would Pagma's Descendant's look like when he learned Baal's identity?

"Kukuk...?" Baal was expecting to see despair fill Grid's face, but he ended up stiffening. There was no change in Grid's expression. He didn't look too surprised in the first place.

'He isn't afraid of me...?'

Grid urged Baal, who was in a state of discomfort for an unknown reason, "So who are you?"

"..." Baal was someone huge. He was like the final boss who protagonists always dreamed about fighting. Baal had met many heroes and saw something in common among all the heroes he had seen. They were wise, regardless of their ability. The heroes of Baal's time were as intelligent as him. It was possible to exchange 10 meanings with a single conversation, so sometimes there was even a rapport.

'Yet why this person...?'

Baffled by the unexpected reaction, Baal was stiff for a moment before shouting, "You are truly Pagma's Descendant! More intelligent and despicable than any hero I've ever seen. It is exactly like Pagma."

"...?"

"You immediately noticed that I have no time and decided to waste time... Huhu, it is a bit disappointing. I will have to postpone seeing your skills until the next time."

"...?"

What did this person keep saying? It happened when Grid was cocking his head with confusion. Baal moved at a speed that was hard to catch even with Grid's transcendent senses and reached Beniyaru's side in an instant.

"I'm glad I still have time to finish the job."

"Wait!" Grid hurriedly rushed through a sword dance. The four fusion sword dance was completed in an instant, threatening Baal.

However, Baal was already reaping Beniyaru's breath. "Haha, I'll see you again next time."

The moment that Grid's sword was inserted into Baal's torso...

[The duration of Assimilation is over.]

Baal's ego returned to hell, and Agnus regained control of his physical body. Death was in front of him. Agnus, who reflexively attempted to use Bentao's Mockery, quickly stopped and gathered Beniyaru's body into his corpse inventory. Then Agnus turned to ash.

"I was told Beniyaru had to die anyway. So what was the point of the rescue attempt...? Huh?" Grid remained in the rotten forest and suddenly closed his mouth. He belatedly found Zibal.

Zibal was admiring him in many ways. "You are truly great."

"What? No, wait." Grid was surprised. "The grandmaster? Why is he here?"

Was he a sleeping prince in the woods? Why was he sleeping here? Grid clicked his tongue and tried to reach for Zikfrector, but he was blocked by Zibal.

“It is no use trying to wake him up because it doesn’t work. Shouldn’t your priority be avoiding him? The Neo Red Knights will be coming soon, and it will be hard for you to deal with them alone.”

“Yes, I will call Piaro.”

“That unlucky person... In any case, the grandmaster will come to visit you when the time comes.”

“Hmm... Are you acting with the grandmaster?”

“That’s what happened.”

“It is a good side to stand on.” Grid grinned. The Red Knights finished up and were coming. Since they were exhausted, the battle against the Yatan Church must’ve been hard. “Since you said so, I will step back today. I’m busy.”

Grid pulled out a return scroll and ripped it without hesitation. Before meeting the world tree again, he wanted to look at Euphemina’s status.

As Grid disappeared, Zibal shook his head. “What a scary guy...”

It might not be the main body, but he was amazed that Grid could be so calm despite meeting 1st Great Demon Baal.

[Chapter 1107](#)

In the capital of the Overgeared Kingdom, Reinhardt...

Lael’s eyes widened as Grid informed him about what happened in the forest.

“Isn’t that Baal? No, there is no doubt that it is Baal?”

“It is impossible.” Grid denied Lael’s speculation. “Baal is almost like a final boss. The timing is too early for him to appear and there was no strength.”

The basis for Grid’s thoughts wasn’t poor. The great demons Belial and Berith boasted a fearsome strength. Putting aside other players, even Grid had seen the ease at which they caused despair. If the identity of the great demon he encountered in the forest was Baal, the absolute monarch of hell, Grid would experience a sense of fear that would be hard to endure.

However, Grid hadn’t been afraid.

“It makes no sense for a final boss to appear in the body of one user. It is too unbalanced if a specific player can borrow the power of a final boss. The S.A Group shouts about balance all the time and wouldn’t allow such a situation.”

“Aren’t you allowed to borrow Braham’s power?”

“Braham isn’t a final boss.”

“I think that for an average person, Braham or Baal are just as fraudulent.”

"In any case, it is different. That must not be Baal," Grid reiterated, "He was even less powerful than the grandmaster."

He wasn't talking casually. The demonic energy that was emitted from Agnus' possessed body was lower than Great Demon Berith. No, it wasn't much better than Belial. If the grandmaster hadn't been asleep then it would've likely been forced on the defensive by the grandmaster. It was too weak to be 1st Great Demon Baal, even if Baal was subjected to a number of penalties by possessing a player's body.

Of course, the fact that Grid's fighting energy filled up so quickly, the great demon freely using shunpo, and the great demon destroying Grid's demonic energy meant it was likely to be a higher ranked great demon. However, this didn't mean it was Baal.

"Didn't he say he was the master of hell's throne?"

"Is there only one throne in hell? Hell has 33 territories and 33 great demons that each rule a territory. There are naturally 33 thrones."

"Agnus is Baal's Contractor."

"It is difficult to assume that Agnus is involved with Baal just because he is Baal's Contractor. I'm not contracted with Belial or Berith but I can use their power. It isn't strange if Agnus can borrow the power of other great demons through some method, such as runes."

"Still, didn't the great demon know Pagma very well? Shouldn't Baal know Pagma the best among the great demons since Pagma was the previous Baal's Contractor?"

Pagma—this was the core point. The demon who descended into Agnus' body had a high understanding of Pagma and compared Grid to Pagma. That's why Lael saw that Baal was the identity of the great demon.

However, this was also denied by Grid. "Pagma was someone who single-handedly prevented the hell army's invasion of the Behen Archipelago. There would be more than one great demon who fought against Pagma. Most of the great demons who participated in the war, not just Baal, would know about Pagma."

"Hmm... indeed." Lael conceded. Grid was the Hero King who purified the Behen Archipelago and he went directly to Asgard to meet the gods. His understanding of the great demons and gods transcended Lael's knowledge. Lael's guess was less likely to be correct than Grid's guess. "Then who do you think descended into Agnus' body?"

"Is it Amoract?"

"You mean Yatan's First Servant that Braham talked about."

"Yes, he is the one most likely and willing to intervene."

"Nevertheless, he seemed to be hard-working if he is running the Yatan Church behind the scenes..."

"...?"

“It is a bit unreasonable to say he is a very free person who has fun watching the pretensions of the gods and humans every day...”

“Then it must be someone else. In the first place, what is the importance of his identity?”

After all, it was a great demon who could only be expressed through the medium of items or skills. The power of the great demon attached to the rune wasn't a match to the power of the living great demons and the assimilation with Braham had obvious limitations. The same was true of the great demon who borrowed Agnus' body. He could just think of it as part of Agnus' power. Did he need to waste time being stuck on this issue?

Grid didn't want to discuss it any longer. Just thinking about Agnus was disgusting.

“There is a separate problem to worry about right now.”

Grid shared the quest information. It was the quest from the world tree.

[Early Death]

[Difficulty Level: SS

The world tree wants the death of the dark elf, Beniyaru.

Help the world tree by killing Beniyaru.

Quest Clear Conditions: Beniyaru's death.

Quest Reward: Slight increase in affinity with the world tree. The linked quest 'Search' will occur.

Quest Failure Penalty: None.

*This is a quest that has already been cleared.]

“...??”

LaueI was also perplexed. The world tree had existed since the beginning and embraced all things like a mother. The sentence that he or she wanted to kill an elf was strange.

Grid explained, “The world tree has determined that Beniyaru is the cause of the darkness outside.”

The elves were pure but more stubborn than necessary. Their self-determination meant it wasn't easy for them to be corrupted. If Grid hadn't rescued the elves...

The world tree claimed that in the situation where Grid rescued the elves from Kir, Beniyaru had willingly assimilated with the darkness.

“Look at the next quest.”

Early Death was a quest that ended the moment that Beniyaru died. Grid brought up the information of the new linked quest.

[Search]

[Difficulty: S

The world tree determined that the Beniyaru active in the Gauss Kingdom's forest is a fake. The world tree suspects that the ancient species 'rafflesia' is responsible for this. The rafflesia have been a major threat to the forest visitors and tribes since ancient times since they nourished the darkness in the heart.

Please search for the location of the rafflesia, who hold Beniyaru's main body.

Quest Clear Conditions: Find the rafflesia.

Quest Reward: Slight increase in affinity with the world tree. The maximum affinity with Beniyaru.

Quest Failure Penalty: None. Beniyaru's death.]

"Ah... the world tree is aware that Beniyaru is nothing more than a fake clone. It has unique insight from the beginning."

"In the first place, don't the ancient species only inhabit the forest of the world tree? That's why it is exceptionally knowledgeable about the ancient species. In any case, is there anyone with good searching skills among Overgeared Two or the Overgeared Shadows? You know that I don't have search-related skills, so I want to be supported by explorers or assassins."

It was just a quest to find the rafflesia, not fight them. In fact, it was easy for a quest with an S-grade difficulty. Grid had no reason to refuse when it was an opportunity to rescue Beniyaru without taking a great risk. Why did he want to rescue Beniyaru?

One of the strongest of the '12 Te', Grid calculated that it was important to build a favorable relationship with her and enter into a contract with her. He had also fought together with Beniyaru and shared her grief and anger. Grid's desire to help her blossomed like a spring flower.

Lauel clearly knew this and smiled, "It isn't easy to search the forest of the world tree. Unfortunately, the Overgeared Guild is lacking a talent that specializes in searching."

"Shit. Is that right? It is no wonder why no one came to mind."

"There is only one outsider who is just right for this job."

"Outsider?"

"Yes," Lauel's finger pointed at Grid's chest, "A man who is fascinated by Your Majesty."

"...?"

"It is the first ranked explorer, Skunk. He will help Your Majesty."

'He has acted terribly since obtaining Kyle.'

Sighing had become a habit. Resh, the knight who served 2nd Imperial Prince Dulandal, felt like he was walking on thin ice every day. Dulandal had failed to give up on his ambition for the throne and conducted secret negotiations.

"I will liberate the forests of your nation."

Dulandal sent letters to many kingdoms. It was a letter stating that with the power and authority of an imperial prince, he would reclaim the forests stolen by the elves. Then they would have to work closely with him in the future. It lay the groundwork for a supply of armed forces to take away the throne.

It was a very obvious proposal but surprisingly, many royals agreed. No, all the royal families who received Dulandal's offer accepted it and asked for salvation. They wanted to reclaim the forests as soon as possible and were very dissatisfied with the current power situation.

They were forced to feel increasing dissatisfaction and anxiety because they were being destroyed while the empire and Overgeared Kingdom were sucking up honey. They hated the empire that only favored the Overgeared Kingdom. They hated the empire that released the different species in the name of unity while neglecting them. There was even a suspicion that the empire was using the excuse of unity in order to destroy them.

Then Dulandal made his proposal. He was just as disgruntled with the new empire and had the power to save them.

'The position of the other kingdoms makes sense. However, Dulandal's greed is too much.'

Dulandal still had many supporters. No, it was more than ever before. The corrupt nobles threatened by Basara willingness to intervene in politics and the economy, unlike the former emperor, gathered around Prince Dulandal. Furthermore, Kyle's recent return from the Ruins of the War God meant Dulandal's force was no longer inferior to the dukes. If he had the power of the other kingdoms then he would become a force that the empress could no longer ignore. The empire might undergo a huge conflict.

'There is no way Empress Basara doesn't know about this...'

It would've been ideal if Basara stepped in and cut off the buds. Yet strangely, Basara neglected Dulandal. It was rumored that this was the will of the former emperor, who asked her to take care of his children. Still, what was the point if she was killed while trying to protect the will of the deceased?

'No, from the empress' point of view, Dulandal must be an eyesore. Maybe she is deliberately leaving Dulandal alone to obtain the justification to break the will.'

It was time to decide. Should he remain with Dulandal, who would surely become a traitor, and suffer all types of dangers and damages? Or should he think of the benefits if Dulandal's rebellion succeeded and take the risk?

'Shit, the penalty I will receive when breaking the oath of loyalty is so big. Am I forced to stay?'

A knight's loyalty was an obligation. Knights who broke their vows would suffer a great loss. It was why player knights might be abandoned by their masters but they couldn't easily betray their masters. Resh was struggling with a heavy heart when a notification window rose in his vision.

[Your master Dulandal has given a new command to all knights.]

[A quest will occur.]

[Reclaim the Forests]

[Difficulty: S

I can't help but lament the illegal occupation of the forests by the dirty different species.

Now is the time to fight for human peace, rights, and dignity.

We will work with the innocent victims to liberate forests across the continent.

Quest Clear Condition: Liberate three forests.

Quest Clear Reward: A medal of military merit. The linked quest 'Reclaim the Forests II' will occur.

Quest Failure: Durandal's confidence in you will drop.]

"Kuoong..."

He should wait and observe a bit more. Under the guidance of a senior knight, Resh left the empire with a heavy heart.

[Chapter 1108](#)

"Ah, it is really dirty."

Was it because the weather was too hot? Grid quickly stopped this line of thought. The Comet Group's diamond capsule, which was favored by Grid, helped maintain the ideal body temperature. South Korea might be experiencing a heat wave of 36 degrees Celsius but Grid's temperature was perfect as he connected to Satisfy and his discomfort index was zero.

Still, Grid continued to be annoyed and felt unpleasant. Swear words kept coming out from his mouth involuntarily. He had been in this state since he went to the Gauss Kingdom. He felt like there was a constant ringing in his ears. Why? What was this? Grid thought about it and realized the cause of his anger was Euphemina.

"Damn."

He couldn't concentrate. Grid, who had wanted to make an item while waiting for Skunk, finally left the smithy. Then he sent a whisper to Euphemina.

-Hey.

Two hours ago—it had been before he met Lael.

Grid returned to Reinhardt and contacted Euphemina first. It was to check if she was okay. Grid had asked anxiously several times and Euphemina had smiled and replied that she was fine.

-Are you still worried? I'm really fine.

As usual, Euphemina responded with a voice that was as bright as possible.

-I didn't drop any items and the experience can be recovered quickly. Compared to you, I'm still at a low level so the experience is good...

-I heard earlier that you are fine.

Grid interrupted Euphemina. His voice was slightly shaking. It was a shaking that came from anger.

-I can't stand it so I have a small bone to pick.

-...?

-You, didn't you say you wanted to become stronger to help me?

-...

-Was that a lie? In fact, you just needed time to chase Agnus and lay down your life for him, rather than becoming stronger.

-Grid.

Euphemina was very surprised. Grid always cared about his colleagues. He unconditionally respected and understood his colleagues' choices and actions, yet he suddenly became sarcastic and annoyed.

-Is Agnus so good? Are you fascinated by him?

-It isn't like that. I just...

-You can only use the excuse of pity once or twice!

-...

-Is he your pet dog that can't live without you? Is it normal to remove your gallbladder for a stranger out of compassion? You've already helped him many times! That jerk helped Irene and Lord so I tried to understand him many times and repaid him! Yet what is the result? That son of a bitch killed you! You died!

-It wasn't Agnus who killed me but the different being who possessed him...

-Shut up! Why do you always try to understand him when you are betrayed every time? Are you his family? His lover? Or do you want to become his lover?

-...

-...!

The angrily shouting Grid was stunned and shut his mouth. His colleagues, friends, and family. He always felt gratitude and affection for those who led him to who he was today. One of them was Euphemina. Without her, he wouldn't have obtained the water clan or gained so many victories in the process of founding the Overgeared Kingdom. He had subconsciously appreciated and cared for Euphemina.

Then why was he acting so angry and bitter toward her? Was he crazy?

...No, he wasn't crazy. This was a very lowly feeling. It was jealousy. He didn't like that his colleague was caring about others more than him. It was enough to overshadow his gratitude and commitment.

'Damn.'

Grid was filled with self-loathing when Euphemina's voice was heard in his ears.

-I'm sorry.

-No, no. I'm the one who is sorry.

-No, it's my fault. I couldn't fathom your heart. I was obsessed with Agnus because he was poor and pitiful, not because I didn't care about you. I was aware that Agnus is your enemy and has damaged you on several occasions, yet you care so deeply that I thought you would understand my selfishness.

-...

-How many times have you been disappointed and angry with my selfishness? I'm sorry. You can be angry. No, you have to be angry. Really... I'm really sorry.

Euphemina's voice trembled. It was a tremor that came from sorrow, not anger. She was really apologetic to Grid. He had silently indulged her behavior over the past several years and tried to understand her. It wasn't because he was strong. It was because he had a wide heart. She believed he would understand her forever.

'How angry must he have been every time he saw my selfishness...'

Euphemina's heart shook. She had been unaware of how harsh and selfish she had been to Grid. Now she realized how much patience Grid had endured and how much he sacrificed.

-I'm sorry... In addition, thank you.

-...

-Thank you for sacrificing your feelings, hiding your wounds, and always smiling at me instead of showing anger.

Expressing honest emotions wasn't something that anyone could do. Euphemina was happy after knowing this fact.

-Now I think that I am recognized as your friend.

-...You know that I've always thought of you as a friend. However, thank you for telling me this.

-Kukuk... Do you know?

-What?

-When I talk to you, my heart is warm. I'm happy because you're so supportive and warm.

-I don't think so. I just become angry or confused every time I encounter something I don't like.

-Okay. Please carry a whip around. I'll stick out my butt at any time.

-What the hell? Who do you think is a barbarian?

It felt like his old age was peeling off. Without his knowledge, the sadness deep in his heart was washed away and his heart and mind became refreshed. Sometimes he needed to be honest...

If he cherished the other person, took care of them unconditionally and only said good words, it would make him tired. A refreshing smile appeared on Grid's face as he learnt a new fact. At this moment...

'Ah.'

Grid was stunned. Once his displeasure and stuffy mind were released, he realized that he had overlooked something. He whispered to Lael.

-Lael!!

-...Kukuku, I answer in the name of the demon king.Red blood flows through my eardrums to my throat...

-Agnus has taken the body of the dark elf.

-...Hmm.Agnus' purpose must've been the dark elf from the beginning.

-Yes. What do you think is the reason?

-The reason is obvious.

It was revealed during the Stone of Life incident. There was only one purpose behind Agnus' actions. It was the resurrection of his old lover. In other words...

-He is trying to use the body of the dark elf as a 'crafting material' to make a doll resembling his old lover.

-Damn...!

The dark elf taken by Agnus wasn't real. It was just a fake. It couldn't produce the result that Agnus wanted. A different being would definitely be born. What if the resurrected lover was a monster he hadn't expected?

'He will go berserk.'

Grid had seen Agnus' madness over and over. Agnus was often rational enough to make people wonder if it was real or acting, but in any case, he wasn't normal. If the berserk Agnus recalled that Grid and Euphemina were at the scene when Agnus acquired the 'fake dark elf', it wouldn't be unreasonable for him to fire the meaningless arrows of resentment at the Overgeared Kingdom.

Grid felt it was urgent.

-Lael, I think you have to figure out the exact identity of the great demon who possessed Agnus.

-Wasn't it Amoract?

-I just mentioned a name I knew.Don't you know?

-Yes, I noticed that you found it annoying and unpleasant to talk about Agnus so you didn't think much.

-Am I too pathetic?

-No.You sometimes get agitated when talking about people you don't like.It is like the cat next door that often loses its temper.

-Cat next door...?

-Every time he comes out for a walk, he always poops in my garden. Initially, the smell varied but it was so plentiful and the smell so severe that I was stressed out. Despite spraying a bottle of perfume, it was useless.

-I-I see.

-Ah, the great demon who possessed Agnus is indeed Baal.

-Eh?

-I went to talk to Sticks because Your Majesty seemed to be in a bad condition. Sticks is convinced that the great demon's identity is Baal.

-Convinced?

-Yes, it isn't speculation based on circumstantial evidence but a conviction based on clear evidence. In Genesis, Baal is the only one among the great demons who can proclaim himself as the ruler of hell.

-...Amazing. Baal had no force...

-The next time you meet, Baal might be different. The Baal that descended into the human body was nothing more than a piece of his ego.

-A piece of his ego?

-Yes, the Baal who descended into Agnus didn't have his strength limited. He was just a small section of Baal. Depending on the next part of Baal that descends, his tone and personality might completely change.

-...

-In any case, Agnus has a terrifying power. Maybe we'll have to help him make the right doll.

Lauel had already reached the conclusion that he had to stop Agnus from running wild. He reassured Grid.

-I'll take care of it so you don't have to worry. Your Majesty should focus on Your Majesty. The promised meeting time is approaching.

Grid nodded as he saw a familiar face in the distance.

-Thank you, Lauel.

Everyone knew the Black Knights and the Red Knights were the strongest knight divisions of the empire. However, not everything was revealed to the world. Out of the hundreds of knights that existed in the empire, 99% might be arranged in the line of the Black Knights but there were rare exceptions. One exception was Dulandal's Black Knights.

They were the best knights division raised with a tremendous amount of money and effort. It was an organization that Dulandal, who liked to brag, called the 'royal guards.' Among them, the high ranker Resh was just the rank and file.

‘...It is easy to get a medal.’

Resh and the Black Knights had already explored seven forests. He gained a medal every time he cleared the ‘Reclaim the Forests’ quest and he was already on the third linked one. This meant the process of reclaiming the forests was extremely easy. Only approximately 10 elves and hundreds of beasts guarded each forest, so they weren’t the opponents of the Black Knights.

“...”

Resh tracked down the elves with his senior knights and sighed deeply as they turned to ash. He wasn’t happy at all that he gained two medals which increased all stats by +2. He couldn’t be happy. The elves had believed in the empire’s declaration of liberation and entered the forests of various kingdoms.

After hundreds of years of suffering due to humans and finally being able to defend the rights of nature, they were slaughtered by the imperial knights without knowing why. For them, they were betrayed again. Resh was pained since he knew the history of the elves through his many quests. He felt like a terrible villain and that his hands were dirty with filth.

“It is a holy war for humanity.”

A senior knight saw Resh’s dark face and patted him on the shoulder, yet Resh didn’t feel any comfort. This massacre wasn’t a holy war. He knew it was a tragedy just to satisfy Dulandal’s ambition.

‘Of course, the actions of the elves when taking over the forests were wrong. Still, can’t there be a conversation?’

If they wanted to know why the elves occupied the forests. If they wanted to know how to liberate the forests, ask the elves for a conversation. The elves weren’t idiots and their actions obviously contained this meaning. However, the kingdoms that had been deprived of their forests didn’t attempt to communicate with the elves. Wasn’t it enough that they were deprived of their forests by a different species? Now they had to have a conversation to reclaim it? They thought it was shameful.

“...?”

Resh was gulping water in this self-destructive mood when he doubted his ears.

One of the Five Pillars, Kyle. He was dubbed as the ‘lightning god’ by Dulandal because he kept emitting lightning after visiting the Ruins of the War God. “This war of attrition won’t end. In any case, the elves are scattered throughout the continent. It is better to take over the forest of the world tree, which will currently be empty.”

‘Is he crazy?’

The senior knight protested on behalf of Resh, who was so shocked that he forgot to swallow the water. “Sir Kyle, the forest of the world tree is the sanctuary of the world tree. Entering there with weapons can be considered an act of blasphemy... Keok.”

The senior knight that Resh had longed to be like. He was a very loyal knight despite his frustration. That’s why Resh had been drawn to him and thought of him as an ideal. He died of a slit throat.

“...?”

Just like that? In Resh's dazed field of view, he saw Kyle holding the senior knight's head. Kyle's current appearance—where lightning, instead of red blood, flowed through the blood vessels of his eyes—made him look inhuman. To put it nicely, it was like a celestial god had descended. To put it badly, it was like the devil had climbed up from hell.

"I didn't know there was a heretic among the prince's knights."

"...?"

"The only gods recognized by the empire are the gods of Asgard, such as Goddess of Light Rebecca and War God Zeratul. The world tree? What type of heretic sanctifies a tree?"

"..."

"Prince Dulandal has given me the authority to lead you. Don't say anything and just follow me. Let's go. I know the location of the world tree."

At this moment, Resh was convinced. This couldn't be allowed. If Dulandal rose to the throne, no one could handle the tyranny of his right arm, Kyle.

'I have to film this to make sure that no player supports Dulandal...'

Resh's vision was blurry with tears as he started to record the video.

[Chapter 1109](#)

Tak...Tak tak tak.

His hands were trembling because of excitement. It was hard to press the capsule operation button, which he had been pressing every day for years.

Ttalkak.

After a minute of wandering, his fingers settled down. The lid of the capsule opened with a mechanical sound reminiscent of the sound effects in sci-fi movies. This was his haven, the unique space where he could be freed from the reality that was worse than hell.

"Luna..."

Agnus staggered as he sat in the capsule.

'Soon... It is coming soon...'

Agnus had been forced to stay logged out after the two consecutive deaths from the day before. He couldn't sleep all night due to intense exhilaration and emotions. His reunion with his lover...

His only heart's desire would soon be fulfilled.

'..In this world, I will see you.'

Along with the hollow promise, Agnus' consciousness was transmitted to Satisfy. Waiting for him to wake up in the depths of hell was...

-Are you finally starting?

It was Baal leaning against the throne. His face was obscured by a dark shadow, and Agnus couldn't see it. Even so, he seemed to know. This person was smiling. He was laughing at Agnus. Baal was present, ready to ridicule and taunt Agnus. Despite knowing this...

"Deceased Creation." Agnus used a skill.

It was an ultimate skill, like Grid's item creation and Kraugel's swordsmanship creation. Agnus went through the process of several system inquiries. Finally...

"I... Luna Caroline..."

Strength entered Agnus' dry hands that were holding the portrait of his lover. His vision was blurry, and he was unable to speak. The answer the system required wasn't 'resurrection' but 'creation.'

Yes, the system kept informing him, 'You aren't resurrecting your old lover. You are just creating a body that borrows the image of your former lover. They are completely different. There will be no memories in the body. Her body and mind will be cold. It will be rotten filth—not hot blood—that flows through the body. It will be hatred—not affection for you—that circulates through the heart.'

'Keep this in mind. The two are different.'

The warning struck Agnus' heart.

"I... Luna Caroline.....I will make her," Agnus struggled before linking the words.

At his words, a miracle occurred. On the altar, the Stone of Life, the body of the dark elves, and the blood and bones he had collected were swirling together. A black light exploded. Death was born.

"Ah... Ahhh..." Agnus' mind went blank for a moment. His rationality changed. He only hugged the dead body that looked like the lover from his memories.

"Luna..."

"..."

[There was a degraded item among the materials used for the creation of the dead.]

[The deceased you created will be rated lower than the usual standard.]

[The deceased you created, 'Luna Caroline', has a rare rating.]

[The low rating has resulted in 'Luna Caroline' having poor intelligence.]

[The low rating has resulted in 'Luna Caroline' having a body that is easily damaged.]

All types of notification windows popped up. They all had unpleasant contents. Still, Agnus didn't care.

'His Luna' was the most precious thing in the world.

How could her worth be discussed?

-Humans really run away easily.

Baal laughed bleakly on the throne.

Creepy and bizarre tentacles soared from the ground. The autumn leaves fell out of season and exploded. The flowers emitted a terrible stench that numbed many senses.

“Disperse if you don’t want to be dragged by the tentacles! Spread out!”

“However, we have to stick together if we want to block the arrows!”

The Sword Knights invaded the forest of the world tree at Lightning God Kyle’s command. They suffered a crisis from the beginning of the forest. Hundreds of hiding elves didn’t stop shooting arrows, so they had to wield their shields and swords without a break.

“Pant... Pant...”

Resh, who was only the rank and file, was already seriously injured. The distinction of ‘high ranker’ was common among players. He had cleared the hidden quests thanks to Grid and Coke, and his level rose rapidly. Resh reached level 367, but he was still just sewage in this place. The elves, who were hiding in the giant tree while shooting a rain of arrows dense enough to cover the sky, mostly had a level similar to or higher than Resh.

‘The standard of the main army is different. At this point, Kyle must be panicking.’

Resh barely blocked an arrow that flew at his eyes and looked around him. He could see his colleagues being forced on the defensive. Even the talented knights of Dulandal were helpless in front of the world tree’s forest, which formed an ideal fortress.

‘We can’t break through.’

Thorny vines surrounded the forest area while bushes blocked the march. There were also the towering giant walls which were created after thousands of years. The beasts crawling from the walls were larger than monsters, and the elves perched on the walls were marksmen. Who could break through here with force?

‘The former emperor didn’t lock up the elves in here.’

It was more appropriate to say the empire hadn’t invaded this place. Even the Red Knights knew that invading here was an act of suicide. Resh’s mouth curled up.

‘You’re in trouble, Kyle.’

Kyle’s judgment that the elves should be trampled on with force was a foolish misjudgment. They were much stronger and more demanding opponents than the senior knight he had killed. He would be punished for ignoring the conventions. Dulandal would learn about his failure and...

Yes, everything would flow in the right direction. The moment Kyle failed, the elves’ power would be revealed to the world. The other kingdoms would no longer try to subjugate the elves. Instead, they would communicate with the elves and achieve true unity.

Resh, who became a knight to defend justice, believed and hoped for this. He hoped that the enemy he had to cut down in the future would only be evil. He honestly didn't want to fight these beautiful elves any longer. However—

Resh didn't give his life to the elves' arrows. He wielded his sword and shield with all his might. Although he might not want to fight, he was determined to survive to the end. He had to film Kyle using brute force and the knights who were victimized by him as much as possible.

Then it was only for a moment. A stream of electricity swept past Resh's cheeks and caused a giant tree to explode.

"Ack!"

Three elves died in an instant.

"...?!" Resh looked back and was stunned. Kyle stood behind him with no signs of agitation. He had anticipated the strength of the forest that was like a solid fortress.

"I want to save my strength, but I'll help you out a little bit."

A current was emitted from Kyle's entire body. The waves of electricity, reminiscent of Magician King Goldhit's great magic, stretched out in all directions and penetrated the entire forest instantly. The beasts fighting with the knights, the plants wielding bizarre tentacles, and the elves firing arrows from the giant trees were all electrocuted and fell to the ground. The large-scale skill caused mass paralysis. It was reminiscent of the blue dragon summoned by Grid. No, it was much faster and more efficient than the lightning that struck down from the sky.

"Why do you look like you're watching the sunset?" Kyle urged the blankly staring knights as hundreds of elves fell from the tree. "Isn't it easier to kill them while they are paralyzed?"

"Cough..." The knights hesitated as they approached the fallen elves. As knights, they were reluctant to aim their swords at those who couldn't resist.

'They are enemies.'

'If we don't kill them, we will die.'

It was ridiculous to talk about reason in a war. The knights had no choice. They grasped their sword while avoiding the poisonous gazes of the fallen elves. It was the prelude to a massacre. At this moment...

"A knight must act fairly!" Someone shouted a verse from an old chivalry vow. "Knights, you must not kill those who can't resist! It is the same on the battlefield!"

These were the shouts of Knight Resh.

"..."

Many of the passages in the chivalry vows weren't realistic. Chivalry was an ideal created by knights who died and lived by it, so it was safe to say that it contained the extremes of inefficiency and was

unrealistic. That's why people laughed at the chivalric code. However, most knights became knights because they were fascinated by the chivalric code.

"..."

Resh's shouts stopped the hundreds of knights from acting. However, it was only for a moment. It lasted for less than a second.

"Kyaack!"

"Keok!"

"Ugh..."

The knights hesitated for a moment before starting the slaughter. They stabbed, cut, and killed the elves who couldn't resist.

A long period of time had passed since they became knights. Reality was more precious than their ideals. They had experienced not eating and had gone through dozens of experiences, and they had families to protect. More than anything else...

"The master's command is higher than the chivalric code."

The last verse of the chivalric code gave them an excuse to compromise with reality.

"Ah..."

The death throes...

Red blood soaked the land and the trees. Tears and hatred encroached on this mighty forest.

Resh stared blankly at the horrific carnage.

"Resh! Wake up! We will die if we don't kill them!" The knights forcibly pushed a sword into Resh's hand.

Resh was an upright person. They didn't hate the youngest knight who still shouted about justice, just like them on the first day. Rather, they often wanted him to stay the same. However, the knights had to compromise with reality. They had to force Resh to slaughter the elves. If Resh didn't change his attitude, he would be executed by the furious Kyle.

"Resh! Hurry!"

Kyle was getting closer and closer. His blazing gaze was staring straight at Resh's back. The anxious knights urged Resh, but he was still in a daze. He felt a deep sense of skepticism.

Shit, he couldn't understand why he was here doing something wrong. He started Satisfy because he wanted to experience the lives of the knights in the movies he had longed for since he was a kid. Additionally, Satisfy was a game. Games were a means of entertaining people. So why? Why did he have to go through this X thing every time?

'Should I just quit?' Resh gritted his teeth as Kyle came up behind him.

Kyle's hand, covered with an electric current, was pointed at Resh's neck.

"After a heretic, it's a traitor? This is an organization that needs reform."

"Shut up!" Resh's fury exploded as he recalled Kyle's senseless murder of Geon, the senior knight who had taken care of him for many years. He cried out with all his might, squeezing out his power and swinging his sword back. Of course, it was useless. It was clear that Kyle, who was beyond the dukes, wouldn't allow the attack of one player to reach him. Kyle lightly avoided Resh's sword and released an electric current.

"Weakness is sin."

It was a fact that no one knew about, but Kyle was a follower of the war god. Kyle took the logic of strength for granted, and Resh felt it.

'Grid might've been able to expose this guy's weak side...'

Originally, it was a thought that couldn't continue to the end. Kyle would shoot the electric current, and Resh should've died.

"...?"

Yet he was still alive? Resh was perplexed.

Then he saw a strange and unfamiliar back. It was a woman with white hair down to her waist. She wore full plate armor, carried a large shield, and held a sword in a solemn posture. The woman was also a knight—a knight more virtuous than anyone in this place.

"Mercedes...?"

"Your conviction—it is wonderful," her beautiful voice echoed through the forest dyed with a red film. The electric current flowed through the shield while the legendary knight wielded the White Tiger Sword, cutting off Kyle's hair.

"You...!" Kyle was about to counterattack when he suddenly stopped at the sight of the red armor from two generations ago which was now an antique. Three armed knights and a blond man in a blue cloak fell to the left and right of Mercedes.

"What, what? Did you want to say hello to the world tree while passing by? Then what are these enemies?"

"Little Mercedes. Did you do this deliberately?"

"It's a coincidence."

The knights in red armor had a normal conversation in the middle of the battlefield. There was no fear or nervousness. Rather, Kyle was the one who was a bit nervous. It was because of one thing.

"Electric Eel Kyle. You've grown a lot since the last time I've seen you."

"Asmophel...!"

They were the former Red Knights who led the empire's golden age—the single-digit knights.

[Chapter 1110](#)

After being crowned the empress, Basara's first task was to admit and apologize for the empire's past mistakes. That's how they could move forward. They weren't the empire of the past. All the misdeeds, wrongs, and mistakes of the past empire hadn't been committed by her. For her, it was just history that had passed...

If she used these excuses to ignore the mistakes of the past generations and not take responsibility, who would comfort and appease the victims of the empire? Who could erase the wounds that had been rooted in them and their descendants? Could she discuss a future with them?

For the continent's unity and peace, Basara knew she had to take full responsibility.

"Unbelievable..."

The eyes of the Sword Knights shook. There was a woman with three sword scars in the center of her face, a short man without a left ear, and an elderly man with different colored eyes. The knights knew these people who were armed with the old red armor.

Amelda, Kentrick, and Dante—they were the single digit knights who led the empire's golden age along with Piaro. They were the idols of the Sword Knights.

"Thank you... Thank you, Goddess of Light."

The knights suddenly started to pray. They were trembling. Thanks to the truth Empress Basara had revealed, the knights knew that Piaro and the Red Knights weren't traitors. No, they were still heroes. The knights knelt and shouted in unison, "Sir Amelda! Sir Kentrick! Sir Dante! It is an honor to see you again!"

Their eyes were red and wet. The heroes, who had been unfairly accused of being traitors, had gotten betrayed by the country they had devoted their lives to and even lost their families. The knights didn't dare imagine the anger, hatred, and grief the heroes would've felt over the years. However, the knights were grateful for their survival and would honor their wounded hearts, hoping they could recover even a small bit.

Amelda laughed. "What, what? Is this real? Have we been cleared completely?"

Kentrick spoke in a somber voice, "Those who were chasing us a few years ago to kill us are now honoring us..."

"..." Dante was silent.

All three of them didn't welcome this. Rather, it was absurd and unpleasant. That was a natural reaction. What was the point of their names being restored when they had already lost everything? There were no family members or colleagues left for them to rejoice with. All that was left was revenge. Their honest feeling was that they wanted to point their swords at the soldiers and knights of the empires who had harmed their families.

"Calm down," Mercedes restrained Amelda's killing intent. She had already figured out the situation.

'Empress Basara apologized and made reparations to all nations and people who were damaged by the empire. The empire's treasury is empty. The moderates accused her and stuck to Dulandal. In the process, Dulandal had Kyle punish the elves in order to negotiate with other kingdoms.'

Mercedes guessed this perfectly because she was aware of Dulandal's nature. During the time when she was the first knight, she often encountered the imperial family, and her knowledge of Basara and Dulandal made it easy to gain insight into the situation.

'A fight can't be avoided.'

In the past, Grid—her liege—had fought to protect the elves. It was her duty to protect them for her liege.

Mercedes's gaze turned to Kyle. Among the Five Pillars, he was unusually favored by Juander. He might've been regarded as the weakest of the pillars, but his potential was great.

'He must be a lot stronger than he was before. I will have to deal with him carefully.'

The empire and the Overgeared Kingdom were building an alliance. It meant they shouldn't fight one another. However, the Overgeared Kingdom had signed the alliance with Empress Basara, and Dulandal wanted to take the throne from Basara. Even if she fought Dulandal's minions, there was little concern that it would become an international incident. The moment that Mercedes finished her calculations...

"Stop with that tone which is looking down on me," Kyle, who had been watching the situation like Mercedes, opened his mouth to say. He had also grasped the situation. "You are still treating me as a child when you have been wasting away for more than 10 years."

Kyle's expression was stiff. He let out electric currents as he faced Asmophel with a stern expression and tone.

Asmophel smiled bitterly. "I have never looked down on you or treated you as a child. I'm just admiring you because you've really grown up."

Amelda interrupted, "Hehe, heh. That's right. Kyle was dwarfed by his peers. Now he is totally grown up. By the way, it doesn't match. Wasn't Kyle a model student? You were always polite and respectful to everyone. Then what is with this tone and expression? Huh, huh? Have you become an imposing person?"

"This is treating me as a child. Amelda, you haven't changed at all. Aren't you ashamed of using that childish tone when you're so old? Or did you get a head injury while living as a fugitive?"

"What? I'm still in my 30s, my 30s! I'm not a grandmother!"

"Kuk...! Kukukuk!" Kyle suddenly burst out laughing. He was laughing at himself for being nervous a while ago. Kyle had been remembering the past.

Asmophel who had been the deputy head of the Red Knights led by Piaro and a pillar of the empire, the Fifth Knight Amelda, the Seventh Knight Kentrick, and the Ninth Knight Dante... In the past, they were dazzlingly strong. They would stand beside the emperor while Kyle didn't dare to even set eyes on them.

However, that was more than 15 years ago. Over the years, Asmophel had been enchanted and drugged while the other three were mentally and physically exhausted as they fled the empire. It wasn't strange that they had lost their skills from their prime.

No, it wasn't a problem even if they regained the skills from their prime or developed beyond that. At present, Kyle was overwhelmingly strong. He worked under the former emperor to become a 'pillar' beyond the Red Knights, and he was recently chosen by the war god.

Kyle stepped into the realm of transcendence. The way he saw it, Legendary Knight Mercedes was the only one to be wary of among the uninvited guests. Even she had yet to fully mature in the years since she became a legend. There was no need to be nervous against them.

"Asmophel," Kyle laughed for a long time before saying, "I think your personality is the worst ever. Not only do you call me 'Electric Eel', but you also betrayed your friend Piaro out of a sense of inferiority and framed him. Still, I didn't know you could be so shameless. You are now calling upon your old colleagues who were branded as traitors and lost their family members because of you. I would've never dreamed of being reunited with them, even if I were sorry."

Kyle hated Asmophel in the past. At that time, he hadn't been familiar with life in the imperial palace. Feeling afraid, Kyle would choke and wave his hands every time he met someone's eyes, causing him to be called Electric Eel. Kyle still had vivid memories of when the people around him laughed at him. He wanted revenge.

Therefore, at this moment, he mocked the man blocking his way, rather than killing him straight away. Asmophel's response was different from expected. He wasn't angry or ashamed. Instead, he just smiled bitterly.

"I reunited with them to take responsibility for my sins. I was obliged to meet them. Additionally, the way I treated you in the old days..." Asmophel couldn't finish his explanation. Lightning struck the spot where Asmophel stood. Asmophel's gaze sunk as he jumped to the side to escape.

Kyle spoke from the ground, "It was sour. Now choose. Are you going to leave here or will you die by my hands?"

The answer came straight away. "This is a land King Grid protects. I won't leave, nor will I die."

"Okay. Then try living." Kyle released a surge of electric currents. It was the large-scale magic that paralyzed the elves. Electricity was the unique attribute that Kyle was born with. In his childhood and adolescence, Kyle had been afraid of this attribute but not anymore. He was able to fully control and use his power. It was thanks to Juander, his own effects, and War God Zeratul.

[Physical defense isn't possible.]

[You have suffered 15,900 damage.]

[You are paralyzed for 5 seconds.]

"Ugh...!"

The current had a terrifying effect on those whom Kyle perceived as enemies—Mercedes, Asmophel, Amelda, Kentrick, Dante, Resh, and the elves. Resh was electrocuted despite raising his shield, and he sat down, convulsing. His trembling gaze turned to Mercedes.

Then he saw it. The electric current fired at Mercedes's group was deflected by sword energy.

Kentrick was furious. "To use such a weak attack against us, he must really see us as obsolete."

Amelda also inflated her cheeks. "Right, right! How much have we done in order to survive!"

Dante spoke for the first time, "Don't mock the adversity we have experienced."

"...!" Resh's eyes widened with surprise.

The three knights moved quickly and approached Kyle, attacking him. One of them had speed and sharpness and was called 'a genius who appears once in 100 years' by the commander of the Sword Knights. Amelda's two swords stabbed at Kyle, but Kyle's electric current blocked the attack. Kentrick dashed and aimed at Kyle. Then Kyle kicked at a rock on the ground to block the path of the broadsword. Dante's mace smashed into Kyle's chest at the same time.

"Ah..."

Resh and all the Sword Knights lost their souls. The number of blows that Kyle and the single digit knights exchanged in a second was beyond their common sense, so it was hard not to be amazed. The booms continued without a break. Kyle continued to use the currents as a weapon while retreating, and he was pursued by the three knights.

'It is ignorantly strong.'

'It is a combat method that relies solely on his innate attributes.'

'He can't beat our experience of overcoming life and death struggles for decades.'

The three knights estimated the odds. Kyle used the electric currents to deal with every situation and didn't use any martial arts or swordsmanship. If the electric currents were like his limbs, then it would be sufficient to cut them. The three knights cut apart the currents like they were a monster with nine heads.

Three sharp sword energies filled the air and tore the currents to shreds. Kyle was exposed, and the three knights didn't miss this gap. The weapons of different shapes and trajectories pierced Kyle. No, they seemed to pierce him.

"Bah." Kyle's upper body receded sharply and soon touched the ground. All of the knights' attacks reached nothing. Then Kyle's fist sprung up like a spring and struck Dante's chest precisely. At this time, the scattered currents once again concentrated on Kyle's fist.

There was a balloon popping sound. Dante coughed up a handful of blood, lost his momentum, and fell to the ground.

“Fairly good...!” Amelda cried out as she stabbed at Kyle’s thighs. The currents swirled, and his tiny body was blown into the air. Kentrick’s broadsword rushed in through the gap! However, it was caught by Kyle’s hands and stopped.

This wasn’t what the three knights had expected. Kyle hadn’t only trained and strengthened his attribute. He had also acquired an amazing level of physical skill. It was no wonder that he was a follower of the war god.

“Such a monster...”

He was more skilled than the dukes. His ultimate talent was so atrocious it wouldn’t be strange if it were given the modifier of ‘strongest on the continent.’

‘Nothing has changed.’

The Sword Knights would slaughter the elves as scheduled...

Resh felt despair.

“Bloom,” Asmophel’s clear voice echoed through the forest right then. A large flower bud rose above Kyle’s body. It was transparent and red, and it consisted of sword energy.

“...!” Kyle’s face turned white. Blood was pouring out from his nose and ears.

“I won’t kill you,” Asmophel declared before moving his sword again. Beautiful flowers blossomed from Kyle’s body as his blood soaked the forest.