

Overgeared 1161

[Chapter 1161](#)

It was dark. Night? No, this place was somewhere underground. Grid used the light elemental.

‘...It is a cave.’

It was a very narrow cave. If he didn’t squeeze his body, his shoulders would be touching the walls. If he didn’t bow, his head would be touching the ceiling. Grid started to move along the winding path with the light elemental and thought it was like a giant ant cave or a rabbit cave.

“It’s safe, nyang. The great Noe has confirmed that there are no traps and monsters,” Noe, who returned after looking around, spoke. Hell’s best demonic beast’s senses became more advanced. The higher the level, the greater his ability to sense danger.

Grid nodded with a rotten expression.

[The third gateway in the north of Pangea has been broken through for the first time.]

[It is thanks to the ruler of the toothless tiger community, the ‘Blue Tiger,’ favoring you.]

[The title ‘Pangea’s New Star’ has been enhanced!]

[A new quest granted by the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides has occurred.]

[Red Phoenix Guardian]

[★ Hidden Quest ★]

From the moment humanity was born, the red phoenix has been the guardian deity protecting the south part of the East Continent.

Due to being sealed by the expelled gods, it has been enslaved and exploited for years. The red phoenix is currently weak, like a lantern on the verge of going out.

Protect the soul of the red phoenix sleeping in the bow so that it can recover.

Quest Clear Condition: Keep the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides in your inventory for two years.

Quest Clear Reward: Acquire the 1,000th heart of the red phoenix. Affinity with the red phoenix will rise significantly.

Quest Failure Conditions: Three deaths within two years.

In Case of Quest Failure: The Hwan Kingdom will reclaim the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides.]

[★ Another Quest Clear Condition ★]

Give 20 Red Phoenix Breaths to the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides.

Quest will be instantly cleared and the red phoenix released.

Quest Clear Reward: The red phoenix's breath is absorbed into your body. Acquire the 999th heart of the red phoenix. Affinity with the red phoenix will rise significantly.]

The Easterners tended to use the names Four Auspicious Beasts or four sacred creatures mixed together. Sacred creature referred to a mystical animal and were different from gods, which meant the people's faith in the red phoenix, white tiger, black tortoise, and blue dragon wasn't as deep.

'That's why I thought they were of a grade lower than the gods.'

Now he saw that the Four Auspicious Beasts were also gods. They had been defending the East Continent long before the Five Seniors were driven to the east.

'It is probably because of the Five Seniors and yangban that they aren't treated as gods.'

Grid frowned as he recalled the blue tiger's words. In fact, the weapons of the sacred creatures were actually seals locking up the Four Auspicious Beasts? Now he could understand why the yangbans had the breaths of the sacred creatures. The yangbans weren't helped by the Four Auspicious Beasts. They ruled the Four Auspicious Beasts and took away their power.

'They are deceiving people that the barrier they set up is to prevent the great demons from appearing... it's funny that they are the grandmaster's last hope.'

The more he knew, the worse they became. It made the Western gods, who were faithful to their emotions, seem pure. Of course, the Evil God Yatan and Goddess of Light Rebecca were questionable. It was difficult to judge them. It couldn't be understood with human beliefs alone.

'Stop thinking and focus on the situation in front of me.'

Grid brushed off his complex thoughts and confirmed the effect of the upgraded title.

[Pangea's New Star 3rd Stage]

[Stage 1: It is relatively easy to obtain information from the residents of Pangea.

Stage 2: The quest acquisition rate increases in the Pangea region.

Stage 3: All spiritual beings in Pangea will favor you.

* Every time you destroy a monster community formed in the north, the level and effectiveness of the title will increase.]

In the end, the effect was still only applied to Pangea. Even so, the value was not low. Grid's heart grew heavy as he recalled what happened at the toothless tiger community.

"Tiger... are you okay?"

In fact, in retrospect, it was unlikely the blue tiger would've been hostile to him even if he wasn't Pagma's Descendant. Exchange with the toothless tigers had been set from the moment he broke through the lazy cow community. The blue tiger wouldn't randomly hurt humans.

'He is a good guy...'

Grid's worries deepened. The sight of Garam fighting the blue tiger and toothless tigers was depicted in his mind.

'...No, it will be fine.'

The blue tiger had enough strength to throw Grid hundreds of meters away with only one arm. As a descendant of one of the Four Auspicious Beasts, the white tiger, he wouldn't be easily defeated by the yangban. He couldn't be easily subdued, even if it was Garam...

The disbelieving Grid touched his face. Then Berith's Skin Mask activated and his appearance and body shape started to change. This time, Grid's choice was the old man Dante.

'That jerk.'

Grid's face was hideous as he recalled the smiling Garam. The man who usually referred to Grid as the 'ignorant masses' now called him by name. It was like he was laughing at Grid's disguise.

'He has a real dog-like personality.'

Would he have become similar to Garam if his former self had gained his present power? Grid shuddered at the creepy thoughts.

'Garam tracked me down with the conviction I would be here.'

From the beginning, Grid hadn't expected to deceive Garam's eyes with the skin mask. No matter how much Grid hid his energy, Garam was a transcendent with the blood of a god flowing through him and could easily see through the skin mask. However, this was a story when meeting face to face.

This time, Garam knew and tracked Grid's location despite no direct encounter. The hunchback Nobuldam hadn't recognized Grid at the checkpoint but it was revealed he chased Grid and was captured by Garam.

'They must've found me based on a certain situation...'

There was only one situation that he could think of. It was breaking through the lazy cow community. Maybe there were watch towers spread throughout the communities. However, there was no reason to hesitate in destroying the communities when his location was already found.

'While the blue tiger buys time, break through the rest of the communities and go to the Cho Kingdom.'

It was necessary to confirm if the king of the Cho Kingdom was really protecting him. It was because the Cho Kingdom was a precious home for Han Seokbong and Sua.

Step.

Grid finally escaped the cramped, complex maze-like structure and saw vast agricultural fields. Large rabbits dressed like humans were working hard everywhere.

Ttiring~

[You have entered the hard-working rabbit community.]

The cave that he passed through seemed to be a rabbit cave. Grid held the Enlightenment Sword in order to prepare for any rabbit attacks.

“The rat that was able to become a member of the 12 Zodiacs by riding on the cow’s back was originally lacking in qualifications but the black cow was not an easy opponent.”

A voice was ahead from above Grid’s head. Grid, who was already ready, raised his gaze and saw a rabbit sitting on a tree. The rabbit stared at Grid and jumped from the tree. “You have a good edge to your senses. You have remarkable insight to be able to see through the black cow’s trickery. You are qualified to receive the favor of the blue tiger.”

“Rats, cows, tigers, rabbits... The 12 Zodiacs... Ah!” Grid finally noticed—the monster communities to the north of Pangea had a theme of the 12 Zodiacs.

“Originally, us 12 Zodiacs were the servants of the Four Auspicious Beasts. However, our power quickly weakened since the Four Auspicious Beasts were deceived and sealed by the gods. Most of the spiritual beings following us lost their intelligence and became monsters.”

“.....”

“Only Blue Tiger, the descendant of White Tiger, Earth Dragon, the descendant of Blue Dragon, and I, the beautiful Tosun, who was particularly cherished by the Four Auspicious Beasts, barely managed to maintain our strength and reason, and keep the other 12 Zodiacs under control. Then even that became impossible after Blue Tiger was kidnapped one day.”

“Beautiful Tosun?”

“Tosun is my name.”

“Why Tosun...?”

“I’m a female.”

“...I see.”

There seemed to be no complaints or questions about her name. Grid decided to let it go.

Tosun’s explanation continued, “The moment Blue Tiger left his position, most of the tigers were turned into monsters or wild animals, attacking humans and being hunted in reverse. Even the 10 Tigers, who retained their qualifications, lost most of their past memories. Earth Dragon, who unreasonably wanted to stay alone, blamed himself for not guarding the tigers while Blue Tiger was away and hid underground. I barely managed to protect half my herd.”

Tosun shrugged and turned her gaze to the fields. There were around 50 rabbits in the fields but they didn’t show any hostility when they saw Grid. Some of them smiled and waved. They seemed to be classified as spiritual beings, not monsters.

“In this situation, we avoided the curse of the evil daoist. All of the 12 Zodiacs and their subordinates, apart from Earth Dragon, Blue Tiger, and my rabbit herd, couldn’t avoid the curse and became monsters.”

Tosun's request was simple. "Human who has received Blue Tiger's favor. There is nothing but chaos beyond here. Nothing can be obtained from the community of the sleeping Earth Dragon. After the Earth Dragon community, you will only face irrational monsters. So stop here and go back. Please. Please stay away from the eyes of the yangbans until Red Phoenix is restored."

"..."

Grid had felt strange from the moment he received the mythical item for free. He didn't know that he had taken on a huge role. Honestly, it was normal to be offended but Grid only felt a sense of responsibility and motivation. It was because the opponents were the yangbans.

Grid wasn't willing to be intertwined with transcendents or gods, but the yangbans were an exception. He didn't like the existence of the yangbans and he wondered if it was inevitable that he would clash with them as Pagma's Descendant.

'Let's think about it.'

Grid revisited the quest information. Keep the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides for two years but he couldn't be killed more than three times in that period. The quest difficulty of the Red Phoenix Guardian quest was absurdly high. He had to operate in a safe place for two years. Even if he hid in a safe place, he would continue to be exposed to the threat posed by the yangbans. It was virtually impossible to have less than three deaths in two years.

However, this wasn't the only quest clear condition. He could clear it immediately as long as he got 20 Red Phoenix Breaths. For the average person, getting 20 Red Phoenix Breaths would seem much harder and impossible than not dying three times for two years but for Grid, it was the opposite. Grid's teammates were eager to give him the gold medal rewards for the National Competition. Furthermore, the method of obtaining the Red Phoenix Breath wasn't only the National Competition.

"If I kill a yangban, will they drop the breath of a sacred creature that they hold?"

"...!"

"What?!"

"D-Don't tell me, you...! You are going to fight the gods by yourself!"

Tosun was shocked. He might've been chosen by Blue Tiger but a human thinking about fighting against the yangbans? It was absolutely absurd.

Grid's eyes didn't waver. "My plan hasn't changed. I will break through all the remaining communities, develop my strength, and hunt the yangbans."

"S-Sophistry! Vain and full of pride!"

The rabbit cave that Grid passed through exploded and a stalker appeared. It was a man wearing the same blue robe as Garam. Tosun's face stiffened. "Yangban...!"

The yangban, Hangyeol, laughed. "I followed Garam and found something funny. Ignorant human, what indignity did you bring to Garam? What did you do to make Garam so upset when he sees you? Tell me more."

“Run away! We’ll buy time for you!”

Tosun and the rabbits came in front of Grid. They were ready for death but Hangyeol didn’t even look at them. He treated them as insignificant.

“Come on, tell me. Tell me how stupid Garam was. Based on your words, I will be able to take Garam’s place.”

Only the most talented of the yangban could show their faces to the public and be deified. It was the Five Seniors’ plan to raise gods quickly by focusing faith on a small number of people, but it was very regrettable and unfair for those who weren’t selected.

“Haha! Go ahead!”

By chance, he found Garam leaving the Hwan Kingdom. Hangyeol followed and was thrilled to see this. He smiled as he imagined replacing Garam.

Grid snorted. “Newbie.”

“...?”

“...?”

Hangyeol and the rabbits doubted their ears. They had no time to wake up from their consternation. Grid was engulfed in Lightning Speed and had already moved behind Hangyeol.

“T-This technique...?! Kuaaaaak!”

A yangban who hadn’t been deified—this person allowed Grid to advance and was hit. He vomited blood while the rabbits raised their ears.

[Chapter 1162](#)

At the toothless tiger community...

The old rocks collapsed. It was the work of the blue tiger.

“You are an absurd guy.”

Garam swept his long hair—soaked with blood and sweat—behind his ears and laughed. His eyebrows raised sharply as his eyes alternated between looking at the injured blue tiger and at the collapsed old stones.

“There is no precedent for humans to survive in the face of a god’s grudge. Even if you grab onto my ankles until I break down the few remaining of the 12 Zodiacs, Grid is doomed to die. He might resurrect a few times but he will always dance on the palm of my hand and suffer from tens of thousands of deaths.”

There was no value in a foolish sacrifice...

Mocking overflowed from Garam’s leisurely face. He had no doubt that he would be able to find Grid again and kill him, even if he missed Grid now. Honestly, he was enjoying it by this point. He wanted to

have fun, like a hunter setting a fire and waiting for the raccoon to crawl out of the cave. He was holding the Cho Kingdom as a hostage.

The blue tiger shuddered. "Aheung. I feel sorry for you, a god's creation who is pretending to be a god."

"..."

Garam's face was stiff. Humans and yangbans were no different, thus they should cherish each other and treat each other equally. A madman's sophistry revolved around Garam's head. He silently stared at the blue tiger for a moment before turning his attention to the 10 trembling toothless tigers.

"Since killing a god is impossible, I'll have to torture and kill them to allay my anger."

"Why are you obsessed with pointless killing?"

Garam snorted as the blue tiger blocked his way. "Didn't I say that I was going to soothe my anger?"

Garam started to wield the sword like a whip. He shivered with joy as he remembered the days when he tortured the blue tiger. The wounds on the blue tiger's body increased as he was forced on the defensive, only for the toothless tigers to cry out. "Aheung! The other yangban chased the human!"

"...?"

Garam and the blue tiger's attention shifted at the same time. The tigers explained with an incomprehensible expression.

"T-The two of them are fighting! A yangban suddenly appeared on the side of the sheep community and crossed using the stones, heung!"

"There was no time to stop him, heung!"

"...!"

Garam and the blue tiger's eyes were burning after they saw that the tigers weren't lying. The blue tiger was worried about Grid and the Red Phoenix Bow while Garam was anxious about his dirty laundry being discovered.

'The bitter candidates are the only one who can fool my senses.'

The bitter candidates—it referred to the yangban who finished 8th place and below in Chiyou's test. They were beaten in the competition and weren't worthy to be objects of faith. They were much weaker than the Seven, including Garam, but they were still yangbans. It was easy for them to subdue a human. In particular, Hangeol was skilled and it was possible for him to deceive Garam's senses. It would be easy for him to chase after Grid unnoticed.

"That son of a bitch...!"

Grid would've already been overpowered. That guy would cling to his cheap life as usual and tell Hangeol all about Garam's dirty laundry. Garam went crazy at the thought and rushed forward. The blue tiger and the toothless tigers were no longer his concerns. The moment he was ridiculed by the other yangban, his position might be weakened and he might be disqualified from the Seven.

Garam had to shut Hangyeol's mouth no matter what. Since the stones were broken, it would take time to get to the rabbit community. He was forced to leave straight away.

The blue tiger sat down in place. He didn't rush after the departing Garam. There was no reason to hold him with force. Grid would already be dead. It was too early to have given him the Red Phoenix Bow.

'Pagma... I brought danger to your descendant...'

The guilt-ridden blue tiger was in tears.

Grid didn't forget the thrill of seeing the yangban for the first time. The presence had been reminiscent of the legends of the West Continent and Grid had flinched back. Yes, the yangbans were strong. Those who had the blood of a god couldn't be weak. The fighting energy that boiled the moment Hangyeol appeared proved the reality. However...

"Pinnacle Kill."

Grid predicted the odds of winning. Unlike a few years ago, he didn't shrink back. Now he was stronger and had penetrated the weaknesses of the yangbans. It was as expected.

"Ugh!"

Hangyeol was hit twice in a row by Grid. The fatal weakness of a yangban—it was that they made mistakes out of pride. Hangyeol was humiliated because he couldn't respond quickly to Grid's surprise attack. He never imagined that a human would dare to strike at a yangban.

"This swordsmanship... Kukuk! Was Garam caught off guard like this? I understand why his eyes are fiery now."

"...!"

Following Kill and Pinnacle Kill, Grid tried to link it with Restraint only to reflexively fall back. There was a wave of air where Grid had been standing. It was caused by an invisible wind strike.

'This strength...'

It was a technique with the power to make Grid silent. Previously, Garam had lured Grid to the East Continent using a quest and he used this invisible wind to turn Grid to tatters. This was one of the decisive reasons why Grid was afraid of Garam. How could a player beat a monster who won against the opponent using an attack with no form?

It was a power that caused Grid to feel frustration. Yet at this moment, he glimpsed the truth. The strike of invisible wind. The identity of this ability that Garam called 'power' was actually Formless Will. The power of willpower, embodied by those who had already awakened the heart. The yangbans were able to embody the ability with their innate willpower and called it 'power.'

"It turns out that you're pretty good," Hangyeol muttered. Avoiding the intangible winds? This person wasn't a normal human. It was unknown how he mastered Pagma's Swordsmanship but he must've overcome human limitations in the process.

Hangyeol's attitude became a bit more serious. He started using the power of the wind in earnest. The force of the wind that blew around Hangyeol gradually became faster and fiercer. He had no intention of pulling out the sword hanging from his waist at all. He looked at Grid in a relaxed manner despite already being hit twice.

It wasn't because he was stupid. The yangbans had ruled humans for at least hundreds of years. They were a disaster to humans or saved humans according to their mood. It was fundamentally impossible for the yangbans to be concerned about humans.

In fact, Hangyeol's wounds were already healing quickly. It was the power of the Red Phoenix Breath. No, there was no need to talk about the Red Phoenix Breath. The wounds he suffered weren't deep in the first place. It was evidence that a human couldn't harm the yangbans.

"Haha, I'll break your legs first."

Hangyeol gave a cheerful laugh and his personality was very different from Garam.

Garam, who had been deified for a long time, was obsessed with every little wound Grid dealt him because it was a blow to his pride. Hangyeol, who wasn't chosen to be an object of faith, had endured for a long time and wasn't obsessed with petty wounds.

He remained reasonable and calmly targeted Grid. An intangible wind swept over Grid. It wasn't easy to avoid invisible attacks. This was the power of one who would become a god. Before great power, humans were supposed to kneel...

"...What?"

Hangyeol's smiling face stiffened. The intangible winds were torn away without reaching Grid.

[The target's solid will has neutralized the Formless Will.]

Formless Will was a power of willpower. It was a force that easily subdued targets with relatively weak or no willpower. It also meant that it wouldn't work against strong-willed targets at all. The expansion of his mana core allowed Grid to open the willpower stat and Grid obtained Formless Will, but it was impossible to control it directly.

"This...!"

Hangyeol stood with a baffled expression and hurriedly grasped his sword. It was because the man engulfed in a dark red-purple aura quickly started dancing amidst the storm of wind. This dance wasn't familiar to Hangyeol.

"Transcend!"

It was a sword dance that created sword energy. If he didn't narrow the distance, the situation would be at a disadvantage for a while. Hangyeol rushed forward. He needed to approach Grid before the sword energy flew forward. However...

"Transcend—"

The time Grid took to complete the sword dance was faster than Hangyeol expected.

“—Link Kill Pinnacle.”

There were no gaps.

“...!?”

Four sword dances at the same time? No, not even Pagma...

Hangyeol's thoughts didn't last long. The dozens of energy blades that poured forward precisely aimed at his vital areas and contained killing intent to the extreme so there was no time to consider it.

“Kuek...!”

Hangyeol planned to twist the trajectory of the dozens of energy blades by drawing a large circle with his soft sword, but failed. Another weakness of the yangban was their lack of experience. Braham's magic was in Pagma's Swordsmanship. It was impossible for the yangban, who had been lazy all his life, to cope with the combined power of two legends.

[Fenrir's Power is supporting the spirit of struggle that doesn't lose. You have overcome the gap with the target.]

The damage of the fully buffed Grid was 100% applied, mangling Hangyeol's body. Grid's attack power penetrated even the defense of semi-god transcendent.

“Kuaack!”

His screams couldn't stop and red blood poured out as Hangyeol collapsed. Grid was already in the process of using Transcended Link Flower.

“You...!”

Something was wrong. This person wasn't Pagma's successor. He was a monster who had surpassed Pagma. A chill went down Hangyeol's spine as he used Lightning Speed and soared up into the sky. He had the idea of escaping from this place right away but Grid didn't allow it.

“W-Who are you?”

Hangyeol's face was white. He hadn't expected Grid to also use the power of the blue dragon. He was caught by the chasing Grid and Hangyeol pulled out the power of the white tiger. The Red Phoenix Breath was busy restoring his wound so he had simultaneously activated the power of three of the Four Auspicious Beasts.

“Cough!”

Black blood poured from Hangyeol's mouth. He couldn't die in the hands of a human and did his best. A shield of stone walls that wouldn't break appeared around him. Then the walls disappeared.

“I won't allow your comfort.”

“...!”

Hangyeol crashed to the ground.

[Chapter 1163](#)

His wounds hurt and the sky was high above him. It was only after Hangyeol fell in a ragged state that he became aware of a fact he had taken for granted. Even so, he didn't want to admit it. It was because he was a god.

"...This is a foreign realm."

The Red Phoenix Breath was constantly emitting flames. The red phoenix was a god who governed over fire and life. The flames of life restored the seven fatal wounds engraved on Hangyeol's body. Hangyeol's body disappeared with a roar. The blue dragon was a god who governed over wind and lightning. Hangyeol was surrounded by lightning and gusts of winds and eliminated the notion of space.

"I won't be beaten by a human like you!!"

Hangyeol's sword shrieked as it emitted thick smoke. The power of the black tortoise, who governed water and death, revealed itself. Hangyeol, who hadn't built up faith, was unable to completely control the violent power of the black tortoise. However, at this moment, he transcended his boundaries. He was trying to break the barrier with his willpower for the first time since he was born and he waited for the black tortoise to surrender.

Hangyeol had a gut feeling. The human in front of him was a trial that the gods had given to him. He would overcome this trial and face a turning point.

The soft sword that soared behind Grid's back moved like a rope and twisted its trajectory. Like the tail of a scorpion, it struck at Grid's neck. Grid belatedly turned his head and Hangyeol smiled as he met Grid's eyes.

'Die. Your flesh and blood will be a soulful requiem...!'

Hangyeol's eyes widened. Four black-gold hands suddenly blocked his attack. Hangyeol shook when the attack, aimed at the perfect human blind spot, was blocked. He raised his hands nervously, saving his face.

'He owns four treasures with such a powerful ego?'

Just like the strength of the ego varied from person to person, a treasure also had ratings. Treasures that could move on their own and fight for their owner was classified as the best items, along with a treasure sharing their vision or experience with the owner.

'He is definitely a tricky guy.'

Hangyeol's vigilance was amplified. He couldn't easily evaluate the man who used Pagma's Swordsmanship more skillfully than Pagma, simultaneously cast magic while swinging his sword, and possessed the power of the sacred creatures, the evil eyes, and the treasures.

Grid used Link and Hangyeol blocked the first blow. Dozens of energy blades pressed steadily at his defenses but Hangyeol managed to avoid all attacks because he entrusted his body to the wind. The problem was the anomalous and powerful magic mixed in with the sword dances.

However, Hangyeol's specialty wasn't swordsmanship or physique. Amulets spread around Hangyeol, blocking the magic. Braham's spells embedded in the sword dances couldn't easily penetrate Hangyeol's amulets. It was the limit of basic magic.

"Kuek...!"

However, the buff-magic, Enchant Weapon, worked well despite being basic magic. Braham's magic reinforced Grid's sword and Grid used the sword dances developed from Pagma. As a result, Hangyeol continued to be on the defensive and was hurt.

"Ah, I can't see..." The rabbits on the ground blinked their eyes. Grid's offensive, with fighting energy at the maximum, and Hangyeol's steady movements to stop it, were so rapid that it wasn't visible to their eyes. They only recognized that colorful lights were colliding. Tosun was in a similar situation since she had continued to weaken since the Four Auspicious Beasts were sealed.

'I never thought there would be a human who could fight on an equal footing with a yangban...'

What type of life had this human lived? The moment Tosun questioned it, blue petals exploded and Grid and Hangyeol, who had been entangled for a long time, finally separated from each other.

"Pant... Pant..."

Blackening had been released a long time ago and Grid was breathing roughly. His hands trembled as he took out potions.

"Cough, cough!" Hangyeol vomited blood while maintaining his breathing. His belt was released so a hard upper body with black marks was revealed between his loosened robes. However, he didn't use the Red Phoenix's Breath. No, he couldn't. It was the aftermath of using the Red Phoenix Breath during the process of attacking and defending against Grid.

He needed a moment of mental recovery as he struggled to control his rough breathing. In short, his mana had fallen.

"I'm sad to lose precious things."

Hangyeol wiped the blood from his mouth, looking relaxed. The Black Tortoise Breath was a poison that corroded objects and withered life. It was impossible for Grid and his treasures to be safe when they exchanged hundreds of blows with Hangyeol inside the Black Tortoise Breath's fog.

'It will be advantageous to me as more time passes.'

Hangyeol was convinced. The world that was three seconds in the future unfolded in his mind. The four black-gold hands would completely weather and scatter like dust. The battle would soon be in his favor. Hangyeol was preparing for an airstrike when he soon became flustered. "What?"

The black-gold hands, which had been constantly exposed to the Black Tortoise Breath, were completely fine. This was different from Hangyeol's expectations. Rather than weathering, they didn't rust at all as they floated in front of the human to protect him.

'What is that material?'

It was outside the expected range. Anxiety rose. Hangeol broke out of the airstrike position and retreated again. He checked to see if Shunpo was reusable. At this moment, the dark sword in the human's hands let out a loud noise. The sword, which had constantly emitted flames during the battle, started to crack with a scream. It was the same for the crown full of arrogance, the gloves filled with swiftness, and the cloak that let out a bloody smell...

All the items worn on the human's body started rapidly weathering because they couldn't withstand the Black Tortoise Breath. Hangeol was curious because the armor and shoes that should've been broken first were fine, but he soon dismissed it as trivial. He was convinced that he had already won.

"Hat...! Kuhahahahat!"

Was it so sweet to triumph over a human? For the first time, Hangeol felt joy in the rights he naturally enjoyed and burst out laughing.

"Ignorant human! Get down on your knees and beg me! Tell me, how did you acquire the sword dances of the loser? What happened to the loser? Tell me everything that happened with Garam! I won't take your life as long as you speak! Hahahahat!"

"....."

Grid was silent. In fact, he couldn't afford to answer. This person used the Blue Dragon Breath to fly in the sky. No matter how he was hit, he recovered using the Red Phoenix Breath. Fatal injuries were blocked with the White Tiger Breath or avoided with Shunpo...

Grid was exhausted as he faced the monster, Hangeol. In particular, he felt a significant threat from the Black Tortoise Breath, which dealt a curse of corrosion. Grid's concentration was exhausted.

'It would've been much easier if the success rate of the Castration Eye is 100%.'

The primary effect of the Castration Eye was to delete 'some' of the target's beneficial effects. This had a success rate of 100%. However, the effect of 'deleting all of the target's beneficial effects' wasn't always helpful because it was a probability trigger.

'I'm not a manhwa character.'

It was a really tough fight. Hangeol was a truly fraudulent character. This guy was growing throughout the battle. He was overcoming the weakness of his lack of skills and experience as he kept fighting. Grid's prediction—that the yangbans with no faith would surpass Piaro and Mercedes in terms of stats and skills, but the overall performance would be on par with the two—was shattered. His stats, level, and abilities, were similar to Teruchan, he had a power comparable to Mercedes, and he was now growing to Piaro's level in technique.

'If I drag this out longer then I'll lose.'

Growing in real time. It was like the hero of a manhwa fighting for a long time. The determined Grid pulled out a portable furnace and a blacksmith's hammer. The legendary blacksmith's ability instantly increased the firepower of the furnace and he quickly repaired the items that had been damaged.

Ttang!Ttang!Ttang!

“...?”

Hangyeol was dumbfounded for a moment. He didn't understand the behavior of the human who sat down and started hammering. Then suddenly...

“Crazy!”

He shuddered and swore as he confirmed that the human's battle gear were being repaired at a tremendous rate. He was blocked by the God Hands. Rather than the corroded swords, the God Hands pulled out Mjolnirs and tangled around Hangyeol in a dizzying manner. It was a meteor-like momentum but Hangyeol wasn't threatened. He was able to move faster than the God Hands and he had already become accustomed to the intentions of the God Hands.

“Stop this meaningless struggle!”

He lightly broke through the God Hands' defense line and swung his sword at Grid's side. It wasn't just swinging the sword. It was a powerful swing based on the awareness he gained during combat. The soft sword folded and unfolded. It was as fast as lightning as it aimed for the gap Grid revealed.

“Kyak kyak.”

It greeted the Overgeared Skeletons rising from the ground instead of Grid.

“Hah! You've really mastered many things!”

He made a funny expression as he recovered the sword and stabbed it again. The soft sword oscillated and there seemed to be hundreds of them as he thrust his sword at Grid.

“How rude, nyang!” Noe appeared like a flying squirrel and used Lightning Discharge to nullify the attack. He was just attempting to use Soul Ingestion when Noe's face became like this (X ^ X) as it was hit.

“Hahahaha!” Hangyeol laughed despite the fact that several attacks had already failed. Every time Grid pulled out a new move, he trembled with joy, convinced that he had won. The next attack followed. Unlike the previous attacks, it was a powerful strike without any finesse. Hangyeol would cut Grid completely, no matter what Grid did. Yet it failed.

“Revolve.” Randy appeared in Grid's form and hit back.

“Keuk!” Hangyeol was cut by his own sword and shivered with shame. “This human...! Damn human!”

How many times had he been humiliated? The furious Hangyeol gritted his teeth and viciously cut Randy and Noe, killing them. Even in this dire situation, he aimed his sword at Grid who was focusing on hammering.

[You have received catastrophic damage!]

“Keuk...!”

Blood flowed from Grid as he hammered at the anvil. Nevertheless, his hammering didn't stop and he didn't die. Blacksmith's Patience increased his defense and the shield of the First King title and the health recovery of Tiramet's Power allowed him to endure it.

"Tricky guy!"

Hangyeol swung his sword again. Then...

Ttang!

Grid raised his hammer over his head and prevented the attack. As he held the repaired Enlightenment Sword in his hand, he gazed at the black tortoise's fog around him and questioned, "Why do you guys look down on humans every time?"

"...!"

Clearly, Grid looked terrible, like a dying man. However, Hangyeol shrank back. It was the impact of Divinity.

[Show off the virtues of a blacksmith who deserves to be praised as a god. The casting time and cooldown time of all blacksmithing skills will be removed. It is applicable up to two times whenever the skill is used.]

'W-What is this?'

The shadow of the Five Seniors could be felt from in front of him. Deity—a holy dignity that couldn't be touched. Hangyeol felt the power of a god from Grid at this moment. He couldn't acknowledge it.

"A mere mortal human... isn't it natural to regard weak humans as inferior?" Hangyeol wondered with a trembling voice.

He was denying reality. The human being in front of him. He constantly denied that the trivial human in front of him who used the sword dance of a loser could have a god's qualifications. Grid's gaze on him was cold and heavy. "Aren't you also mortal?"

"Nonsense!" The word 'mortal' touched on Hangyeol's pride. He overcame his fear with anger and attacked Grid. The sword looked like the gorgeous tail of a peacock as it swept across Grid's chest and finally penetrated his heart. It felt like the tiring battle plagued with humiliation had finally come to an end.

...No, it wasn't over.

"...!"

The human whose swordsmanship was handed down. Hangyeol didn't know what was going on. His heartbeat became louder and louder as he stepped back with a pale face.

Step. Grid walked forward and pursued him. Grid had entered the enlightened state while repairing the items and witnessed this moment like it was eternity. It wasn't just himself who was tired. The proof was that the wounds on Hangyeol's body weren't recovering.

"Item Combination, Item Transformation."

The Enlightenment Sword was combined with Grid's Greatsword. Greed emerged from the inventory and copied the exact form. Two swords, exactly like twins, were held side by side in both of Grid's hands.

"Storm Demonic Energy Field."

The dark clouds that emerged replaced the fog of the black tortoise. As lightning fell, the shadow of Grid moved through the fog and pierced Hangyeol's heart. It was like the prelude to a new myth being recorded in the world.

"Ah... Uwahh..."

Tosun and the rabbits witnessed a scene they couldn't even imagine and their ears moved up and down repeatedly.

[An unknown person has killed a half-god.]

A short, powerful statement, emerged as a world message.

[Chapter 1164](#)

-It is Damian.

-Right. It is Damian.

-Yes.

[Pope Damian declared that he won't participate in the National Competition]

The media around the world were buzzing with the news but the people's reaction was calm. They had already foreseen the identity of the demon king this year. Damian's declaration that he wouldn't attend the National Competition was simply admitting that he was the demon king.

-Ah. ⇨ ⇨ Who would be deceived? If it was me, I would just stay silent or be honest. ⇨ ⇨

-He is a Grid fan so he is going to follow Grid. ⇨ ⇨

-Damian is honestly cute.

There was no reason for Damian to refuse to participate in the National Competition. In the world that was divided into the heavenly system and earth system, apart from Grid and Kraugel, Damian was a top predator belonging to the heavenly system. This year's National Competition without Grid was a great opportunity for him to play at his best.

In the first place, the Demon King's Subjugation was specialized for Damian. Damian had a variety of buff skills and percentage heals. He was more likely to become an immortal demon king if he gained the health boost.

-Besides, Damian has many talented people.

Rebecca's Daughters—Damian's three strongest NPCs were equivalent to Grid's knights, and the senior Vatican members had healing abilities beyond Damian and were considered as Damian's subordinates. If

they became the Four Heavenly Kings and guarded the gateways, it would be difficult for the players to invade.

-Additionally, the Templar have started to act recently.

The Templar were the secret knights of the Rebecca Church and everything about them was veiled. According to information leaked by players in the Rebecca Church, the Templar stopped operating as a separate private organization and recently started supporting Damian. If the head of the Templar—who was likely to be a named NPC—appeared as one of the Four Heavenly Kings, then this year's Demon King—Damian—was likely to be invincible, just like last year's demon king.

-There is no reason to refuse to attend the National Competition unless Damian is senile.

This was the people's conclusion. No one doubted the identity of the demon king. Only Damian suffered.

'I was going to surprise people by appearing like last year's Grid!'

Yet the plan failed. Strictly speaking, it was due to Ares. During the time when there was no news about Ares' participation in the National Competition, there was some speculation that this year's demon king was Ares. Then he suddenly participated in the National Competition and this collapsed.

'My surprise show...'

Damian turned his gaze from the TV talking about him to stare out the window. Reporters were surrounding the house. The situation was the same when he connected to Satisfy. There were a rush of whispers and shouts asking for interviews. Reporters disguised themselves as visitors and infiltrated the Vatican. By this time, even Damian was tired.

'I'm tired because I attracted too much aggro.'

Damian insisted that the basic virtue of an otaku was to not lose his pace at any time or under any circumstances. No matter what others were saying, he didn't care at all. Even when Japan was in the midst of the anti-Grid sentiment, Damian openly praised Grid. However, this level of interest was burdensome even for Damian. Everyone in the world was watching his every move and things were more uncomfortable than he could've imagined.

'As expected, Grid is sugoi...'

Grid was a person who received attention every day. Damian deeply respected the fact that Grid remained focused while in the center of attention.

'He is the one I acknowledge.'

Damian remembered the first time he met Grid and became determined. His goal was to grow into someone who could stand next to Grid. In order to do so, he needed achievements in the Demon King's Subjugation.

'In order to do this, I need to find Orbis' Ring in the month remaining.'

Damian's concern for the Demon King's Subjugation was the healing reduction and no healing curses caused by burns, bleeding, and more.

His unique class Goddess' Agent had continued to grow and he was also the pope, so he had a resistance of more than 82%. Still, he wasn't completely resistant, unlike Grid. He would be greatly weakened the moment he was hit with debuffs that lowered his resistance to abnormal states. Thus, he felt the need to block off this weak point.

His only hope was Orbis' Ring. It had a terrible probability of dropping from the banshee queen, who respawned every 36 hours in the Land of the Cryers. It was a legendary accessory that gave immunity to healing reduction and no healing skills. Damian had been aiming for the ring for three months now.

However, he still didn't get it. It was shameful to use the authority of the pope to have the paladins block and monopolize the hunting ground under the pretext of 'purifying polluted land.' However, if he didn't do so, it would be impossible to obtain Orbis' Ring. Likewise, he would have to compete fiercely with the rankers looking for the banshee queen. The banshee queen respawned 36 hours after death 'somewhere in the field' and was originally a type of field boss that went to the first person who found her.

'If the reporters keep chasing me, they'll know that I'm monopolizing a hunting ground.'

This was a serious problem. The news would be flooded and he would be inundated with public criticism. It was certain that a large number of people would appear to prevent Damian from monopolizing the banshee queen.

'When will there be a new article?'

He wanted news big enough to turn the reporters' attention away from himself.

'...Well, such huge news won't burst so easily.'

Perhaps if another great demon suddenly appeared... however, this was a wish that couldn't be achieved.

'I'll have to be prudent for a few days. Let's take that opportunity to leave the Vatican.'

It happened as Damian was sighing and trying to ignore that the banshee queen would respawn in an hour...

[An unknown person has killed a half-god.]

"...??"

It was an absurd world message that was only one line.

"Heok! Big news!"

"G-God? What is it this time? Is it Grid again?"

The reporters who had infiltrated the Vatican made a fuss and scrambled to leave. It was like seeing a procession of ants.

"....."

Damian lost his soul. He was stupefied for a long time before kneeling down and shouting, “God Grid! Ohh, God!”

Pope Damian—he started to worship and pray to Grid when he should only be worshipping and praying to Goddess Rebecca. He truly deserved to be punished. It was a sin that should receive a stern warning from Rebecca’s Daughters, who were the keepers of faith. Yet Isabel pretended to be asleep—she was the first person to deify Grid.

In the East Continent, the rabbit community...

“Pant... Pant...”

Grid had overextended himself in the battle against Hangeol that he had won. He ignored the notification windows floating on one side of his field of view. He was mentally and physically exhausted. His body sank down and his eyes blurred. He couldn’t even read the text.

‘This is the limit.’

Just because he needed to rest his body didn’t mean he had to rest his mind. Grid focused as he checked himself and reviewed the battle.

‘It seems it is time to use my saved stat points and skill creation rights.’

The total number of times that God’s Command triggered in the battle against Hangeol was three. In particular, the time when God’s Command activated when Flower Revolve was used, and then again later on when 200,000 Army Crushing Sword was used, was enough to influence the battle. This meant that luck played a significant role in Grid’s victory.

‘It would’ve been hard if I wasn’t lucky.’

Originally, Grid had a good chance of winning against the yangbans who hadn’t built up their divinity. They might have inherited the blood of a god but the reason for their birth and the significance of their existence was to be a ‘consumable.’ Yes, a consumable. Those who hadn’t built up their divinity were completely different from Garam. They were merely miscellaneous soldiers or extras in the war against the gods planned by the Five Seniors. There were clear limitations because they hadn’t been given a special story or role, unlike the grandmaster on the West Continent.

Grid only recently realized it but it was clear that Kraugel had been looking into it for a long time.

‘Thus, I can fight the yangbans if I just reach level 500.’

True named NPCs boasted a growth that was beyond users. If Kraugel had thought of all yangbans as transcendents then Grid wouldn’t have even thought of fighting them. Yet at the end of the 3rd National Competition, Kraugel had made it clear—the yangbans weren’t as absolute as Bunhelier and the prerequisite for dealing with them was level 500.

The current Grid was already enough to meet the conditions that Kraugel mentioned. Once Grid’s fighting energy reached the maximum, he boasted stats that even level 500 players would never dream of. There was also the Blood King title.

‘However, it still isn’t enough.’

There was a real difference. If God’s Command had triggered one less time, he might’ve lost the fight. This allowed Grid to understand his target.

‘The enemies are too strong to leave this.’

Grid had 606 stat points remaining after raiding Fenrir and reaching level 405. An average player gained 10 stat points with each level up. That’s right—Grid had been storing nearly 60 levels worth of stat points. He wasn’t conscious of the cliché ‘a master hides his strength.’ Rather than hiding his power, Grid had been running around more than necessary and wasn’t aware of the cliché.

Grid was just cautious. If he wanted a 1:1 ratio of strength and agility, he would have to invest 400 points in agility. What if he regretted it? In a position where he already had enough damage and speed, wasn’t it more stable to aim for increased health? Should he increase his intelligence to maximize Braham’s magic stored in his sword dances? Etc, etc.

Grid’s troubles continued every day and this naturally led to him saving his extra points. The biggest problem was his lack of references. Most players would look at higher leveled players to find a more efficient way to train. However, Grid was in the leading position and had no noteworthy references.

In the past, he thought Piaro and Mercedes were the best and would’ve referenced their stats, but he couldn’t do that anymore. Piaro’s stats ratio after being a farmer for a long time was completely different from the days when he was a great swordsman. Meanwhile, Mercedes actively handled various situations through the use of Keen Insight and was a balanced-type knight who raised almost all her stats. She was different from Grid.

Grid had to judge and pioneer the way for himself. It was the grievance of the supreme one.

‘It is best to use the premise of a 1:1 strength to agility ratio.’

Grid didn’t forget Piaro in his great swordsman days. Thanks to the perfect 1:1 ratio of strength and agility, Piaro’s swordsmanship was fast but heavy. He was ultimately powerful. It was a shame to invest 400 points in agility when his speed was already at the maximum but it was a good idea to use them rather than leaving them alone.

‘It is better to put it in health.’

Grid’s attack power was already sufficient after becoming the Blood King. He was reminded of all the named NPCs he had fought. The reason it was hard to deal with them was more about their health than their damage or defense.

‘My skills can be used as long as I’m alive.’

The smell of Overgeared Corn’s saliva, who licked Grid with his tongue to restore stamina and recovery, was starting to become terrible. Grid recovered moderately and checked the notification windows.

[You have killed the yangban Hangyeol.]

[Your level has risen.]

[The Red Phoenix's Breath has been acquired.]

[The White Tiger's Breath has been acquired.]

[The Blue Dragon's Breath has been acquired.]

[The Black Tortoise's Breath has been acquired.]

[The Yangban's Soft Sword has been acquired.]

[The Yangban's Dupo has been acquired.]

[The Yangban's Horsehair Hat has been acquired.] [1]

"...!"

Grid's eyes widened. He thought the yangban would drop some breaths but he hadn't expected one of each type. He also dropped a weapon, cloth armor, and a hat? It was a real jackpot.

Grid's heart was excited by the result beyond expectations and started to rampage like crazy. The notification windows were being updated.

['Pungsa' has caught a glimpse of you as you stand over Hangeol's corpse.]

[★ Note ★ Your knight Dante has formed a hostile relationship with the Hwan Kingdom.]

"...?"

[You have achieved the 'Half-God Killer' achievement!]

[The soul of a half-god has been absorbed into the Strange Magic Power Stone. The magic power of the Strange Magic Power Stone has risen.]

[The Half-God Killer achievement has increased the deity stat by one point.]

[The 'Hard-Working Rabbits' who witnessed your achievement are deifying you. Your deity stat has risen by one.]

[Your deity stat has reached 10 points and something special will happen.]

"...?!"

A light shone down over Grid's body—it was a divine light that made the rabbits joyous.

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[Your deity stat has reached 10 points and something special will happen.]

How long did it take to get here? Grid was thrilled when the deity stat, which had been opened thanks to Isabel, finally reached the target. Great excitement and anticipation rushed inside him, shaking his heart.

'Will I become a half-god?'

Grid already had a chance to become a half-god once. The quest 'Crossroad of Good and Evil' that occurred during the Vatican raid had given him a chance to become a half-god. Additionally, if he evolved into a half-god then there was room for a significant increase in all stats. Yet Grid refused to become a half-god.

At that time, Grid was qualified to become a half-god due to the First Holy Sword and 4th Evil Taren, not because of the status he built up himself. If Grid had chosen to be a half-god, he would've gained the Holy Sword of the 4th Evil and become hostile to all the gods on the West Continent.

Now it was different—Grid was deified by many beings and was qualified to become a god on his own. If this achievement made him a half-god then the gods of the West Continent had no justification to be hostile to Grid.

'Please...! Please, a half-god!'

Hangyeol might be a consumable, unlike Garam, but it couldn't be denied that he had the blood of a god. A yangban's death was a major milestone in history and it wasn't unusual to be part of an epic. Then why wasn't an epic appearing? Additionally, what would happen to Dante in the future? The old knight had become hostile to the Hwan Kingdom just because Grid used his name and face for the skin mask.

Despite the many questions, Grid decided to focus on the events ahead. He waited eagerly, hoping to be qualified to become a half-god. The light that surrounded him grew stronger, as if responding to Grid's expectations. It was a far cry from the light that occurred when Rebecca, goddess of light, gave him a blessing. It was a hot and intense light, unlike Rebecca's unrelenting light. It was like a blazing flame. If the flames on Hexetia's nipples became bigger then it might feel like this.

'Wait?'

He was Pagma's Descendant. If he became a half-god then he should be a blacksmith half-god. If so, wouldn't his relationship with Hexetia become uncomfortable? He was the only one among the gods who could be considered a friend. Grid would feel sadness and awkwardness if Hexetia considered him as a competitor and harbored animosity. The moment that Grid was feeling anxiety...

[Over the years, a total of 10,759 battle gears have been made.]

[The battle gears you have created have become part of the world and are being used and spoken about.]

[Most of the faith toward you is rooted in the battle gears you have created.]

"This..."

Indeed, it was unfolding in this direction. New notification windows were appearing in the field of view of Grid, who couldn't hide his regret.

[However, you don't deserve to be the god of blacksmiths.]

[Your blacksmithing skills are inherited from others.]

[Part of your accomplishments as a blacksmith is attributed to Pagma, which has led to the dispersion of faith.]

[The battle gears you have created isn't a means of proving your divinity.]

"...!" No, wait. He was sorry to be the blacksmith god but that didn't mean he didn't want it. He didn't want to be completely disqualified. The moment that Grid's anxiety was heightened...

[The means to prove your divinity comes from the epics you have written.]

[Your myth comes from a canyon dyed with red blood.]

"...!"

[In the canyon, you saved the lives of many people, just as you have done before.]

It was only for a moment. His experiences over the past decade unfolded like a kaleidoscope in front of Grid.

In the kaleidoscope, Grid rescued Irene after she was kidnapped by the Yatan Church, fought against the golem army to save the people of the Eternal Kingdom, rescued the UI Clan and other minorities who were on the verge of being destroyed by the empire, and felt compassion for the legends of the previous generation who suffered on the Behen Archipelago.

Grid was the one who protected the Overgeared soldiers in the war, the one who defeated the great demons trying to turn this world into hell, and held out an outstretched hand to the people of Pangea who were afraid of the yangbans. However, there was a fact that Grid didn't know—he was the protagonist, who along with Kraugel, prevented the demise of the empire.

[A total of 183,791,595 NPCs have been saved by you.]

[The title of Hero King is lacking.]

[The people's gratitude toward you constitutes your divinity.]

[As compensation for your deity reaching the required amount, the title Pangea's Duke of Virtue has evolved to Duke of Virtue.]

"XX."

Things were going well so why this? He couldn't help swearing. The more the system spoke, the more uneasy Grid became and the more his anticipation chilled. Nevertheless, he hadn't given up hope.

[Your fervent heart has saved and protected human lives and will be embodied as a reward for achieving divinity. The new title, Duke of Fire, has been acquired.]

"...!"

This was the moment why Pagma was the Duke of Fire was revealed. Pagma was a hero who saved countless lives. He became the Duke of Fire after his hot heart, which was trying to protect people, was embodied as flames. The difference with Grid was that Pagma had sacrificed too many people for the cause. Perhaps this inclination led to his failure to get the Duke of Virtue title.

'Am I the first person to obtain two 'duke' titles?'

Braham had said it—'Just as some of the direct descendant vampires have the title of 'wise lord', human beings also have the title of 'duke.' Sword Saint Muller had the title of 'Duke of Pressure' and Blacksmith Pagma had the title of 'Duke of Fire.' The title of a duke is a symbol of legends and gives great power to legends.'

There had been no legend with two or more duke titles.

'I am the first to do so.'

Grid's heart thumped. He had surpassed the previous generation legends in one aspect and was deeply impressed, the emotions surging over him like a tsunami. He felt like he had become a really incredible person. The good news wasn't over yet. There was still something left.

['Divinity' is enhanced as the main reward for achieving the required deity points.]

"Ah." Grid sighed. It was definitely a good skill. No, it was more than just a good skill, it was great. It was a skill that removed casting time and cooldown time up to two times...

It was one of the best skills in Satisfy and no one could deny it. However, it wasn't universal. The Divinity skill was gained from creating three myth rated items. His skill in this field was comparable to a god. The Divinity skill made Grid a 'blacksmith equal to a god' and was only applicable to blacksmith related skills. It was definitely a good thing to be able to use Item Combination or Item Transformation more than once in a row, but it was worse than evolving into a half-god where all stats would rise.

Grid was disappointed. However, he overlooked one important fact. The current system didn't evaluate him as 'Pagma's Descendant' but as a 'Magic Swordsman of the Epics.' Grid shouldn't have forgotten. The first time he gained Divinity, he might've been Pagma's Descendant but he was now recognized as 'Grid.' Pagma's Descendant was now only a part of him.

[From now on, Divinity will apply to all your skills.]

[From now on, it is possible to raise Divinity. One of the special things that will occur every time Deity gains 10 points is directly related to the rise in the level of Divinity. The maximum level of Divinity is 10. Whenever it levels up, the number of consecutive uses of Divinity will increase by one.]

[Once Divinity reaches level 5, your race will revolve from human to half-god.]

"..."

Grid was at a loss for words. Divinity had only applied to blacksmith related skills and despite the fact that it could only be used consecutively twice, it was evaluated as a great power. Now it would apply to all skills and the number of consecutive uses could be increased up to 12 times.

'If it reaches full level, I can perform a four fusion sword dance or the Undeclared King's swordsmanship up to 12 times consecutively.'

It was crazy. Surprising! A scam! It was a much better reward than becoming a half-god with room for all stats to rise.

Grid didn't think for a long time. He opened the inventory with quivering hands and took out two scrolls he had valued and cherished so far. They were the scrolls to enhance skills that had been neglected for a long time. The target was naturally Divinity.

[The level of Divinity has risen. The number of consecutive uses has increased by one.]

[The level of Divinity has risen. The number of consecutive uses has increased by one and the cooldown time for reuse is reduced.]

"Uwaaaaah!"

Patience was bitter but the fruit was sweet. He had gained a skill that was hard to raise and Grid was delighted to use the skill enhancement scroll that he had saved. Then his face stiffened...

[Duke of Fire is reacting to you.]

[Your bad work of hurting people to save others has been embodied as demonic power.]

[The attention of 1st Great Demon Baal can't be avoided.]

[The voice of Baal, filled with pure interest and malice, is heard.]

-Duke of Fire.Pagma's Descendant is following in his footsteps.

[Great Demon Baal is attempting to corrupt you.]

[The effect of Duke of Virtue if purifying your demonic power. Baal's curse has returned in vain.]

[Demonic power is purified and Blackening can't be used. Due to the effect of Duke of Virtue, a new skill will be created.]

-...What?It is different from Pagma.Haha, how interesting.How long can you really hold on?

[Baal is preparing a ritual so that you can't be liberated from demonic power.]

[Baal's demons are beginning the ritual.]

[It has failed.]

[The Demon Slayer, wandering in a lonely manner through hell, has destroyed the foundation of Baal's ritual.]

[Baal's gaze has missed you.]

-....!!

Baal's voice was suddenly no longer heard. Grid, who was liberated from demonic power and lost Blackening, hastily brought up the skills list. He needed to check his condition yet he wasn't allowed time. A voice was heard. "...Your face is changing frequently."

"...!"

It was a creepy voice. The surprised Grid turned his head in a hurry. The owner of the voice was standing in front of Grid, in a completely different direction from where the voice was heard. It was Garam.

[An unknown person is writing the fourth epic.]

Why did it have to happen back-to-back? Grid's expression distorted.

[Chapter 1166](#)

Demonic power was poison. If he died in Blackening state, there was a possibility of being forced into hell. There was also the possibility of his race changing to a demon, becoming a demon in Satisfy's world view, and many other possible side effects. A typical example was Baal's gaze.

Grid had already experienced that the higher his demonic power, the greater the chances of being exposed to Baal's gaze. This made him feel scared. However, he never wanted demonic power to be extinguished, nor did he avoid the accumulation of demonic power.

Blackening and the Rune of Darkness—Grid's favored abilities were closely related to demonic power. Blackening was a skill that couldn't be used without demonic power. Additionally, certain skills attached to the Rune of Darkness would have fewer penalties in the Blackening state. Even the prerequisite for having Noe as a pet was demonic power.

Demonic power was a poison that could be deadly but it was also one of the forces that formed Grid's foundation. Grid was in a position to fully control it, rather than fearing and avoiding demonic power.

'Damn, what's going on?'

[The effect of Duke of Virtue is purifying your demonic power.]

[Demonic power is purified and Blackening can't be used.]

[A new skill is created using the effect of Duke of Virtue.]

Was he going to lose demonic power? Grid was greatly flustered. First, he wanted to check his condition. However, he wasn't allowed this time.

"Your face is changing frequently."

"...!"

Grid, who was trying to bring up the skills list, hurriedly pulled out his sword and held it. A man of great beauty was right in front of him. It was Garam.

[An unknown person is writing the fourth epic.]

Lips that stretched out coldly and dark eyes. Garam, who he met again after a long time, still boasted a pleasing appearance. Even so, Grid knew—the man in front of him was one of the most arrogant, cunning, and cruel beings in the world. He couldn't be fooled by appearance. He couldn't forget the vicious slaughter of the residents who remained in Pangea and the blacksmiths...

Grid swung his sword viciously. He used Blacksmith's Rage, Quick Movements, and Blackening out of habit but the absence of demonic power prevented him from using Blackening. At the same time, Garam's short spear moved quickly enough to cut apart the dozens of energy blades coming from Grid's sword. It was a stabbing attack that directly penetrated the center of Link, which had spread out like a net, and Grid's sword stopped helplessly.

“Slow.” Garam’s words were short. He had been training using his anger toward Grid as a springboard and he was much stronger than the last time they met.

“No matter who you are, you can’t go against him! Run away!” Tosun shouted as she jumped and kicked at Garam with an amazing lower body power. Garam’s short spear stabbed at Tosun but Tosun was nimble. She wasn’t a normal existence. She was someone who once served the Four Auspicious Beasts but Garam was even greater.

The sword hanging from Garam’s waist was suddenly unfurled and wielded. It twisted its trajectory like a living creature and wrapped around Tosun’s ankle.

“...!”

“...!”

Changing the direction of already released sword energy? Grid and Tosun were stunned by the incredible sight and Garam declared, “All things in Heaven and Earth will move according to God’s will.”

A god—Garam called himself a holy being without any doubts. Did he build up even more divinity? His pride that soared into the sky seemed to have gotten even higher.

“Ugh! Run away! I’ll buy you some time.” Tosun urged as she stood in front of Grid and took an unfamiliar martial arts stance. She had great strength in her lower body but she seemed unstable due to her injured ankle. Nevertheless, she seemed to have no intention of backing down. Like the blue tiger, she was determined to protect Grid at her own expense. She didn’t want Grid’s Red Phoenix Bow to return to the yangbans.

“Please! Please run away safely...!”

[The beginning of the story comes from the desire of the fleeting people who have been forgotten.]

“Protect the red phoenix on our behalf!”

“...”

[He saw an unchanging faith in the face of the coming disaster.]

[He revisited the meaning of a god through those who worship the gods, despite losing everything because of the failure of the gods they believed in and served.]

“...?”

The emergence of Garam. A new epic. Tosun and the rabbits who were making sacrifices. In this dire situation, Grid got a strange feeling.

“...”

“...”

Grid and Garam’s eyes met in the air. Grid’s eyes swirled with confusion and fear while Garam’s eyes were still. Grid realized the identity of the strange feeling. ‘Garam’s attitude is different from usual.’

Garam's eyes always looked down on others. His disdain and disgust toward lower-class people always offended Grid. It was Garam who hated Grid more than Grid hated Garam. Garam showed passion every time he faced Grid. He expressed extreme joy or anger. Sure enough, Garam's attitude was as usual when they met in the toothless tiger community a few hours earlier.

Now it was different. Grid didn't read any emotions from Garam. Garam was controlling his emotions.

'This jerk... he's serious now.'

The reason why Grid survived every time he met Garam was due to Garam's arrogance. It was the belief that humans wouldn't dare bare their teeth at him and the conviction that he wouldn't be defeated even if they did...

Due to his life experience, Garam looked down on Grid and experienced bitterness twice as a result. However, this time was different. Garam had learned. He witnessed Hangyeol's death. Today, Garam wouldn't make any mistakes. Grid noticed that the dark shadow of death was covering him.

Garam declared, "I won't miss you this time."

Flap.

Garam swung his arms out wide and his blue dupo flapped. Dozens of talismans poured out from his wide sleeves.

[A powerful enchantment has been installed.]

[Space transition has become impossible.]

"Let's get rid of the disrupters."

—!

Garam's soft sword silently drew a circle. As sword energy expanded along the circle, it stretched out to the chest of Tosun and the rabbits surrounding Garam.

"Avoid it!"

Tosun hurriedly shouted as she jumped and all the other rabbits jumped as well. However, the sky became Garam's limbs once the sword energy expanded enough to accommodate all of them and spun violently. The majority of the rabbits, except for Tosun, were devastated by the sword energy whirlwind they couldn't escape from and crashed down disastrously in a puddle of blood.

"Hahat, those who were insignificant have become even weaker." Garam laughed. No malice could be felt. It was the pure laugh of a child enjoying it as he tore off the wings of a dragonfly.

Was this a god...?

Grid felt like he had been struck in the head with a hammer and was in shock. It was as if he had seen something that shouldn't be seen. Yatan and Rebecca—it occurred to him that the way that the two absolute gods destroyed and recreated the world wouldn't be much different from the current Garam.

[He was reminded of the other side of the world that he had neglected.]

[He faced a fate that couldn't be resisted despite knowing he would be sacrificed to providence.]

[He knew that the screams of the fleeing people couldn't be the only future of those who served him.]

An epic was written along with Grid's thoughts. The contents of the epic were likely to incite Grid's thinking. Still, one thing was clear. Grid's choice would've been the same even without the epic. The epic was merely writing down Grid's story. Morpheus just made him aware of the future that would come without even a 0.01% variable.

The whirlwind of sword energy kept slaughtering the rabbits. Garam painted a tranquil forest of death.

"200,000 Army Crushing Sword." This was crushed by Grid's interference.

"You...!"

Tosun avoided the whirlwind of sword energy and gritted her teeth as she exclaimed. She resented Grid, who didn't use the short gap created by her sacrifice to escape.

Grid spoke in a mysterious manner, "If you are a god, shouldn't you at least live up to the expectations of those who believe in you?"

"...Eh?"

Tosun didn't have time to understand. Grid was charging toward Garam. Garam shook off 200,000 Army Crushing Sword after suppressing it and spoke while facing Grid, "It's light."

It was an honest feeling. Compared to Garam's sword, Grid's sword was slow and weak. On the way to this place, Garam had been greatly surprised when he sensed Hangyeol's death but now he was fully calm. He once again confirmed that Grid, who inherited Pagma's power, could hurt him but not defeat him. He was pleased with Grid's self-destructive attitude. He felt great joy that he could finally cut off this annoying guy's head.

"Now, come!" Garam's sword aimed at Grid's sword. He intended to blow away Grid and his sword. He identified Grid's power through a few exchanges and determined it was possible. 'I understand the target. Now I will trample on it slowly and thoroughly.'

Two sharp points were aimed at the same point. Just before Grid's sword and Garam's sword collided, Grid was undergoing a change.

[400 points have been invested in agility.]

[Your strength and agility stats are exactly the same.]

[The golden ratio effect of the fourth stats awakening will strengthen your normal attacks.]

[Normal attacks will deal 20% more damage and there is a normal probability of the 'high speed' and 'destruction' effect occurring.]

[The effect of Duke of Fire infuses your weapon with the flames of willpower.]

"...?!" The moment their swords collided, Garam's eyes widened. He was supposed to blow away Grid but instead, his right arm was rising in the air.

'...What?'

Flames travelled along Grid's sword and smashed into Garam's nose.

'You!'

Garam's eyebrows were scorched and he tried to suppress his boiling anger. He ignored the unidentified force that pushed back his right arm and sped forward, cutting at Grid's waist in the gap when Grid couldn't respond. At the same time, he attempted to use the intangible winds to smash Grid's head into a mess. The sharp energy that rose around Grid tore the wind apart.

"Ah...!"

Garam was continuously shamed and his face was red. Even so, there was no light in his eyes. He suppressed his feelings because he knew he would forever regret it if he was overcome by his anger. In order to avoid creating variables, he calmly started to target Grid.

There were no more variables. The intangible winds kept disrupting the actions of the God Hands. Grid's sword dance was broken. The four fusion sword dance was never completed. Garam thoroughly destroyed Grid's strengths. It was as if he felt no more humiliation as he avoided a power struggle with Grid and made all of Grid's efforts useless.

'This is it.'

The only thing left was to wash away the shame.

'The end.'

It was the moment when Garam peeked at the tired Grid's face.

Flash!

A light as brilliant as the stars filled the high expanse of the sky. A sword flew toward Garam. It didn't hit but Garam was nervous. It was because a person powerful enough to throw a sword from a distance that was hard to grasp couldn't be underestimated by even Garam.

However, there wasn't only one. One weapon, two, ten... 100, 200...

Hundreds of different types of weapons continued to descend from the sky, bombarding Garam's enchantment. Most of the weapons scattered into dust, unable to penetrate the enchantment, but some were exceptions. A large greatsword that resembled a predator of the sea started to crack the enchantment. Then the enchantment collapsed. Two swords with the breath of the white tiger and a bow with the breath of the red phoenix were particularly irritating to Garam.

'What is this?'

He couldn't understand it. What type of incomprehensible scene was this?

"What type of trick are you playing?" Garam roared angrily as he moved backwards to avoid the rain of battle gears falling toward him.

Grid told him, "Pant... Pant... You... you can't be a god."

Blood flowed from Grid's eyes and nose. It was the aftermath of using the Duke of Virtue skill that he checked during the rabbits' sacrifice. He was mentally exhausted but he continued in an upright voice, "I will stop you."

"...!"

[He soaked the land of the old gods with the rain of battle gears of those who believe in him and serve him.]

"I."

[He declared in the presence of the murderer dreaming of being a god and the fleeting people watching.]

"I will become a god."

[My myth will lead the world in the right direction.]

[The rain that falls now proves my qualifications.]

"You...! What sophistry is this?"

Garam couldn't bear it and showed his power. He opened the four powers of the sacred creatures simultaneously and slammed into Grid, fiercely breaking through the rain. It was the final blow and Grid died. Grid had lost his immortality before Garam arrived and had no way out.

However, Grid hadn't be beaten in silence. Thanks to the help of the rain of battle gears, which was now beginning to die down, Grid fought against Garam with all his might. There was Noe, who stayed with him despite him losing demonic power, Randy who had always been with him, the Overgeared Skeletons still dancing in the midst of this, and the light elemental.

"Run away! The red phoenix... Kuk! Don't worry and run away!"

"H-Human...! N-No! God...! God...!!"

"Run aw...ay!"

"Ugh...!Kuock...! You must...!"

[He hopes to sustain the world that will perish.]

[A tree that has grown up with the help of many.]

....

...

[An unknown person has completed the fourth page of the epic!]

[Special compensation will be paid to all players who have contributed to the completion of the epic.]

....

...

[Chapter 1167](#)

[He saw an unchanging faith in the face of the coming disaster.]

The most famous protagonist of the world messages was Kraugel. He had maintained his position of supreme one for three years after Satisfy opened. He was the first pioneer to explore many hidden fields and he uncovered the concept of hidden quests. He had made many achievements ahead of others and created the formula of 'unknown person = Kraugel.'

Now Grid was catching up with Kraugel's record. Grid's record was astonishing considering that most of Kraugel's achievements were in the early days when many things weren't unveiled. Unlike the early days, it was now much more difficult to monopolize the world messages alone.

Of course, no one disparaged Kraugel's accomplishments. Many of Kraugel's accomplishments seemed easy to get now but at that time, Kraugel was the only one who managed it among two billion people. In people's eyes, both Kraugel and Grid looked great.

"This time, Grid's epic is about religion."

"I heard the Dominion Church is a mess. Is he involved in this?"

"Perhaps he wiped out the Yatan Church."

"I hope so. These days, the Yatan Church members are acting so wildly that I can't hunt properly."

Grid's fourth epic made the world buzz. Thousands of people were speculating on Grid's current whereabouts. People didn't forget about Grid's first epic written in Taleren Canyon. People wanted to experience it again. They wanted to share their emotions and thrills with everyone who enjoyed Satisfy by witnessing the process of the epic in real time.

Unfortunately, Grid's second, third, and fourth epics were written in a place where people were absent. People had to infer Grid's situation based on the writing and could only imagine it. It had its own charm but it was lacking compared to the feeling of seeing the situation directly.

"Eh?" Charlesville, an ordinary level 193 that could be seen everywhere—he was dining with his friends when he suddenly dropped his fork with amazement.

"Why do you suddenly look so stupid?"

"Did you connect to the game without closing the gas valve again?"

"N-No, that isn't it..."

"...?"

"G-Grid... it is Grid."

"What about Grid? Tell me properly."

Charlesville's friends wanted to focus on Grid's epic, which was coming slower than usual, and were annoyed. To them, Charlesville was babbling nonsense.

"He asked me to lend him my weapon?"

“...Tsk.”

They wouldn't be fooled like this. Charlesville's friends looked at Charlesville with shit-eating expressions. Charlesville felt wronged.

“No, really! Look!” Charlesville stood up from his seat and released his sword from his waist, holding it in his hand. Called the Fairly Useful Longsword, it was a rare rated level 160 sword that had a casual name and no special appearance. However, the performance was not ordinary.

It overwhelmed the other weapons of the same level in terms of pure damage and durability. In fact, it was one of Charlesville's biggest prides. It wasn't just the good performance. The creator of the longsword was labeled 'unknown craftsman.' Everyone knew that the identity of the unknown craftsman was Grid from a few years ago. Charlesville was very proud that his weapon was Grid's work.

“Who put poison in Charles' soup... Eh?”

Charlesville's friends, who were staring at the sword, suddenly become wide-eyed and stopped talking. It was because Charlesville's sword started vibrating before it disappeared. The furious Charlesville shouted, “How about it? Did you see it? I lend my sword to Grid! Hahahat! Grid borrowed my weapon! Grid took my weapon!”

Similar incidents were taking place throughout Satisfy.

“Asking to borrow my weapon?”

“This is really...”

[Player 'Grid' wants to borrow your weapon '+7 Mass Produced One-Handed Sword.' If you accept, ownership of the '+7 Mass Produced One-Handed Sword' will be transferred to Grid for two minutes.]

[Player 'Grid' wants to borrow your weapon '+8 Shooting Bow.' If you accept...]

[Player 'Grid' wants to borrow your weapon '+8 Smashing Mace.'...]

Thousands of players encountered the same notification window. The common denominator was that they had a named weapon. No, it was that they were owners of weapons that Grid made himself. Some used them as their main weapon, like Charlesville, while others just stored them as collectibles. Yet they were all asked the same question.

[Do you want to accept the request?]

'How can I accept in this situation?'

'Does he want me to die?'

People's circumstances were different. Some people were eating like Charlesville while others were fighting monsters or PKing at the hunting grounds. Some people were experiencing a crisis of a lifetime. This meant that not everyone could respond to Grid's request. Of course, there were many people who didn't care even if their situation wasn't urgent.

'Did Grid really send me a request? No way.'

Grid might be the supreme player but was it common sense to use a strange system to ask for help by borrowing other people's weapons? People were suspicious and wary of such strange situations.

Or...

'Why should I lend it?'

There were many people who turned away for no reason. It was a normal reaction. No matter the circumstances, how many people would lend their items to someone else for no payment? In the first place, owning Grid's weapon didn't necessarily mean they had a connection to Grid. Among the works created by Grid, the best items were only distributed among the Overgeared members. Only the items that Grid had made a long time ago or were classified as lower-grade items were circulated in the market. Many of the players currently receiving the request from Grid had never met Grid personally.

Indeed, many people turned away from Grid's request. However, there were also many people who accepted Grid's request. Those who accepted Grid's request, even if they had no connection to him, were aware of the peculiarity of the situation.

"This is a request during the writing of the epic..."

"I don't think I'll lose anything."

"I don't know~ I'll just lend it because it's fun."

Thousands of items left their master's hands and returned to the creator's arms.

Laue and Piaro's tactics, the abilities of the knights, including Mercedes and Asmophel, and the division of the soldiers and orcs. The Overgeared soldiers and orcs allied forces quickly advanced to the Gauss Kingdom. The only enemy remaining was the 50,000 Gauss royal troops, directly led by King Nemesis.

'Did Goldhit betray me?'

There was no news from Goldhit, who was left in the last fortress, and now the enemy was right in front of their noses. King Nemesis was already prepared but he felt great despair by the result that was more empty than he imagined. He just couldn't bear to express this in front of the soldiers and shouted at the soldiers with a determined expression, "This is the last battle. Fight without leaving any regrets. The world will say that Gauss' soldiers were valiant until the end."

"Wahhhh!"

Once King Nemesis took the lead, the morale of the soldiers pierced the sky. It didn't matter if the enemy had 10 times more troops than they did. They were already prepared for death and would fight bravely to defend the last honor of their home.

"Waaahhhhhhhh... ah?"

Gauss' soldiers were chasing after King Nemesis toward the enemy when they lost momentum and stopped. It was because the leading Nemesis ordered them to stop. What happened?

The Gauss Kingdom's army was hesitating when King Nemesis's voice, filled with magic power, echoed through the battlefield, "Are you recommending for me to surrender? Okay. I will be grateful if I can save the lives of my soldiers with my death. The entire army, listen! In the future, live as the people of the Overgeared Kingdom!"

King Nemesis made a decision. The young king, who had become the ruler of a crumbling nation and only cared for his people, gave his neck for his soldiers in the last moment.

"...Hah." Piaro was surprised by the sudden situation and lamented. The hand plow and sickle returned to his hands and he silently paid tribute to the body of King Nemesis. The knights and elite soldiers behind him similarly armed themselves again with their returned weapons.

That's right—King Nemesis had witnessed all the enemies at the forefront standing unarmed and interpreted it as a sign recommending him to surrender, but the reality was different. The knights and soldiers of the Overgeared Kingdom merely lent their weapons to their king. King Nemesis and the Gauss army's surrender was just an absurd incident caused by King Nemesis' misunderstanding.

Piaro commanded the knights and soldiers, "...For the sake of their pride, this matter must never be made known."

"...Yes."

[He soaked the land of the old gods with the rain of battle gears of those who believe in him and serve him.]

[He declared in the presence of the murderer dreaming of being a god and the fleeting people watching.]

[My myth will lead the world in the right direction.]

[The rain that falls now proves my qualifications.]

The epic was at its peak.

"Myth? It is a myth?"

The world was overturned.

[An unknown person has completed the fourth page of the epic!]

[Special compensation will be paid to all players who have contributed to the completion of the epic.]

"C-Crazy..."

"Amazing!"

"Dammit!"

Soon after the epic were over, people were feeling joy or sorrow. Those who loaned their weapons to Grid were filled with the ultimate joy while those who didn't lend their weapons were overwhelmed

with the regrets of a lifetime. Charlesville belonged to the former. He trembled as he held the weapon that returned to him after the end of the epic.

[Your weapon 'Fairly Useful Longsword' has returned after communing with its creator, 'Grid,' and its potential has been awakened. Attack power and durability has increased by 10%. This effect will only apply once per weapon.]

[There is still more potential remaining in the Fairly Useful Longsword.]

[You have become part of the fourth epic of an unknown person. Terrain adaptation in the Pangea region of the East Continent has risen by 50% and all stats are slightly increased.]

[Once you encounter bards singing the fourth epic, you will get a special buff.]

“...?”

Grid's resurrection point was set to Reinhardt. However, it wasn't Reinhardt that greeted him when he resurrected after being killed by Garam. Covered with dust, it was like a small, haunted house. It was an unfamiliar space.

'Where is this place?'

If a player died without setting a resurrection point, they would be resurrected at the nearest city or temple. However, Grid had set a resurrection point and this place wasn't a city or a temple.

Grid confirmed there was no movement in the bamboo forest outside the window and checked his condition first. He lost 40.6% of his experience from the death penalty, the durability of the skin mask had decreased by 1, and the Ideal Longsword was lost. The blow was great. The lost weapon could be reproduced at any time but the skin mask was an item that couldn't be repaired.

'If I'm going to die in the future, I'll have to take off the skin mask first.'

At the very least, Grid didn't intend to die until he resurrected the red phoenix. Grid recalled the sensation of cutting off one of Garam's ears just before he died and muttered, "Duke of Virtue..."

It was an absurd skill that used the bonds engraved into every weapon he had ever made. This wasn't all. It was also a skill that used human relationships. The effect of the duke title was so great that it surpassed Grid's imagination. He thought the function of the duke titles would be similar to his second class, Duke of Wisdom.

'Well, Duke of Wisdom is probably lacking compared to the real one.'

Duke of Wisdom wasn't a power that Grid had built up. It was Braham's knowledge that was shared and it wasn't really in his mind. On the other hand, Duke of Virtue and Duke of Fire were different. They were powers that Grid built up himself and were based on Grid's foundation.

"Status Window."

Grid had reached level 406 from killing Hangyeol and his experience was at over 80%. This meant that his level didn't decrease despite losing around 40% experience from the death penalty. Grid had a strange idea when he saw that only the strength and agility stats had turned a gold color.

'If there is a golden ratio for strength and agility, will there also be a golden ratio between other stats?'

In the future, he should pay a bit more attention when observing the stats of NPCs. The moment Grid thought this...

Swaaah!!

"...!?"

There was an object pouring out light from the corner of the haunted house and as if in response, the Red Phoenix Breath and Red Phoenix Bow started to flash red.

[Chapter 1168](#)

[The rain of battle gears that appeared in Grid's fourth epic?]

[TV broadcasters and streamers from all countries are desperately contacting owners of Grid's battle gears.]

[Grid's epic mentions a myth... has a player become a god?]

[(Column) The difference between the legendary and myth ratings that can be discovered through quest items.]

['Make the scene of writing Grid's epic public!' Hundreds of public organizations around the world are urging the S.A Group.]

『 Grid's fourth epic is causing an unusual ripple. There is a fierce conflict between those who claim that not disclosing Grid's epics, which have a direct influence on the world view, is violating a player's right to know and those who claim that Grid's epics are his private life. 』

The world forgot about the National Competition. Even those who had been waiting for the National Competition throughout the year could only focus on Grid's epic. It meant the celebration of billions of people had been buried by Grid's one action.

Hundreds of companies participating as sponsors of this year's National Competition cursed. If the popularity of the National Competition wasn't strong enough then the publicity effect of the companies would also decrease. This led to a flurry of concerns among them. However, there was one exception...

"Huhu, the largest companies in the world are going to lose money because of my son-in-law."

It was the Daejin Group. Unlike other companies, Yura's company enjoyed the Grid special. Since Grid was the group's promotional model and there was the perception that Grid was a family member, there was an upward synergistic effect every time Grid was mentioned.

"Um, let's see..."

Chairman Lee Jinmyung logged into WikiXDia and gazed at Grid's image in a pleased manner. He searched for Grid, revisited the contents of the Daejin Group which was linked and muttered, "I'm riding on the coattails of my grandchild."

Now Chairman Lee Jinmyung was Yura's most ardent supporter. He didn't hesitate to provide all sorts of support to improve Yura's gaming environment so Yura's growth rate was at its highest level ever. Even without Grid, South Korea would play an active part in the National Competition this year...

Lee Jinmyung didn't doubt it.

The Eregia Underground Water Dungeon was one of the hardest instance dungeons. It wasn't possible for high ranking players to target it unless there were at least three people in the party. There...

[Your level has risen.]

[You have defeated all the monsters in the dungeon by yourself.]

[Something special will happen when you achieve the Sword Saint hidden piece 'Beginning of Endless Asceticism'!]

Kraugel alone completely conquered it. He quietly closed his eyes as he blocked the bamboo spears fired from the stinking rats with foresight and Control Sword, easily killing the monsters who were called the king of the underground. He wasn't impressed by his accomplishments. This level of achievement didn't give him any inspiration.

'...Duke of Virtue.'

Kraugel closed his eyes and recalled the epic scene. That's right—Kraugel witnessed the epic scene. No, he experienced it. He shared the vision of the White Tiger Sword he lent to Grid and became one of the rain of weapons from the sky. He saw the fear projected in the eyes of the one dreaming of becoming a god.

Chill. Kraugel got goosebumps. He persevered as he endured the pain engraved on his soul every time a weapon was broken and saw the appearance of Grid overwhelming the yangban. He felt something that was beyond a thrill. He saw the future of Grid, who became a god. He knew it was an immutable future.

Kraugel realized the path he had to pursue. A sword that could cut a god.

'Make the ultimate technique.'

If a player could become a god then a player should also be able to cut a god. The picture in Kraugel's mind slowly changed. In the rain of battle gears, it was Kraugel fighting against Grid, not Garam.

The light emitted from the Red Phoenix Breath and Red Phoenix Bow gradually resembled a flame. It shook and then suddenly burned Grid's entire body. The startled Grid screamed reflexively but fortunately, he didn't feel any pain.

'What is this harmonizing with?'

Grid regained his composure after confirming that the light wasn't harmful and approached the origin of this unknown phenomenon. On the small altar, there was an unidentified object covered with dust. It was a statue modeled after a small bird but it was still shining with a strong light and showed off its presence.

"This...?" The size of the statue was small enough to be held in one hand. He thought it was a statue modeled after a small bird but the reality was different. Grid shook off the dust and cobwebs and found a familiar form. "The red phoenix?"

At this moment, the beam of light released from the red phoenix statue exploded more strongly and was sucked into the Red Phoenix Bow. There was a vibration and the hot heat of the Red Phoenix Bow was felt.

[The breath of the red phoenix nestled inside the 'Red Phoenix Statue Abandoned for a Long Time' has permeated the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides.]

[19 more breaths are needed to restore the red phoenix.]

"...!"

The identity of this haunted house was revealed. This must've been the original shrine where the red phoenix was worshipped. However, as the people's belief in the Four Auspicious Beasts turned to the yangbans, they were gradually forgotten and this shrine was abandoned. They didn't even know that the red phoenix had distributed its breath to people.

'It wasn't a ridiculous quest.'

The difficulty of the Red Phoenix Guardian quest that Grid received was unrealistic. The moment it was known that he had the Red Phoenix Bow, he was surely be tracked back home. It was safe to say that lasting two years without dying more than two times or collecting 20 Red Phoenix Breaths would be impossible for ordinary people to achieve.

Now there was a chance of completing it. He could clear the quest by finding shrines scattered throughout the East Continent.

'The red phoenix sent me here to give me this hint.'

Grid realized why he was resurrected in an unexpected place and completely cleaned up his head, which had been complicated for a while. Then he pulled the Red Phoenix Breath out of his inventory.

'I'm curious.'

He had been curious from the time he received the quest. What would happen if the Red Phoenix Bow absorbed an enhanced breath?

'It would be disgraceful if it is no different from a normal Red Phoenix Breath.'

In the worst case situation, he might not receive a judgment itself. This meant that the system regarded the Strengthened Red Phoenix Breath as a completely separate item from the Red Phoenix Breath.

'Still, let's try it.'

It would be foolish to ignore the possibility of a better result just because he was afraid of losing one of the Red Phoenix Breaths. Unlike others, Grid could secure a large number of Red Phoenix Breaths.

'This place is safe.'

It was a place the red phoenix directly led him to. It was also a place that had been forgotten for many years. At least he didn't have to worry about being chased by Garam while he was here. Determined, Grid went outside the shrine and pulled out a portable furnace. In the process of taking out various tools such as a hammer and anvil, his eyes noticed the forest.

"This?"

Currently, it was autumn in Pangea. Yet the scenery of winter was seen between the long stretches of bamboo. The leaves with white snow were spread out. Was there snow in this season? No. It was the white phosphorus tree. A mysterious tree that controlled fire perfectly despite being a tree. It was known to be impossible to cut because it was hard as dragon iron and as ferocious as an active volcano.

[The Daoist Woodcutting Axe has been equipped.]

'I had wanted to obtain it so this is great.'

Grid's axe slammed into the white phosphorus tree. If the people of the East Continent had seen this sight, they would've expected the axe to split in half and for Grid to be swept away by an explosion. However, Grid's axe was fine. Rather than causing an explosion, the white phosphorus tree was cut and became Grid's firewood.

Grid's first blacksmithing quest was to cut firewood. His axe was adept and the white phosphorus tree couldn't stand it. In an instant, Grid cut down all the white phosphorus trees in the area and looked satisfied.

'This is enough to make 2,000 items.'

It was a good start. He was at his peak condition and started to enhance the Red Phoenix Breath.

[The effect of Duke of Fire infuses your hammer with the flames of willpower.]

[All working speeds are doubled.]

[Duke of Fire]

[* The best master craftsman of this era.

His hammer makes battle gears and his martial power makes peace.

He is the owner of a passion that never turns off, which can sometimes be a poison.

* Increases the willpower stat by 20%.

* Stamina consumption will be reduced by 10%.

* There is a low probability of 'excessive greed' occurring.

★ If you experience excessive greed, you can be active for up to one minute even if you don't have stamina. However, the stamina stat will be permanently reduced in proportion to the time it was active. Please pay attention to the management of stamina.

* The skill 'Fire of Willpower' will be generated.]

[Fire of Willpower (Passive)]

[* Effect when producing items:

All working speeds will double. There is a chance of infusing the 'Breath of the Duke of Fire' in the item.

* Effect in combat:

The attack power of the weapon equipped will increase in proportion to the willpower stat. Additional 'heart' attribute and fire attribute damage will be dealt to the target in proportion to the willpower stat. The heart attribute attack will completely penetrate the target's defense.]

The description of Duke of Fire was very similar to Duke of Wisdom. Duke of Wisdom started as the 'greatest intellectual of the era' but it couldn't be denied that 'sometimes it is a poison.' They were titles that implied a certain degree of danger. On the other hand, Duke of Virtue was different.

[Duke of Virtue]

[* The most benevolent person of this era.

People look up to you due to the generosity and good deeds bestowed with your whole heart.

* Stamina is increased by 35%.]

There were no negative descriptions regarding Duke of Virtue.

The basic effect was as good as the Duke of Fire and Duke of Wisdom.

It could even be asserted that the skill effect was the best.

The only problem was the name of the skill.

[* The skill 'Request to Stand With Me' has been created.]

[Request to Stand With Me]

[Ask for help from those who have been given virtue.

You can ask for help from the battle gears you produced or the people associated with you.

* Effect when asking the battle gears for help:

Summon all the weapons you have produced so far.

The weapons that respond to the call will attack the target you specify according to the attack power when the weapon's owner uses the weapon. The number of attacks can go up to at least six times depending on item rating and it will be returned to its original owner once the number of attacks is consumed.

The durability consumed will be replaced by resources such as your health and mana.

* Effect when asking a person for help:

Ask for help from someone who is within your force or who has good will with you.

You can borrow the target's skill or stats.]

"..." It seemed hard to use in front of people. Grid's expression twisted as the Strengthened Red Phoenix Breath was being completed at his fingertips.

[Chapter 1169](#)

[The Red Phoenix Breath has been strengthened!]

The smelting difficulty was proportional to the rating of the material. Grid spent a considerable amount of time and stamina every time he strengthened the sacred creature's breath. However, it was different this time. Thanks to the sparks of willpower effect from Duke of Fire, Grid's fatigue was greatly reduced compared to before. At least, it should've been so...

"..."

Grid's face was dark as he looked at the Strengthened Red Phoenix Breath. His current fatigue was higher than ever. It was due to the feeling of conflict sparked by the severe warning that struck at his sense of reason when he regained his composure once he got the result he desired.

'This is a really crazy gamble.'

The breath of a sacred creature was an ingredient for a myth rated item. Discussing the value of this material itself was disrespectful. Was it right to throw it away on a gamble? He was afraid of the sense of loss he would feel if this failed.

'...It is nonsense to worry about this now.'

He decided to give it a try. Why was he wasting time worrying about this again? Grid knew it was just a waste of time. Once the conflict ended, he gave the Strengthened Red Phoenix Breath to the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides.

To be honest, his heart was pounding. Sweat dripped down and the saliva in his mouth dried up. For the Red Phoenix Guardian quest, the objective stated in the quest information was to give 20 Red Phoenix Breaths to the Red Phoenix Bow. It was extremely unlikely that the system would permit the giving of the 'strengthened breath' to the Red Phoenix Bow. Yes, he was likely to suffer a great loss...

It happened the moment Grid closed his eyes...

The Red Phoenix Bow accepted the strengthened breath and red surged, beating like the heart of a giant beast. It was hotter than lava but wasn't a life-destroying flame. Sparks rose and numerous plants grew on the ground where Grid was standing.

"...!"

A panorama unfolded in front of Grid. The chaos before the beginning—Yatan, Rebecca, and Hanul were there and they created the world. Rebecca planted the world tree to support the earth. Hanul, who created the gods that governed weather, injected new life into the earth. Yatan took Baal out of the abyss to prepare for destruction.

They weren't actions or plans with any special significance. They were just moving according to the rules.

The first humans were terrified. They respected but didn't rely on the almighty gods. The more they served and knew the gods, the more anxious they felt. Humanity wanted new gods. Gods they could believe in and rely on. Gods to protect them. Then flames appeared on the grey landscape that expressed the despair felt by the first humans. They were flames that could germinate the sparks of life without the help of the gods that Rebecca and Hanul created. A guardian god born only from humanity, which originated from their heart's desire.

『... A call. 』

Flames swelled and a voice emerged. It was the first time he heard this voice and Grid noticed the voice's owner. It was the red phoenix.

『 I... A call like this. 』

The flames burned more strongly and gradually took the form of the red phoenix. It was hundreds of times larger than the red phoenix called by the Fly Up! skill attached to Jishuka's Red Phoenix Bow. Both wings seemed like they could cover a great mountain and it exerted a presence that was above material size.

Grid was overwhelmed. He honestly shrank back as the red phoenix stared at him. Nevertheless, he didn't feel the extreme impression like he was a speck of dust. It wasn't because the majesty of the red phoenix was lacking, it was just that Grid had grown.

The landscape surrounding Grid changed again. A red sky filled his vision.

"...?"

Grid quickly adapted to the sudden change and lowered his gaze. He could see a burning royal palace. Hundreds of thousands of troops surrounded the royal palace. The identity of the army was the Overgeared soldiers and the allied orcs.

"Sir Piaro! Are you insane?"

'Lael?'

Grid heard Lael's voice and searched for him. Finding Lael wasn't difficult. He stood next to Piaro at the forefront of the battlefield. He was clearly tired. His eyes trembled as he alternated between looking at Piaro next to him and the rushing enemy.

"...!"

Grid was stunned. He immediately realized why Lael was agitated. Many of the knights and soldiers of the Overgeared Kingdom were empty-handed. It was during a war. They abandoned their weapons in the face of the enemy. It was because they responded to Grid's Request to Stand With Me.

"My mind is fine. The thing that matters to me is the safety of His Majesty, not the war in front of me."

"...I will do as the commander-in-chief wishes."

Lael shook his head and raised both hands, the weapon in them disappearing with a flash of light. In fact, he was the same as Piaro. He knew that death wasn't the end for Grid but he failed to ignore Grid's crisis.

'Lael, are you going to follow rather than stop him?' Grid's eyes widened.

Then the landscape surrounding Grid changed again.

"...Hup." Grid frowned and held his breath. A land dominated by a sweltering heat—Grid knew the identity of this unpleasant space.

'Hell?'

From there...

"Daring to disturb the ritual! It is hateful!"

Yura was running alone. A large frog with a crown was jumping as it chased after her.

"Yura!"

Grid immediately pulled out his sword and flew forward. He hid Yura behind his back and cut the frog. However, nothing happened. All the sights in front of Grid were the past and he couldn't intervene. The crown-wearing frog aimed its long tongue past Grid toward Yura's back.

Did she decide that she could no longer run away? Yura stopped running and fired her gun. Then she pulled out a sword and set it up as a shield. Thanks to the buffs she received in hell, she could accurately read the fast trajectory of the flying tongue, which was hard for even Grid to follow. No matter who looked, the defense was obviously successful.

Then just before the tongue and sword touched, Yura's sword disappeared from her hand. It was because her spare sword was Grid's work. Yura's heart was pierced by the tongue.

"You aren't as good as the old one," the crown-wearing frog mocked her.

The gun in Yura's hand converted into a green sword. For five seconds, she fought silently. The moment she turned to ash, there were no regrets on her face. Rather, she looked satisfied.

"Yura..."

Grid flopped down. He felt some responsibility watching her sacrifice herself for him and hoped to stand side by side with her.

The landscape continued to change. During the one-sided slaughter of hundreds of monsters, Jishuka lost her bow and was surrounded by monsters. Peak Sword lost his sheath and was unable to cope with

lyarugt running wild. He faced a disastrous end. Most of his colleagues' circumstances in the ever-changing landscapes were similar. All of them made great sacrifices in response to Grid's Request to Stand With Me.

"This... unbelievable..." Grid sighed.

Once he learned that his power demanded the sacrifice of others, he rebuked himself and regretted it. In front of the collapsed Grid, the huge red phoenix appeared again.

『 Human with the desire to become a god. 』

『 Your power isn't almighty and you will repeat many mistakes and failures. 』

『 Don't be overconfident in not knowing this and be buried in despair and regret. 』

『 Only a strong mentality and determination will give you an opportunity to change your providence, whether you can sustain it or not. 』

Don't be like us.

The red phoenix seemed to be giving advice. The despair and regret that the red phoenix felt over the years could be glimpsed from the red phoenix's eyes. Grid asked, "Do you believe that I can only stand up to the gods if I accept the sacrifices of those who believe in me and follow me?"

The red phoenix was silent—it meant confirmation. Grid shook his head. "No, that isn't necessarily the case."

It was the reason why Grid chose the path to become a god. He wanted to protect his people. The moment he turned away from them, the reason he had to walk on this path would disappear.

"I'm not going to sacrifice them."

The beak of the red phoenix twitched—it looked like a smile.

『 Noble one, I will give you my heart. This heart will grow with your willpower and it will be a small boon to your future. 』

The appearance was holy but the exit was shabby. The red phoenix pulled out a heart and rapidly became smaller, quickly disappearing into sparks. The surrounding landscape of the dazed Grid returned to its original form. Then a notification window popped up.

[A hidden story has arisen due to the effect of giving the Strengthened Red Phoenix Breath to the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides.]

[The sealed power in the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides has been greatly restored. The red phoenix admires your ability and feels great favorability toward you.]

[The 'Red Phoenix's 9th Heart' has been acquired as hidden compensation for the hidden quest ★ Red Phoenix Guardian ★.]

[Red Phoenix's 9th Heart]

[One of the 10 hearts that are the source of power for the red phoenix.

It is one of the hearts that the red phoenix kept to the very end.

The heart will respond to your willpower and grow with you.]

[The Red Phoenix's 9th Heart has permeated you.]

[Your blood is running hot with the holy flames. You won't become tired easily in the future.]

[Health recovery is increased by 20%.]

[Stamina recovery rate will permanently double.]

[The Rune of Darkness can't adapt to this hot heat and is running wild in your body.]

[The Red Phoenix's 9th Heart has noticed the Rune of Darkness.]

[The Rune of Darkness is trying to hide itself.]

"...!?"

An increased health recovery and a doubled stamina recovery rate, Grid got more benefits than imagined from the heart but he couldn't afford to feel joy. The Rune of Darkness—the hidden card that contained an explosive power seemed to be antagonistic to the red phoenix heart so he felt more frustration than joy. It was even more disturbing because the Rune of Darkness had been greatly diminished due to the disappeared demonic power.

"Ugh!"

As the heat in his body rapidly swelled, Grid felt the pain and sat down. The Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides was quietly sleeping without being aware of the disaster its power caused.

'This is a big mistake...'

In Satisfy, resistance was very important. It was natural that the Rune of Darkness, which was evil, would be countered by the red phoenix, one of the gods who could be defined as good. He shouldn't have accepted the heart. Grid realized it was a serious situation and was trying to regain his composure when it happened...

[The sacred flame circulating from the Red Phoenix's 9th Heart has succeeded in capturing and purifying the Rune of Darkness.]

[The circulating fire of willpower from Duke of Fire has responded to the sacred flames and have dominated the Rune of Darkness.

[The Rune of Darkness, which has harmed you even after becoming a part of you, is completely submissive to you.]

[The 'demonic power increase' penalty that occurred when Rune of Darkness is used will be deleted.]

[The powers attached to the Rune of Darkness will demand the fire of willpower in the future. This will change the name, effect, and direction of some of the skills.]

[Once the Rune of Darkness is opened, the dark attribute damage that was added to general attacks and skill attacks will be changed to the heart attribute damage.]

[The unique passive effect of Rune of Darkness is enhanced. In the future, you will absorb the unique characteristics of the target, even if you kill angels, half-gods, and gods, as well as named great demons, demons, and demonic creatures.]

[The name of the Rune of Darkness has changed to the Rune of Gluttony.]

“...”

Runes were bound items where each account could only hold one. In Satisfy, bound items couldn't be released or traded. According to various documents, there were hundreds of runes in the world. Thus, a player who obtained a relatively poorer rune than others would suffer irreversible damage for the rest of their lives.

In that sense, Grid had benefited greatly. The Rune of Darkness, which absorbed even the power of the great demon, was certainly the highest-level rune. Now it had been upgraded to a rune that could even absorb the power of a god. The Rune of Gluttony—the new rune that seemed to have developed under the influence of Grid's inclination and purpose ignited Grid's enthusiasm.

“...It worked properly.”

After a long time, Grid gave a relaxed smile and checked the status of the Red Phoenix Guardian quest. The quest stipulated that 11 breaths had been given to the Red Phoenix Bow where the Spirit of a Sacred Creature Resides. This meant that one strengthened breath was equivalent to 10 breaths.

On the East Continent, there were still a number of yangbans and forgotten shrines.

‘One, I just need one more.’

Grid turned his gaze in the direction of Kars, the capital of the Cho Kingdom. There were people there who wanted to help him.

[Chapter 1170](#)

“This microorganism...! You are inferior to beasts!”

Garam's original plan was simple—he was going to tear Grid apart, kill him, and then go to the Cho Kingdom for retribution. Nobuldam tried to protect Grid. As the king's servant, the Cho king should naturally be held responsible. Yet things had become twisted. He couldn't see other people in this state.

“...!”

“G-Garam?” A path lined with white phosphorus trees that bloomed once in a thousand years—a man and woman enjoying a walk near the entrance of the Hwan Kingdom were shocked to find the approaching Garam. Garam's appearance was different than usual. His long hair, which was usually twisted up with a hairpin or combed beautifully, was scattered in a mess. The dolo that should be clean

without a crease was crushed, torn, and stained with blood. The most surprising thing was that it was Garam's own blood soaking his dōpo. His ear was cut off.

What was this? What type of disaster had occurred to injure the body of a god?

"What happened?"

"Let's start with treatment!"

The man and woman rushed to Garam's side and made a fuss. They were also yangbans of the Hwan Kingdom. They were genuinely concerned about their brother Garam, who was born and raised by the same parents. However, Garam thought they were insignificant. Rather than being irritated that they didn't qualify to become gods, they whispered garbage and loved him like a brother. Pagma, who condemned the yangbans, was a hundred, no, a thousand times better than these people...

"...!"

Garam wielded his soft sword without making a sound and slashed at the man and woman's necks. Garam's pride was too strong to leave them alive after they witnessed his ugly self.

"Shit... Shit!" Garam swore as he faced the resentful gazes of those who died without knowing why. He was overwhelmed with fear and anxiety. It was different from his usual self. To be exact, due to Grid who had become qualified to be a god, there were dark clouds hovering over his future that couldn't be seen.

Then a bell jingled over Garam's head.

"You have seen a real god," a familiar voice followed. Garam's eyes widened as he looked up and saw a man floating above him. The man wore a mask and had on a necklace made of leather with large bells tied to them. His hair and visible eyes were fierce, causing Garam to freeze.

"Chiyou..."

Garam's expression was stiff. He felt terrible dissatisfaction because an opponent he could never match was seeing him in a pathetic state.

'Pretend you haven't seen me.' Garam couldn't bear to bring up this request and changed the subject. "A real god? Then there are fake gods? A god is a god. In the first place, he is a human, not a god."

The myth of the guardian gods was known to Garam. Unlike the Three Gods that existed from chaos and the majority of gods who were created, the guardian gods were the purest beings born of the aspirations of humans. Chiyou in front of him belonged to that type—the crystallization of 'military arts', born from the aspirations of humans who wanted power. Even War God Zeratul, who Rebecca had created, was just a copy of Chiyou.

"You are afraid and anxious. It is pathetic to see you deny it." The mask that Chiyou wore shook, the face behind it seemed to express ridicule.

"Shut up!" In fact, Garam knew—it was true that he had limitations. A god that came from forced faith couldn't be omnipotent. However, were they so insignificant that they could be labelled as fake and ridiculed? No, a god was a god—the power might be different but the divinity was the same. "Even if he

becomes a god, he will be on the level of the Four Auspicious Beasts at most. That person is just like the Four Auspicious Beasts, born for abstract reasons. I can afford to handle him. I will seal him, just like I sealed the Four Auspicious Beasts in the distant past!”

Chiyou, who was born out of the specific will of ‘the power to conquer the gods’ or ‘independence from the gods,’ was a monster beyond the standards but the Four Auspicious Beasts were different. They had limitations, just like the yangbans, and it would be the same for Grid.

Chiyou stared at Garam trying to believe this and pointed to a distant place. “Look.”

“...!”

A power equivalent to the Three Gods was invoked. Thanks to Chiyou’s power, Garam’s gaze moved over the Red Sea to the West Continent. He saw a black-haired man. He was a man who communicated with the sword. Chiyou’s words were meaningful, “Child who will cut a god.”

“...?”

“The child you met today will compete with this child for a long time, gradually becoming the object of a much stronger and distinct heart’s desire.”

“...!”

“Don’t turn away. They are real gods and eventually, they will destroy you fake gods.”

“You!” Garam could no longer leave Chiyou’s false and insulting remarks alone. He forgot the modicum of respect for Chiyou and the fear of hell as he expressed his killing intent. At the same time...

“...?”

Chiyou disappeared from all of Garam’s senses. There was only the ringing of bells.

“Hup!” Garam belatedly identified Chiyou’s location through sound and twisted the trajectory of his sword. Yet before his sword could reach the target, Chiyou’s finger touched Garam’s forehead. Chiyou’s mask once again shook.

“Struggle if you want to escape destruction.”

Chiyou hit Garam’s forehead with his finger and Garam’s field of view split into several parts. The appearance of the absurd man who wanted to cut a god and the pathetic man who sold his soul to Baal intersected with Grid’s appearance, stimulating Garam. “Do you know? If you confront them with the same feelings as a beast caught in a trap and struggling, you will become a real god and become qualified to cut me.”

Once the sound of bells rang again, Chiyou was no longer present. Garam’s eyes were bloodshot. Grid, the Sword Saint, and Baal’s Contractor—he knew that they must be destroyed.

Grid kept an eye on the horizon in his field of view. He prayed that the land he would soon arrive at was still standing.

[You have transcended the concept of space!]

“...Keuk!”

The wind blew against his face and Grid stood at the horizon which had been on the edge of his field of view just a while ago. It was the expression of the space movement skill, Shunpo. As a reward for his fourth epic, Grid had built up his transcendence and his chances of triggering Shunpo was now at almost 20%. It was a leap forward compared to the time when it was described as having a terrible probability.

‘...The further I leap, the more resources I consume.’

Pant, pant.

Grid breathed roughly as his mana and stamina were reduced by half. This was the cost of leaping the ‘maximum distance’. The mana cost for leaping five meters was 2,000 and there was no decline in stamina. It was just a hop away but the amount of resources consumed increased dramatically like a taximeter after five meters. However, it seemed like this problem could be resolved after more transcendence was accumulated.

“Hmm?”

Was it due to his mood? The more tired he was, the happier he became about the red phoenix heart. He felt his stamina recovering whenever the red phoenix’s heart beat. Then he saw gorgeously decorated buildings on the new horizon. He arrived in Kars. It took him only half a day. The virtues of Shunpo were high but the ‘Guardian of the Land of Old Gods’ title that he gained as a reward for his fourth epic was great.

[Guardian of the Land of Old Gods]

[When active in the land of old gods, ‘willpower’ will increase by 1.5 times and terrain adaptability is maintained at 100%.]

Terrain adaptability was very important. Depending on the variation in the terrain, a person’s behavior could be constrained and slowed down. However, if terrain adaptability was kept at 100% then the physical limitations would disappear.

‘There are three more places besides Pangea in the land of old gods?’

Like Pangea, the places where the Blue Dragon Dao, White Tiger Spear, and Black Tortoise Jewel were sealed would also be classified as the land of the old gods. Grid believed that his new title would be a great help in the process of gaining the other weapons of the sacred creatures.

“By the way...”

Grid used Lightning Speed and rose high in the sky, putting Kars within his field of view. The scenery of Kars was peaceful, unlike what he expected. It was a good thing but he had doubts.

‘Did that madman Garam go the wrong way?’

Garam had declared that he would find and punish all the forces friendly to Grid, including the Cho king. This was why Grid headed for Kars rather than searching for the hidden shrines. He had no intention of

fighting Garam again and risking his life, but he couldn't turn away after knowing there were those who secretly helped him.

'Considering my delay at the shrine, it is very unlikely that Garam would arrive later than I did.'

Then why was Kars so calm? Grid frowned at the thought.

'It's obvious. It is a trap.'

The first reason Grid feared Garam was because Garam was insidious. His plan to capture just Grid by luring all blacksmiths from the West Continent to the East Continent was something Grid would never forget.

"...No."

Was it really a trap? Why set a trap when he could quickly capture Grid's location and lie in wait. Grid knew Garam's personality. The weaker the opponent, the more he raised his nose. Garam was a mass of pride who easily harmed humans but never allowed a human to aim a blade at him.

'Such a person would never show up in a messy state in front of others.'

That guy must've returned to the Hwan Kingdom first. He would head for Kars after sufficiently cleaning himself up.

'This is my only chance.'

Grid came to a conclusion and didn't delay. He sped up his pace. He flew to the royal palace standing in the center of Kars.

"What bastard?"

"An enemy!"

A challenge came from the start. The talismans widely spread around the royal palace detected Grid's intrusion and started to cast various spells, while warriors and soldiers poured in.

'The level is high.'

This was one of the four countries representing the East Continent. Grid was greatly impressed with the defense of the Kars Palace, which was as good as the Overgeared Palace. However, it was just up to here. Grid didn't feel anything more than admiration as he escaped the chasing soldiers and succeeded in entering the king's hall

"A daoist immortal?" a man with his hands behind his back greeted Grid—it was the Cho king. His eyes under the gold crown were as deep as a lake.

Grid roughly counted the number and levels of the warriors escorting him, the killers hidden in the shadows, and the daoists behind a veil before opening his mouth, "Send out the people."

It wasn't clear exactly what side the Cho king was on. He couldn't rule out the possibility that there were yangban fanatics among the guards of the Cho king. There were a number of variables so Grid only wanted to take off the skin mask when he was alone with the king.

“You’re insane!” The warriors expressed outrage at the intruder’s absurd demands and rushed at Grid. The killers in the shadows threw daggers to support the warriors while the daoists behind the veil cast spells to dazzle Grid’s spirit. Some spells raised the courage and power of the warriors.

Certainly, they were the elite of the elite. It was clear that their average level was at least 400. In particular, there was one person that Grid found hard to read the exact location using his insight. He seemed to be a shadow warrior of the Cho king and had a quasi-legendary power.

However, these people wouldn’t even be a handful of prey for Garam. A bitter-looking Grid opened the Rune of Gluttony.

“Storm of the Fire God”

[Storm Demonic Energy Field - Modified]

The devastating storm emitted the flames circulating from the red phoenix heart and was no longer subject to the weather. It was more destructive than ever before.

“...?!”

The warriors were surprised by the vortex of flames and lost their momentum. They were the greatest warriors of the Cho Kingdom but they didn’t dare plunge into the flames. In the midst of their shock and confusion...

“The red phoenix’s flames!”

The Cho king’s face became rosy. The intruder’s identity was a person of distinction. The sound of bells could be heard from the distant walls. They were bells that told the time for the people of Kars. It was a signal indicating that the time, history, and fate of the East Continent, which had been suspended for the past hundreds of years, had started again.