

Overgeared 1181

[Chapter 1181](#)

“A god.”

Existences derived from the aspirations of human beings. Harang defined the man with black hair and shook her head. She saw a certain meaning in the man’s expressions, gestures, and even gait. It was a sword dance.

‘Performing a ritual in the middle of the battlefield?’

Why? What was this ritual for? Harang was engulfed when she suddenly noticed something. Contempt was in the eyes of the man looking at her. It was to deny the yangbans.

‘...The ritual of a god killer!’

The space was dominated. All the energy of nature was controlled by the man’s ritual and expressed its displeasure toward Harang. It roared as if threatening her to disappear.

‘Ahh, I see.’

Harang had a crisis in front of her and realized...

Pagma, the brother who used sophistry to deny Hanul’s words. Harang knew why Hanul didn’t punish Pagma and who was behind it.

‘Chiyou, you’ve been supporting Pagma.’

Did Chiyou glimpse hope from Pagma? The hope that Pagma could kill him.

Dozens of waves of sword energy poured toward Harang. The ferocity of the sword energy, which had enough momentum to eat even the gods, was amazing. It created the illusion that dozens of dragons were flying. It was a level that would make Harang nervous.

‘Amazing. However, you can’t destroy a god at this point.’

The yangban had intangible power from those who believed in them. Harang’s willpower exploded the air around her, attempting to block the dragon-like sword energies. Yet it failed. The problem was that the entire space was under Grid’s control. The ripple sparked by Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle that Grid used to eliminate Harang completely controlled all the energy in the area, including Harang’s willpower.

Tremble tremble.

Harang’s body shook against her will. It was fear. Her willpower was soon completely defeated and the formless will scattered. She was forced to wield her sword to confront the sword energy. She couldn’t use the breaths of the sacred creatures and even the basic sword energy was unable to be created.

She cut, blocked, and struggled against Grid with pure physical power. Her hands were torn with every clash between sword and sword energy and blood was scattered. An explosion occurred every time a sword energy was extinguished, stripping off the clothes and accessories she was wearing.

“...”

The 10 meritorious retainers held their breath. They were overwhelmed by Harang's divine aura, which cut through dozens of black sword energies in a short period of time.

“...Sigh.” Harang finally let out a breath. She believed that she had destroyed the ritual for the incomplete god killer. At least, until the scattered sword energies once again joined together in the air and descended.

“...!”

Following Transcend, Link, Kill, and Wave, the energy of Pinnacle bombarded Harang. It was a finishing blow that accurately targeted the gap when Harang took a breath.

“...”

The silence was heavy. The place where Harang stood was covered in dust as the sword dance of Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle ended.

“Kuheok... Cough, cough!”

Grid coughed several times as he finished the last movement of the sword dance and fell forward. Jishuka ran to him and reached out but Yura was already by his side. Even before Jishuka arrived, Yura held Grid in her arms. Jishuka bit her lip as the dust slowly cleared to reveal Harang's ragged appearance.

Blood poured from her wounded body but she stood upright, denying Grid, or to be exact, denying Pagma.

“It isn't enough... it can't be seen as a complete god killer.”

However...

“S...Save me...”

It was enough to destroy them, who were nothing more than fake gods. This fact was proven by Gru, who had already died, and Naeun who was begging not to die.

“For us, pain is unfamiliar.”

Harang smiled bitterly and broke Naeun's neck. It was the worst feeling to give rest to a brother who never imagined his end. It was so unpleasant that she felt nauseous. No, it seemed more appropriate to call it sadness. The tears of humans were flowing down her cheeks.

“There is something I want to ask you.” Harang wiped her tears with her fingers and asked Grid, “Is everything you've done here according to Pagma's will?”

“No,” leaning against Yura and with the four God Hands in front of him, Grid responded, “I have only been acting on my own thoughts and judgment.”

Although their attempts to help people were similar, Grid and Pagma had completely different inclinations and thoughts. Grid was a little less selfish, a little less arrogant, and had greater empathy. Grid was certain... "In the first place, Pagma could never be like me."

Pagma was an extremely efficient person. He forced people to sacrifice themselves for the cause. Was it possible for him to gain the trust and support of the Cho king? If he was Grid, Pagma's personality meant he likely would've failed to revive the red phoenix in such a short amount of time.

This wasn't intended to demean Pagma. Grid had a deep appreciation and respect for Pagma.

"Yes... I see." Harang smiled bitterly as she gazed at Grid, who had declared proudly. Pagma was different from the others but in the end, he was still a yangban. He would've also failed to understand the ideal form of a god for humans and wouldn't have become a real god. She thought about it and the existence of a yangban became more and more ephemeral.

"Is Pagma dead?"

"Yes."

"I see. He lost his life since leaving the Hwan Kingdom. However, he left a great disciple behind and his life wouldn't have been as meaningless as ours."

"....."

Grid was Pagma's disciple. Grid had never met Pagma, only inherited his techniques through his writings. However, Grid didn't deny it. He was nervous and prepared for Harang's counterattack with his dying body.

Blood flowed from Grid's mouth and nose. A massive backlash was raging inside him.

[The attack power that has been doubled by consuming one origin true energy has returned to normal.]

[The recovery of all resources and abnormal statuses are temporarily stopped in exchange for consuming the origin true energy.]

[You are currently experiencing fractures and excessive bleeding in exchange for using Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle that became available due to the skill Open Potential.]

[You have suffered 5,900 damage.]

[You have suffered 5,900 damage.]

[You have suffered 5,900...]

Before Yura appeared, Grid had already consumed the Skill Creation rights. Coincidentally, Grid recalled the Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle used by his clone. The five fused sword dances could be acquired naturally if he met the qualifications one day so he wasted the Skill Creation right on it. It couldn't be helped. Time was tight and the strongest skill Grid could think of immediately was the five fused sword dances.

Fortunately, the system put the brakes on him.

[You can't implement Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle with your stats at this time.]

The system responded to Grid's idea like this.

[To implement Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle, you need to unlock your potential.]

It suggested a solution. The word 'potential' gave Grid enlightenment.

Open Potential—a quasi-legendary skill that was said to be held by fewer than five players in this world who had completed certain hidden quests. It was said to allow the person to use skills one grade higher in advance when certain conditions were achieved. In other words, Grid created the Open Potential skill and could temporarily open the locked skills tree. It was now possible to use Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle.

"Grid!"

The meritorious retainers were rushing to Grid's side. They learned that Grid's condition was more serious than they thought and guarded him while being alert to Harang.

"Are you going to create a new world?" Harang muttered in a voice that couldn't be heard by others as she alternated looking between the silver-haired man fighting Garam and Grid's group.

They were inevitably weak. If Pungsa or Unsa sensed this and appeared, they would be wiped out. However, this was a story for only right now. Over the years, they would build up their strength and were more likely to grow into a force the Five Seniors couldn't leave alone.

Chiyou would make time for them.

"Remember this. Not all yangbans are as lax as we are."

"...?"

"There are some yangbans who have studied and trained, unlike us who have wasted the years. They are much stronger and have more comprehension than me. They aren't as clumsy as Garam, whose ego was hurt and he started training late."

It was like giving advice. What was this? Grid knew the nature of the yangbans and doubted Harang. He was convinced that Harang was planning something behind his back. However, his condition was so messy that he couldn't even open his mouth.

Harang smiled at him who was trying to endure the pain without reacting. "I envy Pagma who left you behind before he died."

At this moment, someone fell from the sky and tore at Harang's weakened body. It was Garam.

"Pant... Pant..." The battle against Braham seemed to be a tough one. Garam's distorted face was covered with sweat and blood and his eyes were filled with disbelief. The constant heaving of his chest showed that he was so tired it wouldn't be strange if he collapsed immediately.

"You can't handle a single human being? You are incredibly incompetent."

Garam spat out blood and denied the dead Gru, Naeun, and Harang as he started to recover rapidly. By killing Harang, he absorbed her strength, or to be precise, the faith she had built up.

“This time, I’ll be enough by myself.”

Garam’s breathing was stable. He became more complete as he focused entirely on the faith of Harang and the humans that had been gathered to him. He became much stronger. He was sure that he could beat all the humans in this place, including the weary silver-haired guy and the dying Grid.

“First, let’s change this disgusting space.”

Garam’s formless will became so powerful that it was different from before and it was able to cut the air. Then the thousands of eyes on the hell moon staring at the ground were split in half and the hell that Yura summoned was destroyed. It was the moment when the field magic that had been suppressing the divinity of the yangbans disappeared.

“Next.” Garam’s gaze shifted to Jishuka. Garam couldn’t ignore her potential when she held the Red Phoenix Bow and had the blessing of the red phoenix. Garam was one of the few yangbans who could simultaneously operate the four breaths of the red phoenix, black tortoise, blue dragon, and white tiger. He was particularly talented among the yangbans and had a high fighting spirit. At this moment, he completely awakened and the 10 meritorious retainers failed to respond properly.

The Shunpo that was triggered during a gap in their breathing was a step higher than the Shunpo that Harang had used. It happened when Garam appeared by Jishuka’s side and was stabbing her in the neck...

Grid was a bit faster and rushed to Garam to block the attack. It was a more powerful strike than the previous attacks.

“You?” Subtle differences caused a huge ripple. Garam’s body was slightly pushed by Grid’s move. He slightly tilted and as a result, Garam’s spear swept past Jishuka’s neck without stabbing it. Garam’s eyes were filled with disbelief. His trembling eyes met Grid’s black eyes.

“The dying man has become stronger?”

“I leveled up, you damn XX.”

He used the remaining points he saved as he couldn’t afford to leave them be.

“?”

Garam’s doubts didn’t last long. Braham, who seemed to be quiet for some reason, used multiple restraining magic and Garam had to endure the weight of this gravity. Grid’s sword dance and the ultimate skills of the 10 meritorious retainers poured toward the dull Garam. Garam tried to stop it but he couldn’t fight back.

[The resurrection of the guardian god of the south, Red Phoenix, has succeeded.]

It was because someone intervened.

“Kuek...! Kaaaaaaaaaak!!”

Garam's wounded body and soul were unable to withstand the heat of the sun and started to burn. It was the end of the evil who had long plagued Grid.

[Chapter 1182](#)

It rained. It was a rain of fire that covered the entire south.

"Ah... Ahhh..."

Flames appeared in the pupils of the people of the Cho Kingdom, who ran out of their homes and looked up at the sky. The animals in the heat-filled forest stopped their activities and looked up at the sky. The beasts made a ruckus.

"God...! Our god...!"

The people cried. The rain of fire wasn't a disaster and they weren't crying out of fear. Both humans and beasts welcomed the rain of fire from the sky. Their arms widened as they embraced the rain. They instinctively felt that this was a blessing of the old god, who had been long forgotten.

[The protection of the red phoenix will be imbued in all things in the south.]

[The level and stats of all beings living in the south are greatly increased and recovery has risen.]

[Some of the weakened sacred creatures have regained strength.]

[The scattered traces of the false myths are burned.]

[All those living in the south have become hostile to the Hwan Kingdom.]

[The news isn't transmitted to the three kings of Pa, Xing, and Gaya due to the interference of the Hwan Kingdom.]

"...Grid!"

"...!"

In the capital of the Cho Kingdom, Kars...

Grid had been overcome with emotions after knocking down Garam only to come to his senses. He left behind the updated notification windows and looked back to see the Cho king and his ministers on their knees and bowing to him.

"Grid, thanks to you, the Cho Kingdom was protected and the red phoenix resurrected. I would like to thank you on behalf of all the people of the Cho Kingdom."

The Cho king was unreserved—no matter how much grace he had received, the Cho king's attitude was beyond the attitude that should be shown to another king. The kneeling man was hurriedly pulled up by Grid.

"I was fighting for myself. Additionally, didn't you fight with me?" Grid's attitude was also polite. If he wasn't polite to the kneeling Cho king while his people were watching, he would've insulted the entire Cho Kingdom.

The people roared.

“He is so humble.”

“It is completely different from the yangbans.”

“This is what a real god looks like.”

Change was coming.

[The Cho king and all the people of the Cho Kingdom are deifying you. Your deity stat has risen by one.]
It was an achievement that exceeded expectations.

Originally, the deity stat was one where it was hard to gain a point in half a year. Now within a few days of coming to the East Continent, three points had already been accumulated. Furthermore...

[The Cho king and all the people of the Cho Kingdom are deifying Braham. Braham’s deity stat has risen by one.]

Braham’s deity stat also rose. It was natural. Grid wouldn’t have been safe without Braham’s help and the red phoenix wouldn’t have been resurrected. Braham’s majesty that overwhelmed the yangbans would be talked about and praised by the Cho Kingdom forever.

“Hoh...?” Braham sensed his change and responded with interest. He had seen the possibility of regaining eternal life.

“In the future, you should treat others well for your own sake,” Grid rebuked him.

“Bah.” It was unpleasant but Braham didn’t hate it. He remembered the joy and emotions he felt after being saved by Grid. He realized how those in power should act and was also changing.

Divine flames sprang up. The red phoenix appeared in front of the people after opening its eyes. A guardian god born of the aspirations of humanity—the shockwave caused by the emergence of a real god was great. Hundreds of thousands of people in the Cho Kingdom felt infinite compassion from the warm flames and shed tears of emotion, bowing their heads.

“Please don’t forgive those who dared to forget a god...!”

The Cho king was sobbing.

He couldn’t raise his head. The 10 meritorious retainers silently gulped because they were overwhelmed by the presence of the red phoenix while Braham’s pride was greatly wounded and he gritted his teeth. In the silence...

『 Noble one. 』

The red phoenix opened its mouth. It faced Grid, not anyone else.

『 With your courage and sacrifice, you have defeated the fake gods and returned the south to its rightful place. You have created a crack in the providence forced by Hanul. 』

Everyone’s eyes were focused on Grid. In particular, Hera and the other players were looking at Grid with respect.

『 Thank you. You vowed to fight against the providence that even us sacred creatures couldn't change. 』

『 I am a god who exists for the protection of the south... I can't walk with you but I'll watch you and cheer you on from afar. 』

『 I admire you. 』

The divine flames that made up the red phoenix scattered in all directions. The flames that will spread throughout the south will bless all things and burn out the unclean.

[★Hidden Quest ★ 'Red Phoenix Guardian' has been cleared.]

[The Red Phoenix Breath is absorbed into your body as a quest clear reward.]

[The 999th Red Phoenix Heart has been acquired as a quest clear reward.]

[The 999th Red Phoenix Heart has been absorbed by the 9th Red Phoenix Heart already in your body.]

[The 9th Red Phoenix Heart has grown to the next level. Health recovery rate has increased from 20% to 30%.]

[A new field effect has been added to Storm of the Fire God.]

[Affinity with 'Blue Tiger' has increased by 50.]

[Affinity with 'Red Phoenix' has reached the maximum.]

[The red phoenix will cherish you equally along with the land it defends.]

[Red Phoenix Breath Lv. 1]

[Once activated, health recovery rate is doubled and the skill 'Fire of Life' will be activated.]

* This skill can be stacked with Incarnation of Fire but not Incarnation of Lightning, Incarnation of Earth, and Incarnation of Death.

Duration: 10 minutes.

Cooldown Time: 3 hours.

Resource Consumption: None.]

[Fire of Life]

[Burn the health of the target to restore your health.]

Cooldown Time: 3 hours.

Resource Consumption: None.]

"...!"

Incarnation of Fire was a skill attached to the Red Phoenix Bow currently owned by Jishuka, increasing health recovery rate and stamina recovery by 90%. It also prevented stamina from falling below 5

points. Just like when Grid created the Blue Dragon Boots and gained Incarnation of Lightning, Red Phoenix's Breath caused his health recovery rate to exponentially rise.

'Incarnation of Fire is a persistent passive... as the level of Red Phoenix Breath increases, the longer the duration will be. Won't it be like I'm in a state of always taking potions?'

Generally speaking, the health recovery rate per second was two points per 100 stamina points. Please note that the health recovery per second didn't increase with the stats awakening. Unlike the other additional effects, the health recovery per second growth rate wasn't affected by the effect of titles, skills, and items that players gained as they grew.

Grid alone could raise the health recovery per second rate many times through the blessings of the gods imbued in Greed, the Red Phoenix Breath, the Storm of the Fire God, and the Queen of Fire power embedded in the Rune of Gluttony. The effect of Duke of Virtue increased his stamina stat by 35% and there were a number of items that could raise the health recovery per second rate.

It meant that if Grid intentionally focused on raising health recovery per second, he could temporarily restore thousands of health per second. This was why there was no health recovery per second growth in the stats awakening effect. If even health recovery could be increased like other factors, potions would gradually lose their value and this would cause all sorts of problems.

'I'm certain. Right now, I have to activate Storm of the Fire God and the Red Phoenix Breath to keep in top shape but I can always stay in great shape with Incarnation of Fire.'

Every second would be at the level of taking an advanced potion. If he activated the Storm of the Fire God as well, it would be like taking the highest quality potions. The S.A Group's effort to keep the health recovery per second in check was ineffective and a player possessing the health recovery per second of a boss monster was born.

"....."

Grid measured the possibilities and was speechless for a moment. He felt like he was increasingly becoming a monster...

He was scared of himself.

"...?"

Grid was shaking his head when he belatedly sensed a strange atmosphere. The Cho king, the people of the Cho Kingdom, Hera and the players, and even the 10 meritorious retainers, were staring at him silently. It was with a bemused expression.

"Why are their souls gone?" Grid asked Braham, who was standing beside him, in a whisper.

"It is amazing for a man to be revered by a god," Braham replied.

Then Grid's heart was overwhelmed as he recalled the words of the red phoenix again. Yes, he wasn't going to be a monster. He was on the right path.

At the VIP room provided by the Cho king...

Grid and the 10 meritorious retainers met after a long time and shared their stories. All of them had enjoyed adventures over the past few months and they naturally exchanged information.

“So how did you end up sabotaging Baal’s ritual?”

Grid was particularly interested in Yura’s adventure in hell. The help he received from her at that time had been so intense. Yura replied like it was inconsequential, “It was a coincidence. I was on a quest to wipe out the demonkin nearby and was disturbed by the ritual.”

“Doesn’t Baal rule the 1st Hell? Are you already on a quest to hunt in the top hell?”

“Yes, it was by chance.”

“.....”

It wasn’t a joke. Grid stared at Yura but her expression was so consistent that Grid didn’t dig deeper.

“Don’t sacrifice yourself for me.”

“I won’t.”

“.....”

She had answered too easily to be believed. However, it would be nagging if he said anything more.

Grid confirmed that the cooldown of Red Phoenix Breath had returned and once again activated it. Vantner was intrigued. “How is it? Did your skill experience rise this time?”

“It didn’t rise.”

Grid’s expression was complicated. He had already activated Red Phoenix Breath twice but the skill experience hadn’t improved. It seemed that Jishuka’s opinion was correct. It was agreed that in order to raise the skill level of Red Phoenix Breath, he needed to consume a Red Phoenix Breath.

“Damn... how can I chew on a lump of stone?”

Grid’s expression was weary. The Red Phoenix Breath might be a divine material but it was a mineral after all. There was even a burning fire inside it. The taste was unimaginable.

“Eat it once. Once it’s confirmed, I’ll ask for the Red Phoenix Breath as compensation for the gold medal.” Jishuka smiled and urged.

Her playful smile made Grid feel even more complicated. “You are serious...”

Should he really eat this? Grid had a complicated expression as he pulled out the Red Phoenix Breath dropped by Garam. Was it possible to directly eat it in this form? The atmosphere remained cordial as Grid hesitated.

Time passed and the group separated. Now the 10 meritorious retainers had to return to the real world to participate in the National Competition while Grid had to plan for his future adventures.

Deep in the night...

Grid turned his head and looked up at the sky, breathing in the air of the Cho Kingdom that seemed clearer, perhaps due to the red phoenix's blessing.

"Do you intend to resurrect the rest of the auspicious beasts?" Braham dressed in Eastern clothing was seen. The gorgeous purple robes accentuated Braham's shining appearance. "You shouldn't overdo it right now. You should return to the West Continent while trying to gauge the level of the other yangbans that Harang warned you about."

"I think so as well. Sometimes rest is more helpful."

"Yes."

Rest was important. During the break, he could check and maintain himself in order to provide a springboard for a bigger leap forward. Above all, Grid wanted to see Irene.

'I don't think a new epic is likely to be written right now...'

As his level progressed, his growth seemed to slow and so did his epics. It was clear based on the fact that there wasn't an epic despite killing four yangbans and resurrecting the red phoenix.

"However, I have to meet those kids before leaving."

He was referring to Blue Tiger, Tosun, and the other sacred beasts. Grid had believed he needed to resurrect the red phoenix due to their memories and they believed he would be the one to do it.

"Would you like to accompany me?"

Grid reached out to Braham. He no longer worried about Braham's safety because Braham was much stronger than himself.

"Now you are relying on me, the strongest magician of all time?"

Braham gave a rare smile and grabbed Grid's hand. The quiet scenery blessed the reunion of the two men.

『 The players of the 5th National Competition are entering! 』

This year, the National Competition had suffered from a number of crises. It was because Grid took away all the attention from the National Competition. He killed a half-god, wrote a new epic, and resurrected an old god called the red phoenix. It was no wonder that attention was focused on Grid, who made a ridiculous feat every few days. The backlash was that interest in the National Competition was reduced.

Still, it was fortunate. Fortunately, the ratings for the opening ceremony of the 5th National Competition wasn't much different from the previous ones.

-Where is Grid right now?

-He still seems to be on the East Continent.

-There should be a boycott of the National Competition without Grid.

-Praise God Grid!

The problem was that the audience chat window was bombarded with talk of Grid. In Shin Youngwoo's house...

"They keep talking about our son."

Youngwoo's parents were watching the opening ceremony together and laughed. The two of them chatted well as they watched it on the latest TV model released by Daejin Electronics.

The Korean players were entering the stage. Yura and Jishuka—Youngwoo's mother clapped and cheered as her beautiful daughter-in-law candidates appeared. Then she soon became worried when Sehee and Yerim appeared.

"Their levels are still low. Will they be okay?"

"Low level..."

Youngwoo heard his mother using game terminology and laughed. "Don't worry, their levels aren't low. They are really strong."

Sehee and Yerim told him that they would only compete in duo events. Who could stop the combination of the Saintess and Saintess' Knight who had grown hunting in the Galgunos Temple.

His father asked Youngwoo, who was smiling and drinking Coke, "So who do you think will win this year's National Competition?"

"Our country," Youngwoo replied without any hesitation. The growth of the 10 meritorious retainers he had recently been reunited with was shocking. In particular, the development of Yura and Jishuka, who received the red phoenix's blessing, was remarkable.

Youngwoo was convinced. "There's no one who can stop Yura and Jishuka except for Kraugel and Chris."

"Haha..."

Youngwoo's parents laughed. Youngwoo cocked his head at their reactions and his mother spoke through her laughter, "It is nice to see you already taking care of your wife. Hey, so who is it among the two of them?"

"...No, what?"

Most professionals and viewers expected the United States to win. Many reporters argued that it would be strange if the United States didn't win. His parents were bound to misunderstand. They thought that Youngwoo was being protective of the person he was interested in and that it was a personal matter.

"...Don't be surprised in a few days."

Youngwoo blushed as he cleaned the table. It would soon be time for his access restriction to end. He planned to wash the dishes and return to the capsule. He wanted to reduce the household burden of his mother, who often struggled every day.

'Let's hire a housekeeper. Someone like Yang Fei...'

No, it would take a long time if he looked for someone like that in reality. Youngwoo decided to contact the domestic help companies tomorrow and concentrated on washing the dishes.

“Are you sure Grid is coming?”

“The information is definite.”

“Yes...”

Veradin, the necromancer who lost everything due to the Overgeared Guild’s kill order—he stood with dozens of jiangshi at the entrance of the forest where a monster colony was located and burned with killing intent. After escaping to the East Continent, he met an evil daoist and developed his strength. He had no intention of missing out on this opportunity for revenge.

[Chapter 1183](#)

All players in Satisfy had something in common—healthy teeth. Chairman Lim Cheolho’s consideration sparked the desire of all players to enjoy the fully implemented taste system. However, in front of the Red Phoenix Breath, it was useless.

“Ah, ahhhh.”

Grid bit on the Red Phoenix Breath and felt a pain that was like all his teeth breaking. He grabbed his cheeks as he tried to hold back tears.

‘Damn, how the hell can I eat this?’

The reason why only Grid could smelt the Red Phoenix Breath was due to how hard it was. Apart from Grid, the blacksmiths couldn’t smelt the Red Phoenix Breath even when hammering them in a fire made from the white phosphorus wood—at least at the present time. Chewing on such a hard Red Phoenix Breath? It was impossible even if he wore dentures made of steel.

‘Only a snap will be heard.’

It was like the snap of the elderly...

Grid recalled the unthinking behavior of today’s generation and clicked his tongue. Then he seriously thought about it again. ‘How about carving it into small pieces and swallowing it down like a pill? No, I can’t do that.’

Carving meant shattering. It was distinctively different from smelting. The shattered material would become invalid and turn into a useless stone. Then what would be the point of eating it?

“Hrmm...” Grid struggled with the fist-sized breath in his hand.

He was currently moving to the north. It was to check the status of the sacred beasts such as Blue Tiger and Tosun and to see if there was anything he could get from them. Braham walked next to Grid and scolded him, “Pathetic. Why do you keep acting foolish when you can’t guarantee that eating a breath will strengthen the Red Phoenix Breath?”

“In the current situation, I don’t think there is any other way except to eat it...”

“Isn’t the idea of eating a mineral strange?”

“...?!”

“Ignorant guy.”

“...”

‘Jishuka, you’re too ignorant.’

Grid wanted to protect Jishuka’s dignity and didn’t reveal that the one who thought of it was Jishula. He walked silently and organized his thoughts.

‘Yes, it doesn’t make sense to raise the skill level by eating minerals. Who can do that? I’ll just take some time to watch the progress.’

If things went well in the future, he would meet the blue dragon, the white tiger, and the black tortoise. He might have an opportunity to ask questions about how to grow their breaths. There was no need to be impatient right now.

“Hmm... Braham,” Grid abandoned the foolish thoughts and asked a cautious question, “how would you compare me to the legends of the past generation?”

It was 10 days at best—Grid had taken tremendous strides within a short period of time. It wasn’t like other rankers who invested a lot of resources and tried to rush to gain new equipment. Rather, it was through quests and story making. Grid was currently wondering about his strength. He wanted to compare himself to the legends of the previous generation that he felt was an ‘insurmountable wall’ not long ago.

“Braham?” Grid was puzzled when Braham didn’t answer. In fact, Grid thought that Braham would scoff immediately.

Unexpectedly, Braham responded after seriously considering it, “Every legend has a different field so it would be unreasonable to compare you to all of the previous generation legends. However, compared to Pagma, you aren’t lacking much.”

“...?!”

Grid was surprised. He was currently level 407 after defeating the yangbans in the battle of Kars. It was definitely the best among players but it was at least 200 levels lower than the legends of the past generation. Yet Braham estimated that Grid’s strength was similar to that of Pagma. Since Grid was following his footsteps, Grid found that this was an unexpected answer.

Grid was dumbfounded and Braham responded in a ridiculing manner, “Have you forgotten that legends and transcendents are different?”

“...!”

“You are a legend but you have also built up transcendence and even became an object of faith. Your physical ability and technical aspects are still in the growth phase but nonetheless, you aren’t bad compared to Pagma’s prime. It is both your skills as a blacksmith as well as a swordsman.”

“...Is this only when opening my potential?”

It was before the Divinity skill was strengthened. Grid had wanted to use Skill Creation to create a skill that could eliminate or reduce the cooldown of skills. He thought that if he created a much stronger skill than the ones he currently possessed, there would be side effects such as Failure. However, Divinity was enhanced and the situation changed. Grid’s judgment was clouded by the dire circumstances and he attempted to create the five fused sword dance to avoid the immediate crisis.

Of course, the results were completely different. Open Potential—the power of this skill, created with the advice of the system, was explosive.

[Open Potential]

[Allows you to use a skill that is one grade above the ones you currently have.

Does not apply to skills that have already reached the peak.

Cooldown Time: 12 hours.

Resource Consumption: 10,000 mana. 20,000 health. Half of the current stamina.

* Extreme penalties will occur after using this skill.]

A skill that forcibly activated a skill tree that has yet to be opened—for ordinary players with a normal or rare rated skill tree, they might evaluate the quasi-legendary skill as disappointing. However, it was obviously a legendary skill for Grid. Due to Open Potential, Grid was able to use the five fused sword dance, which was one grade higher than the four fused sword dances. He could also use 300,000 Army Swordsmanship, which was a grade above 200,000 Army Swordsmanship.

The only downside was that it was hard to handle. The pain that occurred immediately after the use of the five fused sword dance was unbearable, even for Grid who was already accustomed to suffering. He might’ve cried if Yura hadn’t been there.

Grid estimated that his waist likely wouldn’t be safe the moment he used 300,000 Army Swordsmanship. It meant he would be unable to fight afterward. It was just that the penalties were proportional to the power. Open Potential was now Grid’s true ultimate technique. If he consumed origin true energy like he did in the previous battle, it would be an incomparable killing skill.

Braham frowned. “You have a very high opinion of Pagma. You are overvaluing him.”

His mood was very bad. He seemed to be jealous as he added, “The Pagma I’ve been comparing you to is the Pagma who had reached his limits. I’m not talking about Pagma after he contracted with Baal.”

“...”

“Pagma was rubbish compared to myself when he was just a great swordsman and blacksmith. You can stand up to him with your current ability.”

Was Pagma so weak before he signed with Baal? Grid was baffled. It was surprising that Pagma, who was considered the best swordsman apart from Muller, was evaluated as so weak.

“No, he was trash compared to me.”

“...?”

“Pagma was naturally the strongest among humans. It means you are strong enough to grow to a level similar to him. You don’t have to overdo it trying to reach your potential.”

“Ah...” Pagma wasn’t weak, Grid was just strong—Grid clearly recognized this and clenched his fists. If his fists weren’t clenched, his fingers would be trembling.

“Time. All you need is time. In the future, you will definitely...” Braham closed his mouth.

Just then, Grid detected a change...

The large community of poisonous rats that he had already cleared a long time ago—he felt an unpleasant sensation the moment he entered the small gorge that was just before the community.

“A bad smell is lingering.”

Braham made an absurd smile and was stepping forward when Grid restrained him. “I’ll sort it out.”

“Don’t you think it’ll be faster if I go out?”

“I have to increase my experience.”

“...Do what you want.”

The moment Braham gave permission, Grid used Lightning Speed. The passive effect of Incarnation of Lightning was activated as he entered the flying state. Grid suppressed the stamina decline and reduced the resource consumption of skills by 20%. Then he fully started the attack. “Wave.”

In the middle of the canyon, the group hiding behind a sloping pine tree were unable to resist the bombardment Grid aimed at them and fell to the ground. They fell from a huge height of 15 meters. No matter how much training they had gone through, one leg had to be broken. Normal people would never be fine. Yet they jumped up like a rabbit and one of them rushed toward Grid.

‘A blood jiangshi?’

In fact, he knew from the beginning that those hiding were jiangshi due to the smell. However, it turned out to be a rare blood jiangshi? The Enlightenment Sword struck the neck of the blood jiangshi. However, the neck of the jiangshi was as hard as steel and wasn’t easily cut.

The recoil caused by the collision meant Grid failed to capitalize on a second attack and descended. Then he kicked the jiangshi upward and attacked again before using Magic Power Detection. It was due to the belief that the blood jiangshi would have a master. It was as expected...

‘There.’ Movement was captured at the top of the gorge to the left. There were 10 jiangshi but it was extremely unlikely that they would all be blood jiangshi. He heard that the recipe of the blood jiangshi

was hard to mass produce because it was extremely difficult, unlike the steel jiangshi and the poisonous jiangshi. Still, Grid was capable of breaking through even if they were all blood jiangshi.

‘I have to handle the shaman.’

Grid gained momentum after striking the face of another blood jiangshi and rushed in the direction of the group. The scenery that entered Grid’s field of view changed as quickly as that outside a train’s window. Grid was able to reach his destination in an instant.

Grid saw it—there was a man with black skin as hard as iron, especially dazzling white hair, and flames around both hands. ‘A black horse jiangshi!’

Grid was hurriedly taking the defensive when he saw the name of the white-haired jiangshi—Veradin.

“...?!”

“Hahahaha! Grid! I’ve only dreamed of getting revenge on you!”

Originally, Veradin was a player who took the best elite path. He was considered one of the best talents of the first generation rookies along with Lauel and built his own guild. Later, he became a member of Immortal under the banner of Agnus and became the first player to get a chance to become a yangban.

Then everything was lost after he became hostile to Grid. The price of driving Khan to death was harsh. After a series of deaths to Grid and the Overgeared Guild, Veradin was disqualified from becoming a yangban. Due to the killing order that spread throughout Satisfy, he was forced to take refuge on the East Continent and start all over again.

However, he had experienced too many deaths and lost his levels and items. He was weakened and the East Continent wasn’t easy. Veradin had been pushed to the edge of a cliff when the evil daoist extended his hand. He used the basic magic that was considered useless during his time as a necromancer. Now it contained great power.

It was the basic premise that it became 10 times more powerful after changing his race to a black horse jiangshi. That’s right—Veradin reappeared after a long time and was no longer human.

“Taste the pain I’ve gone through, Grid!” Veradin’s eyes shone red as he shouted in a terrible manner. His magic and the dozens of blood jiangshi that he constantly summoned struck at Grid. Veradin was assured of his victory. Of course, he knew about Grid’s epics but he believed his sacrifice where he gave up being human to become a monster was far beyond Grid’s epics.

High risk and high returns was Satisfy’s rule. He didn’t know all the sacrifices and pain that Grid had endured. He didn’t properly measure the weight of Grid’s epics.

The Storm of the Fire God appeared around Grid. The divine flames inflicted severe pain on the dozens of blood jiangshi and Grid moved beyond them to Veradin, who was leading them.

“The combination of the pain you have felt and the pain you will feel in the future is insufficient compared to the pain I have felt.”

The Enlightenment Sword pierced Veradin's back as he tried to escape from the flames that melted his blood and flesh. Even Veradin, who was many times stronger than when he was a human, wasn't a match for Grid.

"I have revived an old god after all..."

Grid used Magic Power Detection. Meanwhile, the only 'living' daoist among the jiangshi, including Veradin, was watching Grid with interest.

[Chapter 1184](#)

[You have suffered catastrophic damage!]

[The body that has become a living dead has been severely damaged.]

[The blood of the victims trapped in your body is flowing backward, causing your body to collapse.]

There were three penalties that a player who changed race to an undead type would experience—their agility was significantly reduced, some skills were sealed, and the effects of recovery magic were reversed. However, the black horse jiangshi didn't have the reduced agility and skills sealing penalties.

This was why the combat power of the black horse jiangshi was overwhelming. The flying horse jiangshi were regarded as legends but the black horse jiangshi was actually the strongest. However, it wasn't universal. The black horse jiangshi had frightening side effects.

"Uh...Uwaaaaack!"

The cost of death was huge. This was because he lost a considerable amount of the blood of 300 people he was injected with during the 33 day ceremony. The amount of experience lost when a black horse jiangshi died was nearly double that of a typical player and it took as long as two days to revive. It was rare for him to die but this time, he met a bad opponent.

"Grid! Griddddd!" Veradin roared. He gave up his human dignity in the spirit of revenge on Grid but he suffered a great loss in reverse, rather than getting revenge. He was so furious that he felt like crying.

"..."

Grid didn't even look at him. The sense of alienation that Veradin felt was indescribable.

'To him, I'm nothing.'

There was a rush of futility. In the world that turned grey, Veradin pressed the log out button. It was his final logout—Veradin didn't want to return to Satisfy again.

"Hey."

Grid broke through Veradin and the jiangshi and met the daoist. The daoist's name was Sabaek. [1] He wore a black robe and hat and his face was painted white. He looked like a messenger of the underworld.

"Are you the daoist who turned that trash into a jiangshi?"

"That's right. I'm also the one who created the mark you have."

“...?”

What was the mark he had? Grid cocked his head to the side in a puzzled manner before recalling an item. He only had one mark.

[Mark of Evolution]

[Rating: Unique]

A functional marker developed by the alchemy facility.

If this mark is attached to your body, one of your strength, agility, stamina, or intelligence stats will increase by 200.

User Restriction: Level 200 or higher.

Weight: 0]

The Mark of Evolution was one of the reasons why Grid became obsessed with the alchemy facility. If he hadn't encountered this mark then Grid might've stopped investing in Reidan's alchemy facility.

“Did you make this?” Grid felt a strong distrust. It was puzzling that the daoist, who was associated with Veradin, would suddenly talk about the Mark of Evolution.

“I know that the mark was made by an alchemy facility in the Hwan Kingdom.”

The Hwan Kingdom was a kingdom of the Five Seniors and the yangbans. Humans weren't permitted to visit. The Cho king had clearly said so.

Sabaek questioned the suspicious Grid, “Do you see the yangbans as great men who will study and hone alchemy?”

“...!” Grid noticed his mistake. He was reminded of the scene where Garam mocked Pagma's sword dances and blacksmithing.

‘That's right. It is clear that the yangbans would think of alchemy as insignificant.’

However, they had high-quality technology. This meant they borrowed the power of humans. There was a high possibility that the daoist's argument was correct.

Grid pointed a blade at Sabaek's neck. “Last time, the blue tiger told me that the wicked daoists are the minions of the Hwan Kingdom.”

Jiangshi were undead that could only be manufactured at the expense of people. It meant the daoists who made them were wicked daoists. The blue tiger said that 10 years ago, a wicked daoist scattered garlic and mugwort around the area of Bukdu Mountain to deceive the spiritual creatures.

“I was told that spirits who ascend will become subordinates to the society of gods and are forced to become minions of the Five Seniors. The reason you sprinkled mugwort and garlic around Bukdu Mountain is to eventually turn all spirits into the minions of the Five Seniors.”

“Hrmm...”

“The reason you create confusion is for the yangbans. Every time they calm down the confusion you have created, their faith will build up.”

Grid was certain and cornered Sabaek. Grid recognized Sabaek as an assassin sent from the Hwan Kingdom. However, Sabaek responded in an unexpected manner, “Your reasoning is very simplistic. I was looking forward to meeting you since you revived an old god but I’m disappointed.”

“...?”

“It is true that those who belong to the society of the gods can’t disobey the will of a god. It is just that the concept of a god doesn’t only mean the Five Seniors. The red phoenix you have resurrected this time is also a god.”

“...!”

“The resurrection of the red phoenix gave a choice to those who ascended. I’m sure the daoist immortals of the Peach Blossom Spring are currently considering if they should stand on the side of the Five Seniors or the red phoenix. In addition, most of the spirits who become daoist immortals will be on the side of the red phoenix. It makes sense for sacred creatures to follow the Four Gods.”

“Are you trying to make the intelligent creatures ascend to empower the Four Gods who will be resurrected one day?” Braham stepped up on behalf of Grid who didn’t understand. As he approached, he stood by Grid and observed Sabaek with an interested gaze. “There are transcendents in the east.”

“Transcendents...?”

A chill went down Grid’s spine. If Sabaek was a transcendent then the problem was serious. Grid couldn’t detect Sabaek’s status. This meant that Sabaek’s status was above Grid’s. A smile spread on Sabaek’s face. He seemed pleased that there was someone he could converse with. “My name is Sabaek. To the world, I am known as the boss of the evil daoists.”

“Braham. I am a magician who serves Grid here.”

“...Overgeared King Grid.”

Grid was discontent as he was forced to introduce himself. It was because there were many parts that were unconvincing. “There is still something I need to ask. Why sacrifice people to make the jiangshi?”

“Human power alone can’t stand against the Hwan Kingdom so I am gathering an army of immortals. It is for the peace of the world.”

“Can you seriously consider the peace of the world when damage is being done to civilians?”

“It can’t be helped. Most of the daoists who follow me are actually wicked. They make jiangshi and enjoy hurting people. I can’t control them.”

“...?”

“I can’t openly say that I want to rebel against the Hwan Kingdom. None of the daoists who follow me know my reality and purpose. I am forced to match them on the surface.”

“...”

“It is a necessary evil. In order to gather the strong, I need the cooperation of the wicked daoists. In order to gather the wicked daoists, I need to disguise myself as one... well, there is no need for anger. Once peace is restored to the world in the future, I will make the wicked daoists pay the price for their sins.”

The short conversation allowed Grid to notice it—Sabaek was similar to Pagma.

“Are you on your way to meet the sacred creatures? Please let me accompany you as well. I have to persuade them to let all the intelligent creatures ascend.” Sabaek politely requested. He told them that he had struggled for the world longer than anyone else and noticed a world that was wrong before anyone else.

“I don’t want to.”

“...?”

Sabaek’s expression stiffened and his smiling eyes cooled. Grid flinched back somewhat but he didn’t avoid eye contact. “Your justice is wrong. Your way is wrong. I don’t intend to cooperate with you.”

“Haha...” Sabaek burst out laughing. He shook his head with a ridiculing expression. “My justice is wrong? I am wrong? Were my ears mistaken just now?”

Duguen!

Grid’s heart thumped. His transcendent senses warned him of danger. Grid reflexively prepared for battle but Braham stepped forward and stared at Sabaek. “What will you do if you are offended?”

“.....” Sabaek shut his mouth. He took a step back like he had been living a lie. “I will back down today. Think about it until we meet again. It would be good for you if you work with me.”

Sabaek’s body disappeared like he vanished into the ground. Braham stood still for a moment as he tracked Sabaek. Then he looked back at Grid. “Relax your expression. He was already a transcendent when you were normal.”

“...Yes.”

The second pope Chreshler was also a transcendent. Sabaek might be better compared to Chreshler. Chreshler was a strange pervert while Sabaek was pursuing peace for the world. The problem was that Sabaek’s method was wrong.

‘Peace built up using people’s misery isn’t true peace.’ Pagma had already proved it. Grid recalled Pagma, who felt regret in his last moments, and urged Braham, “Hurry.”

“Yes.”

Grid used Shunpo while Braham teleported. They leapt through space again and again and soon arrived at the community of toothless tigers.

Zibal proved the great power of the magic machines in last year's National Competition and was one of the strong candidates to win this year's PvP. Many viewers were looking forward to Zibal's participation in PvP. Surprisingly, Zibal was absent from PvP. It was because Kraugel had vowed to join PvP.

'Going to an event where Kraugel will win the gold medal will just be in vain.'

Zibal was a master among masters. He had already witnessed the explosive potential of Sword Saint Kraugel several times. Kraugel had the potential to someday catch up with Grid. It was Zibal's decision not to compete against Kraugel, even if he had the magic machine. This year, Zibal would be really serious.

'I will give up my pride in this year's National Competition and win for the United States.'

There was no Grid in this year's National Competition. If the United States didn't win then the face of his people would be lost. He had to win. Therefore...

『 The American player Zibal is entering! 』

This year, Zibal participated in the target processing event. High rankers from Canada and China, as well as Yura of South Korea, were the strong candidates. Zibal planned to eliminate the variables.

'If I win a gold medal here, it will deal a big blow to the other powers.'

Zibal looked at Yura, who was in a duo with a player whose ranking was below 1,000. She wasn't competing together with Jishuka, who had naturalized to South Korea this year. "What is South Korea thinking?"

"?"

"Target processing is an event that can maximize the strengths of both you and Jishuka. If the two of you were to be sent out as a duo, South Korea would be more likely to win a gold medal. Why did they only send you?"

If Yura and Jishuka competed together in the same event then he would've been wary. However, he wasn't nervous of a South Korea without Grid. It was sad that they lost their possibility of winning just because they wanted to spread out their talents.

The sound of bells announced the start of the event.

"Well... try and win a silver medal," Zibal encouraged Yura as he boarded Raiders.

"Fire," Zibal commanded.

The eight guns installed on Raider's upper body and the six on its lower body opened fire at the same time, firing missiles at the targets floating in the sky. He imagined himself winning the gold medal while achieving the best record in the target processing history. However, he witnessed the explosion of dozens of missiles before they reached the target.

"What...?"

Zibal was shocked for a while because he couldn't understand the situation. Then he looked at the situation around him through Raiders' eyes. All the projectiles fired by the hundreds of players were

exploding in the air, just like the missiles Raiders fired. Hundreds of projectiles were scattered to ashes before they reached their targets.

“This is ridiculous!”

A blackened world—thousands of bullets emerged from the black hole rising under the Hell Moon and destroyed all the targets and projectiles in the area.

‘Yura!’

Zibal’s gaze shot toward Yura’s position. She was still standing at the starting point. She stood in place and inserted her gun’s muzzle into the black hole she had summoned, continuously shooting. It was utilizing the Hell Leap skill that wowed Kraugel last year to the absolute limits.

『 South Korea’s representative, Yura, has destroyed all targets! 』

『 The record is 23 seconds...! It is the fastest record ever! 』

“.....”

Zibal closed his mouth. He vowed that in the future, he wouldn’t only be humble to Grid and Kraugel, but also to Yura.

[Chapter 1185](#)

The white skin and pure silver armor were the only pure white presence in hell. In the hall of malice and killing intent, only she was virtuous and just.

Tang tang! Tatatatang!

Demon Slayer Yura—she recreated this hateful hell as she fired a barrage that covered the sky. It was the birth of a cage that locked onto all players involved in target processing.

-Wow...

The event ended in just 23 seconds. Viewers replayed the event repeatedly from various angles and belatedly exclaimed. The entire world was thrilled. The legendary greatness that Grid showed as soon as he participated in the National Competition... Yura only proved it properly after several years. It was the fruit of her long efforts.

“.....”

The cameras focused on Yura, who was breathing hard with her heart pounding. She remembered all the trials and anguish she had faced from the time she met Great Demon Amorract up to now.

Zibal’s hands were shaking as he stepped off Raiders. “You have been suffering for a while now... Congratulations.”

He was congratulating her but the tone and words were more like comfort. Why? Yura was feeling doubt when she suddenly realized that tears were flowing down her cheeks.

“Ah...” Why was she so desperate? Grid, Kraugel, Piaro, Mercedes...

Was she relieved and crying because she followed them late, they who had been the same legends but were far ahead?

“Thank you,” Yura responded with an awkward smile.

“Hey.” Zibal frowned at the sight. “Don’t cry when you’ve only won once. Next year, I’ll win.”

“...?” She wasn’t crying because she won. Yura wanted to explain but she closed her mouth. It was because she noticed that Zibal’s shoulders were shaking. “...I understand.”

Yes, it wasn’t only her. The other players, including Zibal standing in front of her with a somber expression, had been working hard for the past year. All of them deserved respect.

“I’m looking forward to next year. Let’s have a great competition at that time.”

A close up shot of a rarely smiling Yura. The viewers around the world were stunned silent for a moment by her beauty.

Subsequently, the second event, drawing the saint sword, started and flames sparked. She was different from Yura, who blackened the sky. Jishuka dominated the area with flames and heat.

“It is unexpected.” Kraugel touched his wrist that was feeling the recoil of deflecting an arrow and turned his gaze over the wall of fire. He could see the beautiful woman with a blazing bow—Jishuka. It was unexpected for her to compete in drawing the saint sword event since it had been announced a few days earlier that Kraugel would be participating. It was because the swordsmanship of a sword saint made the concept of distance meaningless. This was the worst thing for an archer.

-Why participate in a losing event?

The viewers were full of questions.

“Kraugel,” Jishuka’s smile was refreshing enough to make people forget the heat and she spoke shocking remarks, “I’m going to beat you. I got a quest to become a bow saint.”

“.....”

It was the moment when the reason for Jishuka picking the drawing the saint sword event was revealed. However, Kraugel wasn’t convinced.

“To get beyond the top, you need an overwhelming difference in skills.”

They were words that implied many things. Unless Jishuka’s talent went beyond Kraugel, she couldn’t beat Kraugel even after becoming a bow saint. If the class change condition of the bow saint was to fight and overcome a ‘legend of the current era’ like it was with the sword saint, Jishuka should’ve challenged Yura, not Kraugel. It should’ve also been before the National Competition.

Jishuka pulled back her bowstring. The flames revolving around her formed arrows and her bowstring remained tense. “I am challenging you because it is hard. Wouldn’t it be nice to knock you down and become a bow saint? Be prepared. You will die if you look down on me today.”

Live for appearance, die for appearance—it was one of the favorite sayings that Jishuka had learned since coming to South Korea. Jishuka’s shot became a signal. After she released the bowstring, the

arrows created flames in the area while players from other countries appeared in unison to attack Kraugel.

Jishuka and the other players hadn't planned this in advance. However, the absolute strongman called Kraugel made them naturally cooperate. It was as Jishuka expected. It was also a source of confidence for her.

'I will thoroughly push you here and make you pay the price.'

During her training after leaving the Overgeared Kingdom, Jishuka had made great strides. Not only had she gained multiple levels, she acquired new skills and stats in the process of achieving the bow saint pre-conditions. Furthermore, when she traveled to the East Continent to help Grid, she was unintentionally blessed by the red phoenix. The blessing increased her main stats by 10% and allowed her to create the 'intangible arrows.'

Jishuka looked at the possibilities. She calculated that the stage of the sword draw, which was dozens of times larger than the PvP stage and had a variety of terrain features, was the only stage where she could beat Kraugel.

'I will identify your power today.'

In fact, there was also an easy path. It wasn't to challenge Kraugel. She just had to ask Yura or Grid to let her win once. Yet in the past, Kraugel was in the same situation and hadn't asked Grid. He beat Grid with pure skill and became a sword saint.

It was pride. Jishuka also valued pride. Forcing her colleagues to throw the match just to change classes? It was a shame that would be a lifetime regret.

"....."

Kraugel closed his eyes. It was intended to seal the sight of the shimmering flames and to awaken a different sense. Kraugel slightly widened his stride and swung his sword, cutting down the fire arrow shot by Jishuka. There were two arrows. Viewers believed that Jishuka's attack was in vain.

However, reality was different. Jishuka's real move still remained. It was the 'Intangible Arrow Enchanted with Divine Power' that couldn't be seen with the naked eye. Kraugel was recovering his sword to use Sword Curtain, only to find himself blocked.

'Don't let Sword Curtain be used.' She had noticed it in the process of collecting and analyzing data. A sword saint's Sword Curtain completely neutralized projectiles. An archer couldn't beat Kraugel when the Sword Curtain existed. It had to be blocked.

Jishuka fired an arrow again. This time, she aimed for Kraugel's wrist. Rather than unfolding Sword Curtain, Kraugel was forced to avoid the arrow. It was as expected. Kraugel chose evasion. Jishuka's arrow swept past Kraugel's shoulder because he didn't open Sword Curtain and moved in time.

'He avoided it? A real monster... I'm going to have to use an intangible arrow.'

The other players were rushing through the flames toward Kraugel. Surrounded by dozens of people, Kraugel lowered his waist as much as possible and took the posture of drawing the sword.

“Split Open.”

Sword energy rose around Kraugel. It was the sharpest and most powerful sword energy in the world. All of the surrounding landscape was split apart. All the players who just arrived and attacked Kraugel were also included. The concept of numbers became meaningless.

“Kuack!”

“Kkuk...!”

The participants were fatally wounded and coughed up blood.

“Perforate.” Kraugel’s sword was once again drawn and pointed at Jishuka.

“A legend is someone who ‘goes beyond strength’ and shows ‘something that can’t happen’ or ‘something that shouldn’t happen.’”

All the fallen players were coughing up blood while Jishuka’s heart had two holes perforated into it. Kraugel also proved Braham’s words about a true legend.

“Cough, I screwed up.”

Jishuka didn’t die and recovered thanks to Incarnation of Fire but her heart felt empty.

‘I didn’t know he would grow to this level.’

The rumors that he had been stuck in the mountains for three years weren’t false. The combination of overwhelming talent, persistence, and hard work was simply a scam. Jishuka continued to shoot. Her arrows flew in a spiral and blocked the ability to read their trajectory. Even Kraugel couldn’t block them. There were quite a few wounds on his body. Yet in the process, he successfully defended against the Intangible Arrow Enchanted with Divine Power and finally narrowed the distance to Jishuka.

“The protagonist of a manhwa has more of a conscience than you,” Jishuka scolded Kraugel as he appeared right before her nose. Just then, Kraugel’s feet were caught in something. He hadn’t discovered the trap because his senses had been focused on the intangible arrows.

A succession of arrows took place. Against a shaky backdrop, Kraugel’s sword created dozens of flashes while Jishuka’s arrows were spectacular. The power of the arrows that pierced the stone barriers created by the White Tiger Sword often caused Kraugel to feel cold.

It was a fierce battle. However, it was safe to say that victory was decided from the moment when a swordsman succeeded in narrowing the distance to an archer. By the time the fallen players rose again and rushed to Kraugel, Jishuka was already running away from her position. There was a huge roar from the red phoenix and Kraugel couldn’t rashly chase after her.

“...”

Kraugel was seriously wounded and couldn’t face the players approaching him. In any case, the main goal was to become the figure the holy sword wanted. He had a powerful mind and already grasped the sword’s wish. He started to take advantage of the participants’ skills to extinguish the surrounding fire.

Some of the players noticed and tried to light up the forest again, but it was too late. After fully extinguishing the flames and obtaining the first sword song, Kraugel followed the hints. At this point, Jishuka had moved as much as possible to avoid being close to Kraugel so no one could stop him anymore.

In the end...

『 Kraugel was one step faster! 』

The first owner of the sword stuck in the rock was Kraugel and the second was Jishuka.

“Was I the only one to reveal everything?” Jishuka lamented as she stood on the silver medal podium.

Still, the passion in her eyes was the same.

“Well, once we meet again in actual battle in the game, I would’ve grown again. Isn’t that right? Please accept my challenge next time.” Jishuka smiled as she gazed at Kraugel. She was proud and confident.

Frankly, Kraugel was tired. This was the type of opponent he feared most. ‘I need to ask Grid for mediation...’

“Wait! Wait a minute!” Grid called out to Braham who was far ahead. It was maddening that if Shunpo failed once, the distance with Braham would become too wide. “What if I become lost?”

“A fully grown man like you is whining.” Braham folded his arms and yawned while waiting.

Thanks to this, Grid shook his head and narrowed the distance again.

“Eh?”

The big poisonous rat community—it had become a lawless zone since Grid killed the rat queen. The rats lost their queen and could only move using instincts, making the landscape of the community become desolate. This was what Grid had seen before he left for Kars.

In just a few days, the community of big poisonous rats had changed dramatically. It was well-organized and could even be described as a human village.

‘Did the rats come back as intelligent spirits?’

The rats who had fallen wild after the death of their master might’ve been influenced by the resurrected red phoenix. It was very good news. This was something Grid had hoped for. Grid entered the community and was filled with joy.

“Y-You?”

The rat queen, who had apparently died, was resurrected. The rat queen rushed to Grid who reflexively stepped backwards. She was round like a hamster and rushed with tremendous speed. It was a different speed than before. Grid was unable to draw his sword before she arrived.

The rat queen embraced him. “Our benefactor! I have been waiting!”

[Chapter 1186](#)

“H-How are you...?”

Soft flesh and fluffy fur. Grid was in turmoil as he was held in the arms of a large hamster. The rat queen—the first time Grid saw her, she was wearing a crude crown, a ragged cloak, and had died. It was also by the hands of Grid. That person was now showing herself in front of him.

The rat queen released the flustered Grid and smiled. The face that used to be full of venom was now looking at Grid with a round, gentle gaze.

“I was resurrected due to the resurrection of the red phoenix. It is because there is a myth that the Twelve Zodiacs serve God Red Phoenix.”

Mythical beings couldn't be killed in ordinary ways. Just like the hydra, they were immortal unless a unique attack strategy was discovered or the people's belief in them was destroyed. Grid was reminded of this fact and felt a flash. Yet no matter how he looked, he didn't see 'him.' Only ordinary (?) hamsters could be seen.

“Ah...” Grid was constantly searching everywhere only to make eye contact with the rat queen. Then he avoided her eyes.

The rat queen smiled bitterly. “My husband is in my heart.”

“...”

“My husband was an ordinary spirit, unlike me. He can't be resurrected because he isn't a sacred creature.”

“...”

The first time Grid discovered the rat queen, she wasn't alone. She had been with her husband, a strong male rat. Then her peace was broken. Grid murdered her husband. Of course, the rats at that time had fallen to mere monsters. They were monsters who harmed people. Grid killing them was a worthy achievement and actually benefited the people. Still, he was sorry. Grid felt guilty.

‘This doesn't mean I will ask for forgiveness.’ The rat queen's heart would only become more uncomfortable. In any case, she wasn't in a position to blame Grid. Apologizing to her would be nothing more than a selfish act to relieve Grid's own guilt.

‘At that time, I had to fight them and it was the right thing to do. It is just to that causality that occurred from that act that I managed to resurrect the red phoenix.’

The rat queen reached out to Grid, who was thinking deeply in a silent manner. “Don't mind it. I, no, we don't blame you. If you hadn't beaten us, we would've killed more people and that would've been a great sorrow for us. So let go of that expression. Please take care of us in the future, Benefactor.”

“I would like to ask you as well, Kyeongja.” (Name means year of the rat)

The resurrected rat queen had a name added to her. He didn't know why the rat's name was Kyeongja. However, it was true that there was a sense of friendliness. It was similar to the name of a grandmother.

“Myong! Myong! Myong! Hooray, Her Majesty!”

“Myong! Myong! Myong! Hooray, human friend!”

The rats stared at Grid and Kyeongja’s figures emotionally and struck the ground with the trident in their hand, cheering. They were so short that their feet covered with fur were adorable. The image of the monsters who poisoned and attacked him disappeared from his memories. In the midst of the turmoil...

“.....”

Braham was silent. The person who killed the strong male rat was Braham, not Grid. Braham had used Assimilation to dominate Grid’s body and demonstrated the power of Alarm magic against the strong male rat and that rat had died because of him. However, Kyeongja didn’t know that. Grid was taking responsibility for Braham. There was no reason for Braham to go out and reveal it.

“Was the black cow resurrected?”

Grid questioned as the hamsters started dancing and Kyeongja nodded. “Yes, he is part of the Twelve Zodiacs as well. The moment he was resurrected, he transformed into a human and left for the village. He wants to play as soon as possible.”

“...?”

Suddenly, the rat queen fell down. She was twice as big as Grid but her feet were small, so it was hard to stand for long.

“Did you come here because you’re curious about the blue tiger and Tosun?”

She seemed to have met the blue tiger and Tosun after her resurrection. Grid nodded. “Right. However, based on your condition, they must be safe.”

“Yes. Still, you should stop by. The kids are looking forward to their reunion with you...”

It was at this moment that the voices of the blue tiger and Tosun could be heard from a distance.

“Grid!! Kuheong!”

“God! God!!”

There was a cloud of dust in the distance and dozens of tigers rushed over. At the forefront was the blue tiger and Tosun was sitting on the blue tiger’s shoulder.

“Everyone...!”

Grid rejoiced. The blue tiger, Tosun, and the toothless tigers who sacrificed themselves to help him escape were still alive. He thought they died because of Hangyeol so he was very happy to see they were safe. The tigers approached Grid and spoke with their dentures.

“What is this reaction? Aheung. Human, were you worried about us?”

“Ahuheung, it is a useless worry. We are healthy enough to be alive. Aheung.”

“Grid! Thank you for resurrecting God Red Phoenix! I believed in you!”

“Eek.”

The tigers scrambled out of the way while the blue tiger hugged Grid.

[You have suffered 18,500 damage!]

Indeed, a tiger was a tiger. Unlike the fluffy arms of the rat queen, the blue tiger’s arms were hard and painful. Grid felt the pain of his spine bending.

“Uhuh! Too imprudent!”

Tosun pulled the blue tiger away from Grid. As she stroked the back of Grid who was trembling in pain, she spoke, “I will never forget that you sacrificed yourself for the rabbits to get away. We will honor your merits forever. A new god... God of Virtue...”

“...”

The birds were chirping and he was surrounded by cozy animals, but he couldn’t help frowning. He was glad that everyone was safe and welcoming him but why call him the God of Virtue? Grid denied it.

“Don’t call me a god. I’m still a human.”

“It hasn’t happened yet. However, your virtues will continue to build up and you will eventually become the God of Virtue.”

“What about the God of Rice Cakes, heung?”

“I want to eat rice cakes. Aheung.”

“...Please shut up.”

Unlike the hydra, who became a mythical being by going against the gods, they became mythical beings by serving the gods. They were the sacred creatures. They were very nice, as they had been taking care of humans for the good gods, but they were tactless. There were limitations to beasts, such as being unable to read the expressions of human beings. This was why they kept calling him God of Virtue despite his terrible expression.

“Ohh... You have the heart of God Red Phoenix.”

The blue tiger stared at Grid and turned pale. The rat queen and Tosun also observed Grid belatedly and marveled. “Amazing! You really have the heart of God Red Phoenix!”

“Ahem, it is natural. The God of Virtue resurrected God Red Phoenix and he would be rewarded.”

“Ah...” Grid only realized it at this moment. He had the heart of a god. The reason why the Red Phoenix Heart had the ability to change the nature of the hidden item, the ‘rune,’ was because it had such a high level value and effect.

“Did God Red Phoenix give its 1,000th heart?”

“No, it must’ve shared its 999th heart.”

“No matter what he did, it shouldn’t be a triple digit heart. A triple digit heart is a power that God Red Phoenix has held for a very long time...”

“Right, that’s right. It is too much of a sacrifice for God Red Phoenix. I still remember crying when the Five Seniors snatched its hearts.”

The hearts of the red phoenix builds up over time. Every year, a new heart was created and the heart contained the life and strength of the red phoenix. The older the heart, the greater its vitality and strength. The age of the removed heart was directly linked to the amount of pain and weakening experienced by the red phoenix.

Nevertheless, the blue tiger guaranteed it. “Grid is our benefactor. He would’ve surely been given the 999th heart.”

He hadn’t foreseen this situation when he left the sealed bow to Grid. He thought it would take a really long time for Grid to resurrect the red phoenix or that he would fail to resurrect it. The blue tiger had realistically faced the situation. It was impossible for one human to fight against the Five Seniors and the yangbans who had sealed the power of the Four Auspicious Beasts. However, the result wasn’t what he expected. Grid revived the red phoenix in just a few days. He believed it wouldn’t be unusual if the red phoenix gave its 999th heart to Grid.

The unsuspecting blue tiger was staring at Grid when Grid finally opened his mouth, “I got the 9th heart...”

“...?!”

“...?!”

The eyes of the sacred creatures and spirits widened with surprise. It was almost like their eyes would pop out.

“Is this that great?”

Grid couldn’t comprehend the intense reaction. He admitted that the heart of the red phoenix had value in the world as long as it was the ‘heart of a god.’ It was obviously a great thing that the 9th heart had transformed the Rune of Darkness to the Rune of Gluttony but the main effect was ‘increased health recovery rate’ and ‘doubled stamina recovery rate’ In terms of practical performance, it was somewhat lacking.

Grid felt that the reaction of the sacred creatures was somewhat exaggerated.

Tosun shouted, “Of course it is great! A single digit heart is the real heart of a god that can’t be regenerated!”

“...?”

On behalf of the noisy Tosun, the blue tiger finally explained, “I’ll explain it easily. The only way to kill God Red Phoenix is to destroy the nine single digit hearts. Yet even the Five Seniors couldn’t touch the nine hearts. They had so much strength and vitality that no one could intervene from the outside. If the nine hearts are perfect then God Red Phoenix can exist forever.”

In other words...

“The nine hearts are the lives of God Red Phoenix. It is also the key to the fate of the southern part of the continent that God Red Phoenix is in charge of. You have one of those keys in your body.”

“...”

Grid closed his mouth. He realized what the red phoenix was feeling when it shared its heart with him.

‘You chose me as your companion.’

Grid touched his chest. He felt two heartbeats and thought of the fourth epic. He had vowed to be a god. He had declared that he would protect the world from destruction.

‘Then...’

The red Phoenix supported him.

“...”

Grid’s eyes were half open. His face, shaded by the sun, was quite different from usual. He stood still for a long time before opening his inventory. He pulled out the items obtained from killing Garam and a blacksmithing hammer. He thought of the best he could do.

“Let’s move step by step.”

[Open Potential has been used.]

[Choose a skill tree to open the one grade higher skill(s).]

[Genuine - (Fighting against the Gods) Legendary Blacksmith’s Craftsmanship Skill (Mastered) will change to Blacksmith’s Skill Comparable to a God Lv. 1.]

[Blacksmith’s Skill Comparable to a God is classified as a production skill. The effect is maintained until one item is completed.]

“Let’s start with being overgeared.”

[A verse of the first epic has responded to Blacksmith’s Skill Comparable to a God.]

[His body, tempered by hammering.....]

[The epic effect has increased all stats and skills that affect production by 20%!]

[Chapter 1187](#)

Grid didn’t forget the blacksmith he encountered in a world full of human ideals. Standing in front of the shining anvil and golden clouds, he used his burning nipples to smelt metal and a lightning hammer to temper the metal. The blacksmith god, Hexetia—he was the ideal that every blacksmith in the world, including Grid, had to pursue.

...Except for the nipples.

“...Sigh.”

Grid temporarily put Blacksmith's Skill Comparable to a God to the side, closing his eyes as he took some breaths.

'I never thought I could beat you.'

He recalled the last conversations he had with Garam. He recognized his limitations when he failed to overcome Garam, who was only qualified as a fake god. As a player, he had to bear these limits. Yes, he was a player. Not only was it difficult to exceed the growth power of named NPCs, he was overwhelmingly lacking when it came to basic stats. No matter how high he raised his level or how much stats he built up, even if he became a god, it would still be an insurmountable limit.

This was a realistic conjecture. Even if he became a god, Grid's value would drop as soon as an NPC appeared as an enemy.

'So don't try to be foolish.'

That's why he didn't say to Garam, 'One day, I will surely surpass you.'

He left his desperate wish as a hollow cry in his heart and simply relied on Braham and his colleagues who appeared. He felt like he would fall into the brink of suffering that could never be escaped the moment he expressed his vain wish of fighting and beating Garam. No matter how much time passed, it would be hard to beat Garam, even if he struggled insanely.

However, now his thoughts have changed. It was because the heart of the red phoenix showed new possibilities. Recovery—Grid had the overwhelming recovery of beings who were regarded as insurmountable walls. Right now, it was a recovery that could only be maintained for a few seconds at best but for a short period of time, he completely transcended the limits of a player. It wasn't a transcendence that would be common among players. It was real transcendence.

"....."

The image in Grid's mind deepened. The image of the beautiful and transparent small sword that looked like it was carved of ice slowly floated in his mind.

[Hexetia's Small Sword]

[Rating: Myth

Attack Power: 28,990

....

...]

He didn't remember anything else but he precisely remembered the attack power. It was considered absurd the first time he saw it. He thought it was an attack power that he would never achieve in his life. This wasn't the case anymore. This time, his recovery suggested a new possibility—players could also have transcendent stats. Grid had the ability to experiment with the possibilities.

[Blacksmith's Skill Comparable to a God Lv. 1]

[The production button is enabled and the time it takes to make an item is greatly reduced.

A minimum of unique rated items will be produced.

There is a certain probability of producing legendary rated items.

If certain conditions are met, there is a low probability of making a myth reproduction or myth rated item.

* All stats of a production item will increase by 40%.

* When myth rated items are produced, the blacksmiths' faith in you will increase all stats by 30.

* The deity stat will increase by one for every three myth rated items produced.

★ A temporarily active skill. The myth rated items created won't accumulate.]

Grid didn't even pay attention to the fact that 'a minimum of unique rated items will be produced.'

Since he pursued items above the legendary level, the epic rated and unique rated items had the same value to him. The Blacksmith's Skill Comparable to a God was a one-off skill that was activated by using Open Potential so Grid should aim for the best results.

Grid noted the effect of '40% increase in the stats of production items.' It was 10% higher than Genuine - (Fighting against the Gods) Legendary Blacksmith's Craftsmanship Skill. The higher the stats of the produced items, the more effective they would be.

'I have to unconditionally make a high-grade item.'

The most urgent item was armor. He needed defense to support his recovery. It didn't matter if he had a lot of recovery if his defense was weak.

'My items are too old now.'

There was the Holy Light set he swapped to when responding to magic attacks.

Tiramet's Shoulderguards, the Shiny Leggings, and Lantier's Cloak. Alex's Quick Glove, the Cone Helmet, and the Overgeared Crown. All the armor currently used by Grid were things he had acquired long ago. Even the Cone Helmet and Overgeared Crown were created before the 4th National Competition and had been in use for four years of game time.

'The Holy Light set has been used for the longest time, since the 1st National Competition...'

He felt it was shameful to be called the Overgeared King in his current state. Ordinary players were diligently gaining new equipment and improving their specs while Grid alone was treasuring antiques. The word 'overgeared' still had a negative meaning and if they spoke to Grid, they would insist, 'I am a person who plays with skill, not items.'

'I don't have the answer in my current state.'

Change. It should be changed. The old items might have low basic stats but he hadn't thrown them away because they had a field-specific performance. Now they should be replaced with new ones. He was convinced from the moment he suffered 18,500 damage just by being hugged by the blue tiger.

'I have to harden up.'

Grid pulled out Khan's Valhalla and the loot he got from the yangbans. There were three White Tiger's Breaths, three Black Tortoise's Breaths, and two each of the Red Phoenix's Breaths and Blue Dragon's Breaths. The equipment used by the yangbans such as the smoking pipe, soft sword, and short spear were included in the loot but their performance were somewhat lower than the items made by Grid. They were unique rated items dropped by bosses over level 400. It was quite disappointing since the items dropped by half-gods were at an unsatisfactory level.

Grid was convinced—the yangbans used the strong force they were born with and the power of the Four Auspicious Beasts that they had exploited. They didn't rely on equipment in the first place so it would be strange if their items had a good performance. In common sense, it was a jackpot as long as they dropped one breath.

In the aftermath of the National Competition, the breaths of the Four Gods seemed common but that wasn't the case from Grid's viewpoint. There were few items with as much quality as the Four Gods' breaths.

Black, blue, white, and red.

Grid stared at the different colored breaths and returned all but the black one into his inventory. The black breath he chose was the Black Tortoise's Breath.

"It was some time ago..."

Before coming to the East Continent, Grid had crafted items with the two breaths that were in his possession. One was a sword made from the Red Phoenix's Breath, a growth weapon he designed to give as a gift to Lord. It was a gift meant for Lord to grow up with—to protect his family and people—while Grid was away.

"I failed to smelt the Black Tortoise's Breath."

The other was a blade made with the Black Tortoise's Breath. It was planned to be a new sword but unfortunately, the results were the worst. It was so rough that he didn't feel the need to use it. It was less powerful than the items commissioned by Damian a number of years ago.

"I couldn't find a way to control the power of death inside it."

The reason why Grid dealt well with the Red Phoenix's Breath from the beginning was due to compatibility. The attributes contained in the Red Phoenix's Breath were only fire and life. It was well-matched with a blacksmith who created things using fire. On the other hand, the Black Tortoise's Breath that contained the power of water and death was the worst for a blacksmith. The aura of water calmed the blacksmith's fire and the aura of death hindered the blacksmith's creation. The Black Tortoise's Breath possessed such a nature that it became rusty and weakened the more he smelted it.

"Thus, I want to get advice from you. Is there a way to suppress the aura of death in the Black Tortoise's Breath for a while?"

Once Grid asked this question, the sacred creatures listening started to open their mouths one by one. Their expressions didn't look good.

"I don't know."

“It will probably be tough. The role of the black tortoise itself is the destruction of ‘useless’ things.”

“Useless things?”

“God Black Tortoise only tolerates life and materials born naturally. Artificially created life or objects are considered harmful to everything and are extinguished.”

“.....”

The attributes of the black tortoise were water and death. Grid had felt confused the first time he learned this. Water was closely associated with the birth of life so he didn’t understand why it presided over death. However, at this moment, he understood. The black tortoise’s desire to defend all things was so strong that it became inclined to destruction.

‘Is that why not even the yangbans could use the Black Tortoise’s Breath easily?’

Strictly speaking, the yangbans were artificial beings. It would be virtually impossible for them, born for Hanul and by Hanul, to fully control the power of the black tortoise.

‘The Black Tortoise’s Breath is the most threatening one but they don’t use it often. There is a reason for that.’

Grid smacked his lips together with regret. In fact, he had been envisioning a set of armor with the weapon breaker concept. He would create shoulderguards, leggings, and helmets with the Black Tortoise’s Breath, creating a structure that increased his defense while corroding and weakening the target’s weapon.

Now it seemed too hard. The Black Tortoise’s Breath wasn’t suitable as an item crafting material. Of course, this didn’t mean it was impossible. If he used materials with a strong water attribute, just like when he created Damian’s item, it would be sufficient to produce an item using the Black Tortoise’s Breath.

However, in this case, only the water attribute would be emphasized and the true power of the black tortoise wouldn’t be revealed. Thus, expectations weren’t high.

‘I will keep the Black Tortoise’s Breath for now. First, I will use the White Tiger’s Breath.’

The White Tiger’s Breath lacked the ability to weaken the other side. If he compared the armor created with the White Tiger’s Breath and the armor created with the Black Tortoise’s Breath, the potential to utilize the first one would be much greater. It was just that in terms of stability, the armor created using the White Tiger’s Breath was overwhelmingly good. It was because the advantage of the Black Tortoise’s Breath was to weaken the opponent while the White Tiger’s Breath’s defense itself was extremely high.

Hardening, increasing weight, releasing thorns, etc...

The utility wasn’t bad.

‘No, it exceeds the ‘not bad’ level.’

At the time of the red phoenix resurrection battle, the yangbans were unable to control the Red Phoenix’s Breath and lost their recovery. Nevertheless, they avoided the deterioration of their wounds.

'I must take advantage of the hardness of the White Tiger's Breath.'

They hardened their wounded areas and this prevented the wounds from getting worse. After many thoughts, Grid lit up the portable furnace. It was to create new gaiters to replace the old ones, which could no longer be called 'shiny.'

[Chapter 1188](#)

There were various types of gaiters. There were simple ones that wrapped around the calves or ones that covered the pelvis, thigh, and calves. Naturally, the more each side was protected, the higher the defense but the lower the agility. They also required high strength and stamina to wear. If the material used was metal, not leather, the penalty was extreme enough that the wearer should be prepared to be slowed down at all times.

This was because it wasn't easy to bear the weight on the lower body. This was why most players, except for certain occupations, preferred wearing short gaiters. The Mass Produced Grid's Gaiters distributed to the Overgeared Army were also short gaiters. Of course, this had nothing to do with Grid.

Ttang!Ttang!Ttang!

Greed was tempered on the anvil. He hammered at Greed mixed with the White Tiger's Breath and made several hinges first. He intended to create multiple joint parts so that even if they were worn on his legs, they wouldn't interfere with the movements.

"This is ridiculous..." Blue Tiger marveled as she bit one of the black-gold metal pieces piled up beside Grid. "How can you easily work these metals?"

"Aheung? How is this..."

A toothless tiger cocked his head like he couldn't understand the Blue Tiger's response and came forward fearlessly. He grabbed a metal and bit it before Blue Tiger could stop him. The yellow fur rose and the pattern trembled. The tiger shook like he was hit by electricity. The broken dentures fell to the ground.

The tigers saw this process and were astonished.

"A-Aheung! W-What?"

"What happened?"

Thanks to the sacrifice of their companions, the tigers learned how hard Greed was and their eyes grew wide. It was absurd. Greed changed shape every time Grid hammered. It had looked as soft as a rice cake so they had gulped. They hadn't expected it would be so hard.

Tosun clicked her tongue like they were pathetic. "Stupid tigers. You should've noticed it from the time he turned the white phosphorus tree into firewood."

Even the sacred creatures flinched at the ferocity of the white phosphorus tree. The white phosphorus tree couldn't be cut easily and would explode as soon as it was touched. Yet Grid used the white phosphorus wood as firewood to ignite the furnace and took complete control of the rough flames.

“The true essence of the God of Virtue isn’t just armed force.”

It was clear that his workmanship was also at the level of a god. Tosun had lived for many years and had interacted with a large number of people. Grid was far superior to the best blacksmiths she had seen. Her analysis was that even the blacksmith who made the items the Four Gods were sealed in wouldn’t be able to reach Grid’s skills.

‘I had wondered about the many battle gear that came pouring down like rain. They were actually the battle gear that the God of Virtue created.’

The battle gear he created would be one of the triggers of his faith...

Tosun discovered a new fact and focused.

Grid tempered Greed and pulled out a bundle of leather. It was leather that was torn apart and seemed to have a bad quality. It was like someone had peeled off the skin of a dead beast with great wounds.

Blue Tiger frowned. “It is lousy leather.”

Since it was said that tigers left their skin behind after they died, Blue Tiger took great pride in her skin. The quality of the leather that Grid pulled out was undoubtedly the worst.

“Are you going to use it?”

“Yes. I will put leather or cloth on the inside to make it feel better and it will be able to absorb the shock from the outside.”

Grid nodded and Blue Tiger growled. “Put that away. I would rather take off my skin.”

A tiger leaves behind their skin after they die. In other words, taking off the skin was a story of death. However, Blue Tiger was a sacred creature. Even if her skin was peeled off, she wouldn’t die and would recover. Of course, there would be so much pain that it might be better to die but she could endure it for Grid.

“Now! Take off my skin! Kuheong!” Blue Tiger cried out in a determined manner. She was willing to make sacrifices for the benefactor who resurrected the red phoenix, freed the Twelve Zodiacs, and brought about the ‘future.’

“Oh? Thank you.”

Grid didn’t refuse. There was no reason to refuse when a sacred creature was offering her skin.

‘It could be better than Berith’s Leather.’

No, it would be better. The sacred creatures were complete half-gods. Even the 22nd great demon who terrorized humanity was inferior to a sacred creature. Grid put down Berith’s leather that was holding, pulled out a dagger and approached Blue Tiger. It was at this moment that he noticed that Blue Tiger was shaking like an aspen tree. He realized that the other tigers were pale and looking at Blue Tiger like she was a madman.

‘Crazy.’ Grid thought it would be easy to remove the skin but it seemed that wasn’t the case. He almost did a cruel act of stripping off an animal’s skin while they were alive.

Grid sighed and put away the dagger. “Stop the insane words. You are also mistaking something. This leather is better than it looks.”

The leather of 22nd Great Demon Berith—the damaged parts could be restored to some extent through tanning.

Ttang!

Grid removed Greed that had been completed in the shape of gaiters and placed Berith’s skin on the anvil as he started to tan it. The torn and pierced parts were flattened and perfectly filled. It was something that could be done due to the blacksmith skill that had risen because of Open Potential, the dexterity he had built up, and his epics.

“Ugh...”

The Twelve Zodiacs and the spirits were being amazed by Grid’s skill in filling in the leather when they simultaneously blocked their noses. There was a terrible stench. The demonic energy rising from the leather made the Twelve Zodiacs and the spirits feel unpleasant.

The rat queen, Kyeongja, couldn’t hold back her disgust. “Grid, that is something you should stay away from. It is nasty.”

“Um...”

Grid once again realized the hostility of the sacred creatures toward the great demons. In fact, Grid had no aversion toward the demonic energy. Since he used Blackening and the Rune of Darkness for a long time, he was familiar with demonic energy.

“However, in general, it is natural to be reluctant toward demonic energy.’

Demonic energy was a symbol of great demons and gods were usually hostile to great demons. Since the sacred creatures and the Twelve Zodiacs were born out of the desires of humanity and existed only for humanity, they would feel even more reluctant toward the great demons. The great demons were the greatest enemy of humanity.

“Well, don’t worry.”

These were Grid’s last words.

Ttang!Ttang!Ttang!

No matter what the members of the Twelve Zodiacs said, Grid no longer spoke. From the time the tanned leather was placed inside the gaiters, he had entered an enlightened state. Flames rose from Grid’s hammer. They were the Fire of Willpower caused by the Duke of Fire title.

[Fire of Willpower has doubled your working speed.]

[The effect of Fire of Willpower will result in the Breath of Fire effect being added to the item produced.]

[Duke of Fire’s Breath]

[* 20% increase in fire damage.

* 50% increase in fire resistance.

The willpower stat will rise by 5%.]

The more the flames around Grid's hammer burned, the redder the gaiters turned. It was hardened over and over.

"That's it." Braham, who had been standing silently the whole time, smiled faintly.

A bright, warm white light enveloped the entire poisonous mouse community. All the spirits, except for Braham and the members of the Twelve Zodiacs, couldn't handle the bright light and closed their eyes.

[The production of the 'Gaiters of the White Tiger supporting Heaven and Earth' is successful.]

[A myth rated item is produced, permanently increasing all stats by 30!]

[The Blacksmith's Skill Comparable to a God is a temporarily activated skill. The number of times a myth rated item is created won't accumulate.]

[The energy of the white tiger has surged and blessed Blue Tiger. Blue Tiger, the descendant of the white tiger, is stronger than ever.]

[Gaiters of the White Tiger supporting Heaven and Earth]

[Rating: Myth

Set Item (White Tiger Set)

Durability: Infinite Defense: 1,200

* Earth attribute resistance +60%.

* Dark attribute resistance +40%.

* Additional 30% defense when hit in the lower body.

* There is a high chance of ignoring the damage when the lower body is attacked.

* There is a high chance of releasing 'Thorn' when the lower body is attacked. The sharp stone thorns will reflect 50% of the damage received and reduce the recovery effect.

* The skill 'White Tiger's Attitude' is generated.

* The skill 'White Tiger's Cry' is generated.

* The skill 'Howling!' is generated.

* The passive skill 'Incarnation of Earth' is generated.

* Defense will increase by 10% in canyon terrain.

* The power of wide-area skills will increase by 20% in canyon terrain.

* Decreases the target's defense and magic resistance by 10% when encountering great demons weaker than rank 22.

* If damage to the extent of destroying it is received, the durability is fixed to the minimum for 5 seconds. There is a 10% durability recovery after this effect is over (24 hours cooldown).

★The skill 'Rock' is generated.

★The skill 'Earth God' is generated.

Gaiters made by Grid, a blacksmith comparable to a god.

They are gaiters that cover the pelvis to the knees but it has no effect on movement due to the high level technique, the materials used, and the soft elasticity of Greed.

Lined with 'Enhanced Berith's Leather,' it has a high defense and dark attribute resistance.

The Strengthened White Tiger's Breath further enhances the hardened properties of Berith's Leather. In the process of Greed completely absorbing it, some of the abilities of the white tiger have been inadvertently implemented.

The Strengthened White Tiger's Breath grants the wearer a mythical protection.

Grid's epics are contained in it.

★Once three set items are equipped, defense and health will increase by 10%.

Conditions of Use: Grid.

Weight: 600]

[White Tiger's Attitude Lv. 1]

[Acquire the attitude of the white tiger.

Attack power and movement is reduced by 80% and defense is increased by 198%.

Skill Mana Cost: 17 per second.

Skill Cooldown Time: 30 minutes.

* Skills attached to myth rated items can be upgraded.]

[White Tiger's Cry Lv. 1]

[Create an earthquake with a radius of 5 meters.

All objects within range are subjected to a 'loss of balance' status and a 13% reduction in defense, evasion, and accuracy. If the target is using a spell or skill, casting is forcibly cancelled.

Mana Consumption: 1,500

Skill Cooldown Time: 10 minutes.

* Skills attached to myth rated items can be upgraded.]

[Howling! Lv. 1]

[Summons the image of the howling white tiger.

All enemies within range of the white tiger's howl will stiffen for at least one second to a maximum of seven seconds while allies will have their defense increased by 10%.

Mana Consumption: 2,000

Cooldown Time: 12 hours.

* Skills attached to myth rated items can be upgraded.]

[Rock Lv. 1]

[Make your body as solid as a rock.

Release any abnormal states that you are experiencing.

Immunity to all damage for two seconds. However, all speeds are reduced by 50%.

If used in combination with White Tiger's Attitude, you will be immune to all damage for four seconds. However, all speeds are reduced by 70% and you can't move.

Mana Cost: 1,000 per second.

Cooldown Time: 1 hour.

* Skills attached to myth rated items can be upgraded.]

[Earth God]

[A conditional passive.

Assimilate with the breath of the white tiger.

While stepping on the ground, there is a very low probability of gaining control of the ground.

You can change the shape of the land by consuming 2,000 mana. The changed land will be retained for 30 seconds.

3,000 mana can be consumed to turn a target within a 10 meter radius into stone. The target who becomes a stone won't be able to do anything. In addition, there will be immunity to all damage.

Activates the 'Pillar Release' skill when attacking. The giant stone pillar has a blasting effect of up to 5 meters. The damage applied is 50% of the weapon's attack power.

* If you die while in the Earth God state, the wrath of the white tiger will occur.

* Skills attached to myth rated items can be upgraded.]

"Wow..." The members of the Twelve Zodiacs closed their mouths. From the standpoint of someone who lived for hundreds or thousands of years, Grid's gaiters were extraordinary. The gold border and white mineral that decorated the black sheet metal...

Due to the energy of the white tiger, it obviously boasted a tremendous performance at first glance.

“Sigh...” Grid was restoring his breathing. He confirmed that there were still nine hours left for the cooldown of the Open Potential skill to end. Grid spoke to the speechless members of the Twelve Zodiacs, “Let’s make your items next. First, I’ll make a new spear, crown, and cloak for Kyeongja.”

“...!”

The Twelve Zodiacs were comparable to the yangbans in physical strength alone. They neglected tools like animals. In fact, apart from Kyeongja, Blue Tiger and Tosun only covered important parts with a single leaf. The faces of the Twelve Zodiacs turned blue. They realized the importance of items by looking at the gaiters made by Grid.

[Chapter 1189](#)

[Strange Magic Power Stone]

[Rating: Myth

Type: Consumable

Can increase the rating of the target item to the same rating as the stone.

Weight: 1]

‘It is fortunate.’

Gru, Naeun, Hangeol, Harang, and Garam—Grid held the Strange Magic Power Stone that had grown with the death of five yangbans and was relieved. Thanks to the myth rating of the White Tiger Gaiters, the need to consume the stone had disappeared.

‘I’m a little less nervous now.’

After a long period of work and pleasant sweating, Grid’s mind became lighter. His body and spirit that had been exhausted by the ongoing battle with the yangbans had finally regained the sense of everyday life. Yes, this was normal. The last few weeks had been unusually difficult.

Calm down. Enjoy things.

Again and again, Grid smiled brightly.

“I will make you all stronger than you are now.” Grid approached the sacred creatures favorably. It was an act that stemmed from a deep liking.

Kyeongja, Tosun, Blue Tiger, and the toothless tigers...

All of them were friends he didn’t hate. They were great beings and comrades he would fight together with in the future. Grid guessed that the battle of the Twelve Zodiacs was starting now.

‘Blue Tiger is a descendant of the white tiger.’

It was important to note that two of the Twelve Zodiacs were descendants of the Four Gods other than the red phoenix. The gods that the Twelve Zodiacs served weren’t just the red phoenix, it was all of the Four Gods. In the old days, the Twelve Zodiacs would’ve been scattered all over the north, east, south,

and west. However, once all of the Four Gods were sealed, they gathered and hid here. They might be locked up by the Hwan Kingdom.

Ttang!Ttang!

Grid started making a trident. He had interacted with the water clan people for a long time and made quite a few tridents. Therefore, he had pretty good production methods. He also had experience in fighting and winning against Kyeongja. He knew her combat style and could infer what type of weapon she needed. It wasn't information given by a specific skill or stat. It was the power of experience and knowledge that Grid had accumulated.

'Kelov's Trident should be good.'

Kelov's Trident was somewhat strange because the end of the spear was bent. It was designed to pull the target but was sometimes used as a support to create variables in combat. Kyeongja had a habit of pointing her tail at the ground. She used her fearsome tail as a substitute for her legs and to overcome the limitations of her short legs.

'If she can support herself with her weapon as well as her tail, she'll have a stronger fighting style.'

The cloak would undoubtedly be Lantier's Cloak. Since Kyeongja enjoyed land-base combat, the armor that could be equipped was limited to a helmet and cloak. Thus, it was necessary to maximize the defense.

'Humans are the best, at least in terms of items.'

Grid thanked the human body that could move freely when covered with armor and once again focused on his work.

The flames of the white phosphorus wood hadn't disappeared after smelting the White Tiger's Breath and Greed. Black iron was melted in it and became the unique rated Kelov's Trident. The legendary rated Lantier's Cloak was successfully made by tanning and cutting the Fury Minotaur's Leather and Camellia Lord's Leather.

'Wait.'

Grid was about to make the Cone Helmet when he stopped.

'Is this okay?'

The helmet called the Cone Helmet had excellent defense. As long as the precondition of 'black iron trained for several days and nights' was met, it showed a high defense even if Belial's Leather wasn't mixed in. There was just a fatal problem—the appearance was rubbish. It became a joke because it made the wearer look silly and gave room for a 'pathetic vilification.'

This was why the Cone Helmet was a degraded item. The rating of an item was usually fixed or was capable of growth but the Cone Helmet had the side effect of the rating dropping. It was just because of the appearance.

'...It does seem like it.'

Grid paused in trimming the tip of the helmet and frowned. He could put the crown on the helmet thanks to the First King title but it was different for Kyeongja. If she wore this on her head then he was afraid people would take her for a fool. There was even a possibility that the faith toward her would be weakened.

‘Even if it is a bit lacking in defense, I need to give the right helmet... I think Kyeongja likes a crown so I’ll make a crown.’

The crown had a lot of additional stats in exchange for low defense. It wasn’t bad as the next best thing.

It happened when Grid’s troubles were deepening...

Kyeongja stood next to Grid and watched his work with shining eyes. “Cool...! The crown is cool! The sharp points remind me of my dead husband’s teeth! I want to wear it quickly!”

“.....” It was a heart-breaking sentiment.

Grid once again accelerated his work. He spent nine hours trying to complete the spear, helmet, and cloak before the cooldown of Open Potential ended. It was a leap forward compared to the days when he took more than one day to create unique or higher rated items. It was thanks to Duke of Fire. The passive skill Fire of Willpower that doubled his working speed made it feasible.

“The energy of the tiger is soaring!”

How long had it been? Old equipment that had been gifted by humans a long time ago. In place of those who had lost their seasons, the newly armed rat queen cheered with red cheeks. Her eyes were so shiny that she could fire lasers.

“Myong! Myong! Myong! Hooray, Her Majesty!”

“Myong! Myong! Myong! Hooray, human friend!”

The rat queen’s servants stomped their feet and shouted. Their cheers for Grid and the rat queen were loud but the birds in the forest didn’t leave. Rather, than chirped together to form a chorus. It was a glimpse of the nature-friendly nature of the spirits.

[Affinity with ‘Kyeongja of the Twelve Zodiacs’ has increased by 50.]

[The subordinates who follow Kyeongja have become your allies.]

[All the rats in the world will come to know your name.]

Then the spear stabbed by Kyeongja caused a stir in the atmosphere. It was an admirable blow in all aspects of speed and power. It seemed superior to Garam’s spear.

‘This is one of the Twelve Zodiacs...’

They were classified as half-gods but they were born from true faith, unlike the yangbans. Since they were animals, their instincts were stronger than their sense of reason and there were many physical shortcomings, but they still looked great in Grid’s eyes. Grid wanted to be companions with the Twelve Zodiacs. He wanted to use their strength to overcome the challenges of the East Continent that still

remained. Grid frankly expressed this wish, "It is a gift so we can fight together in the future. Help me. I want to resurrect the remaining Four Gods."

It would've been much more effective to add the words 'for the peace of the world.' However, Grid didn't add anything. The reason for Grid's attempt to revive the remaining Four Gods included private intentions for personal gain.

Kyeongja hugged Grid again and again. "Good human... You just have to ask and I will do it."

[Affinity with 'Kyeongja of the Twelve Zodiacs' has increased by 20.]

[You have built a full alliance with Kyeongja of the Twelve Zodiacs.]

[Even the rats in the sewers will help you and the Overgeared Kingdom.]

...

..

!!

[★ The plague that was supposed to break out in some small villages of the Overgeared Kingdom have disappeared. ★]

[★ Rats who live in the Overgeared Kingdom have started to care about cleanliness. ★]

"...!"

The result was more than expected. He became a true companion to Kyeongja and the rat race itself entered an alliance with the Overgeared Kingdom. Some might laugh at the thought of being allies with rats but Grid thought differently. The plague that could've happened disappeared with the cooperation of the rats. If he used it in reverse, he could cause plagues in other kingdoms.

'Still, there will be a price to pay.'

Grid summoned Overgeared Corn to increase his stamina recovery and pulled out hard bread and lukewarm water to relieve his hunger. The Open Potential skill can now be used again so he planned to make the shoulder guards immediately. The material was naturally Greed and the White Tiger's Breath.

Tosun stared as Grid once again ignited the furnace and asked, "God of Virtue, why don't you join the breaths of different attributes together?"

It was a good idea. If he joined two breaths into one then one item would have two attributes. Of course, Grid had tried it. However—

"No, the auras of the breath aren't harmonious and conflict with each other."

The different attributes of the breaths collided with each other but this wasn't the real problem. The fundamental problem was that the melting point of the breaths was different. Even if Grid attempted to create two different temperatures in the furnace, it was impossible to fuse two breaths together.

'...No.'

It was impossible at the time when he was a 'human' blacksmith. What if he was a blacksmith comparable to a god for a while?

Grid had wondered why humans had two nipples. He was reminded that human beings were modeled after a god so the appearance of the gods and humans was the same.

The blacksmith god, Hexetia, was also human in appearance. He had two nipples. Each of the nipples ignited flames of different colors. The left nipple had a blue fire while the right nipple had a red fire. They were flames with a different temperature.

'Nipples... Two... Different temperature flames...'

The puzzle pieces joined together in Grid's head.

'If I also light up my nipples... Bullshit.'

It was wrong. Grid shook his head and cleared his mind.

'The skill that is comparable to a god, dexterity, the skill effects, and two different flames...'

There was no reason to place flames on his nipples. He could do it in the furnace. He could light two furnaces at the same time and use the bellows at the same time.

'It is worth the challenge.'

The bottom line was that Grid started to create one more portable furnace. His face and body were quickly covered with sweat but he was smiling. On the other hand, the expressions of the Twelve Zodiacs and the tigers were stiff. It was because Grid's state seemed strange as he kept repeating 'nipples' to himself.

"Aheung. Maybe it is estrus."

The male tigers understood.

[Chapter 1190](#)

Kars had been heavily damaged by the invasion of the yangbans but the restoration was completed in just a few days. This was due to the Cho Kingdom's excellent technology, the protection of the red phoenix, and the active help of the players.

That's right—the players didn't leave Kars. They stood by the people of Kars during their most difficult time. It was the same for Hera, the doctor. Despite already making the medicine she needed, she remained in Kars and did her best to treat the wounded. She comforted those who had lost their families. In the minds of the players, hostility toward the Hwan Kingdom was established.

"Never! You must never spread this and have to absolutely keep it a secret! Understood?" Before leaving Kars, Hera emphasized to the players again and again.

At this point, some wondered if she was a parrot. The players looked tired as they patted Hera's back.

"I understand. Now that you know, go quickly."

Over the past few days, Hera and the players had formed a close bond. They had joined forces to resist the yangbans and to help the people of Kars with one heart. They had stayed in Kars because they had the similar tendency of being unable to turn away from those who were struggling. Thus, it was natural to get close.

“Are you sure?!”

“Sigh, look. I don’t like Grid but I don’t have the guts to turn him into an enemy. Don’t worry, we will never talk about what Grid is doing on the East Continent.”

Grid was so strong that he couldn’t be compared to the time of the Berith raid and he was also accompanied by the legendary great magician Braham. The players in Kars unintentionally learned a lot of information but they didn’t want to talk about it. It was natural to be careful because their position was high. The people here were mostly rankers. There were many people with things to lose.

“Good. Then I’ll see you next time. If you experience anything hard then please contact me.”

Hera finally left Kars. Once she learned that the man who helped her—Kentricks—was Grid, she wanted to help Grid in this way.

‘I didn’t know he was so righteous.’

The general public thought that the supreme one was a lofty being. Before discussing good and evil, he was like a figure in a different world. She had thought the supreme one wouldn’t be interested in the ordinary lives of ordinary people.

However, the appearance of the supreme person she actually met was completely different from her imagination. He was the first to reach out to the weak who even ordinary people ignored and embraced them while also not condemning those who ignored the weak. He was fighting for someone as best as he could, without revealing who he was, even in the face of few witnesses.

‘How can he do that...’

She heard that he had lived an unhappy life. A psychologist she saw on TV analyzed that Grid would have a deep inferiority and desire for compensation. He was considered to be a person who couldn’t empathize with others and only lived for himself. That person was a quack. The reality of Grid was completely different. Such a person was really rare in the world and was worthy of great respect.

‘May your path be full of blessings.’ Hera’s short prayer was just the beginning. In the future, more people would pray to Grid.

Grid had been faithful to every moment. It wasn’t an exaggeration to say that he always did his best. The same was true in the days when he wasn’t yet successful. He just failed because he lacked talent and didn’t even have luck. However, now he had found his talent. He had a little bit of bad luck but it was enough to be ignored.

‘I couldn’t try it back then.’

Grid created a new portable furnace and recalled the competition with Hexetia. Despite the fact that his reliance on the God Hands was absolute at that time, Grid had sacrificed the God Hands. He gave up on the experience accumulated by the God Hands and melted it to make the materials of a sword. He judged that this was the only chance of winning.

Grid was the best at that time. Yes, it was the best. He saw that there was nothing more. He had ruled out joining two breaths together. He judged that it was impossible. At that time, it had been technically impossible to fuse two breaths together.

'I thought it wouldn't be possible due to the system.'

The breaths of the Four Gods were the highest rated crafting materials. Items made with a single breath gave birth to a myth rating. Combining two breaths to make an item? It would make an item outside the range of common sense. Grid had been convinced that the S.A Group who liked balance wouldn't just watch.

Now things were different. Grid's technique had evolved and the strength of his enemies was beyond common sense. Creating an item with two breaths seemed theoretically and systemically possible. Of course, it was just a possibility.

"Sigh."

Grid's expression was tense as he took a deep breath. He firmly prepared himself in front of the portable furnaces, one to the left and one to the right.

'It will be a different level of difficulty similar to double casting.'

He had Belial's Staff that allowed triple casting. There was a time when Braham used it while possessing Grid. However, Grid didn't use it. Grid didn't have the talent to take advantage of Belial's Staff. Grid couldn't properly use the double casting, let alone the triple casting. In order to double cast, he had to chant one spell in his head while speaking the other one. It was difficult with Grid's brains.

It wouldn't be easy to smelt two minerals at the same time. In order to adjust the temperatures of the two furnaces differently, it was necessary to move the bellows with his feet in a different manner. In order to melt the breaths in two furnaces at the same time, the movements of both hands couldn't be the same. Since each breath had a different tempering method, the movement required was different. In other words, he had to move his limbs separately. Every action had to be grounded.

'There is a bigger problem.'

The task of taking the two breaths out of the furnace and tempering them into one. This task should be completed in 30 seconds. It was because even for minerals melted at high temperatures, the surface would quickly harden as long as it was exposed to room temperature for more than 20 seconds. It was necessary to fuse them into one perfect shape before the two breaths were fully hardened.

'If it fails then I'll have to throw away one of my breaths.'

In order to separate the combined breaths, it would have to be dissolved again. In the process, one breath would be damaged and lose its value.

'No, don't think about failure.'

Grid shook off the negative thoughts. He reminded himself that he had one advantage over Hexetia. It was the presence of the God Hands. Not only did the God Hands inherit some of Grid's stats, they had some blacksmithing ability.

'I can use the God Hands' assistance in the tempering process.'

They could also help in the task of regulating the temperature of the furnaces. Increasing the temperature to a certain level was only possible by Grid but maintaining the temperature for a while was enough for the God Hands.

'If the hands press the pedals instead, I can rest my legs in the middle. Then focus on the movements of both hands and extract the melted minerals at the same time...'

He was forced to focus on his subsequent work. Could he fuse two minerals into a complete one in 30 seconds...? Grid's calculations were breathtaking. Based on the dexterity and skills that were enhanced when Blacksmith's Skill Comparable to a God was activated, it was possible to complete it in 29~36 seconds.

'If I had six more seconds then I would be able to do it perfectly.'

A little bit more. He could focus on himself a bit more and do better. In the end, everything depended on himself.

Grid threw firewood into the small stove of the portable furnace and it caught on fire. Since the firewood was the white phosphorus wood, there was an explosion and the surface of the furnace quickly turned red. Grid planned to fuse the White Tiger's Breath and Blue Dragon's Breath into one. Although there was the synergy of the white tiger's defense and the red phoenix's recovery, he wanted to finish the set item effect.

'I already have the Blue Dragon's Boots so if this item gains the set effect, I can aim for the blue dragon and white tiger sets at the same time.'

Grid decided and took out the two breaths, about to put them in different furnaces.

"Wait!" An unexpected voice stopped him.

"That isn't good."

It was Tosun.

"What?" Grid was confused. It didn't make sense for Tosun to react like this when she was the one who suggested he fuse two breaths together.

Tosun told Grid to stop acting and Grid asked for an explanation. "The Four Gods are the guardian gods of humanity, born from the aspirations of humanity."

"So? Why do we have to talk about something we already know?"

"The Four Gods are basically only kind to humans."

"...?"

“They reveal their full personalities to non-human beings and the characters of the white tiger and blue dragon aren’t normal. They both have a strong heart. As long as they meet, a fight will happen.”

“.....”

“The two gods have personalities that can’t be integrated. The same is true for the breaths of the two gods.”

“...Did the white tiger win the last time they fought?”

“How do you know...? This is a fact that only the Twelve Zodiacs who serve God White Tiger and God Blue Dragon know.”

“That isn’t important...”

Grid had an uncomfortable look on his face.

“Based on this, is the Black Tortoise’s Breath okay? I think the black tortoise’s personality is the most ferocious.”

The only god associated with death and extinction, it had a habit of denying artificial substances so blacksmiths and created goods were considered bad. Grid was forced to feel negatively toward the black tortoise. He thought the Black Tortoise’s Breath wouldn’t be in harmony with the breath of the other gods.

However, Tosun’s answer was surprising. “The personality of the black tortoise is the most gentle.”

“...Ah, I see.”

It wasn’t very credible but it was useless to discuss it anymore. How could he aimed to combine it with other breaths when at the moment, he couldn’t even properly manage the Black Tortoise’s Breath.

‘Then I will try the combination of the red phoenix and the white tiger.’

It was unfortunate that he couldn’t aim for the blue dragon set effect but in fact, the combination of the red phoenix and white tiger was better. Grid fully controlled the temperature of the two furnaces and put in the White Tiger’s Breath and Red Phoenix’s Breath.

Grid’s two legs were busily working the two furnaces. Grid didn’t rest and the breaths in the furnace started to melt.

“God Hands!” Before moving his own hand, Grid asked for help. He left one furnace to the God Hands and focused on the movements of his arms. At the end of the task, the breaths that had melted to liquid appeared in the world. The two breaths were placed on the anvil and at the same time, Grid swung his hammer.

‘Please...!’

Grid was desperate. He wanted better items. A stronger power!