

Overgeared 401

Chapter 401

[Fog Island haunts this island.]

“Ah...”

Grid had eagerly hoped to encounter Fog Island. It was because he had a lot of challenger points stored that could be exchanged for goods. But why? Why did it appear at this timing?

Flop.

Grid opened his mouth like a carp and sat down listlessly. He howled like a man who lost his country after seeing all the treasures disappearing in the fog.

"Treasure...!! My treasure!!!"

Grid had to go through many trials to reach this 57th island. The clone on the 41st island, the golden crowns, the strong monsters in the 50s islands and the labyrinth he just passed. The degree of difficulty for the Behen Archipelago was atrocious.

How good would it be if Fog Island had appeared in such a difficult area?

‘Then I wouldn’t have suffered so much...’

The probability of missing a bonus stage like Treasure Island would’ve fallen dramatically. But reality was a gutter.

"Dammit!"

Grid realized once again. Lady Luck had abandoned him. It was rare for there to be such an unlucky person in the world.

“Damn!”

Grid kept weeping. If it was the Grid of the past, it would’ve taken him a considerable amount of time to escape from the shock. But now it was different. His spirit recovered fairly quickly.

‘...Still, the harder the island, the better the compensation.’

Let’s take an extreme example.

What if Fog Island appeared on the 41st island? Grid wouldn’t have met the clone and never had the chance to learn Linked Kill Wave and Pinnacle Kill.

‘Yes, it’s good that it didn’t show up on the 40th island.’

Grid developed his thinking skills and thought as positively as possible as he got up.

"It’s enough to get what I want.”

Grid wiped away his tears and walked through the thick fog. Then after a while, he saw a light. It was the light emitted by the pumpkin-shaped carriage. Grid identified the products on display as he approached the carriage.

'Pass on the hidden classes.'

Fog Island sold a total of 13 hidden classes. The rare classes ranged from 1,000~15,000 challenger points. Currently, Grid had accumulated 31,001 challenger points and could purchase any of the class change books.

However, they didn't catch his attention. Since the emergence of the third advancement classes, the value of the rare hidden classes had fallen. There was no reason to invest points in it.

'Next are the skill books...'

There were a total of 46 skill books listed. The rating went from normal to unique. In particular, several unique rated active skills boasted outstanding abilities. However, Grid was a legend. He had the legendary skills, so there was no reason to be obsessed with unique rated skills.

The mastery skills were the exception.

[Skill Book: Weapons Mastery]

Rating: Normal

Type: Passive

The Weapons Mastery skill is generated.

Price: 6,000 Challenger Points.

Weapons Mastery raised the power of every type of weapon. It was the highest mastery skill.

"I have to learn this."

Of course, Weapons Mastery had its drawbacks. The increase in abilities was small compared to the mastery skills that were specific to one weapon. But Grid didn't care. Weapons Mastery was a skill with fantastic compatibility with Grid, who could use any weapon without restrictions.

'Live!'

Over the past several months, he had worked hard collecting challenger points. Grid consumed 6,000 challenger points without hesitation.

[Skill Book: Weapons Mastery has been acquired.]

"Okay."

Grid was delighted as he confirmed that the skill book had entered his inventory. He was happy that he got the skill he wanted.

"Learn it... Hmmm?"

The reason Grid purchased the skill book wasn't just to look at it. He planned to acquire it immediately without letting it stay in the inventory for too long. Then he stopped moving as a skill book caught his eyes.

'Magic Mastery!'

[Skill Book: Magic Mastery]

Rating: Normal

Type: Passive

The Magic Mastery skill is generated.

Price: 5,000 Challenger Points.

"Ummm..."

Magic Mastery? It increased magic power and shortened casting time. Of course, Magic Mastery wasn't the same as the Weapons Mastery skill that could be learned from a skill book. This was because it needed a magician class to learn.

'Originally, I would have no relation with this skill.'

But thanks to the Behen Archipelago, he had a chance to enter a new realm.

'I can now learn magic from Braham through Assimilation...'

Learning Magic Mastery wouldn't harm him.

'No, this is a skill that must be learned.'

Grid had low intelligence and couldn't master Braham's magic. He could only learn the lowest level of magic. But how could Braham's magic be common? Magic Missile (Enhanced) and Magic Detection (Enhanced) had features that were incomparable to magic of the same type that ordinary magicians had. He had to unconditionally learn Magic Mastery.

'The price is too expensive.'

It cost 5,000 challenger points. He could buy at least 20 elixirs with that. Braham's magic might be powerful, but was it enough to give up 20 elixirs? Grid worried about it for a while before deciding.

'...I will learn it.'

Grid was looking into the future. He would keep levelling up and increasing intelligence. Then someday, he would be able to learn higher level magic from Braham. Grid bought the Magic Mastery skill book.

The result.

Remaining Challenger Points: 20,001

"Ugh..."

Grid had over 30,000 points just a while ago, so he felt pained seeing it fall to 20,000.

But!

'It isn't in vain.'

It was a skill book he purchased in order to become stronger. He shouldn't be sorry. Grid controlled his heart and finally looked at the list of elixirs.

[Strength Elixir]

Permanently increases strength by 10 points.

Price: 250 Challenger Points.

[Stamina Elixir]

Permanently increases stamina by 10 points.

Price: 250 Challenger Points.

[Agility Elixir]

Permanently increases agility by 10 points.

Price: 250 Challenger Points.

[Intelligence Elixir]

Permanently increases intelligence by 10 points.

Price: 250 Challenger Points.

From a common sense of view, the most important stat for a blacksmith was stamina and then strength. However, Grid didn't buy elixirs for those two stats. In the first place, his strength and stamina were high enough.

'Right now, I need agility.'

Piara had a strength to agility ratio of 1:1 when he was a great swordsman. Grid followed it in a desire to become stronger.

Name: Grid

Level: 306

Class: Pagma's Descendant

Title: One who Became a Legend

Title: ...

...

...

Strength: 2,830 (+160)

Stamina: 1,306 (+230)

Agility: 1,836 (+130)

Intelligence: 771 (+340)

Dexterity: 2,916 (+680)

Persistence: 1,102 (+130)

Composure: 718 (+130)

Indomitable: 973 (+240)

Dignity: 1,626 (+130)

Insight: 1,466 (+130)

Courage: 662 (+130)

Demonic Magic Power: 102

Stat Points: 6

...

...

"I should use all the remaining points to buy agility elixirs."

20,000 points was at least 80 elixirs. It meant he could gain 800 agility at once, which was equal to 80 levels. Grid pressed the purchase button under the agility elixir.

[A consumable item. Please enter the number you want to purchase.]

Grid smiled with satisfaction at the notification window and was about to reply with '80' when he stopped.

'...Is this really right?'

If it was before he fought the clone, Grid wouldn't have hesitated. Now he was different. He could learn magic due to assimilating with Braham's soul, and at the same time, he acquired Magic Mastery. Wasn't it right to invest in intelligence in order to take advantage of this?

'Every time I level up, six points will be put in intelligence.'

If he gained 100 levels, he would only increase intelligence by 600 points. It was questionable if he could even learn Fire Ball before Braham's soul left.

'Yes, don't be nervous and look at the future. I'm not tied to a legend. I will become a myth.'

He should look at the forest, not the trees. Grid took a deep breath as he recalled Lael's saying and opened his mouth.

"I will buy 40 agility elixirs and 40 intelligence elixirs."

Was being an all-rounder bad? Yes, a common all-rounder stunk. There were many people who weren't strong or weak. But a legendary all-rounder was different. He would be an universal being.

Grid didn't have any doubts as his eyes shone brighter than ever.

[You have learned Weapons Mastery.]

[Weapons Mastery Lv. 1]

* When a weapon is equipped, attack power will increase by 2% and attack speed by 1%.

[You have learned Magic Mastery.]

[Magic Mastery Lv. 1]

Increases magic power by 3% and reduces casting time by 1%.

[You have taken the agility elixir.]

[Agility has risen permanently by 400.]

[You have taken the intelligence elixir.]

[Intelligence has risen permanently by 400.]

He gained 800 stat points and two mastery skills at once. Now Grid was much stronger.

"Let's speed up the process."

Grid was full of confidence as he moved through the gate to the 58th island. The 58th island was a time attack type hunting dungeon. Grid was able to clear it within the time limit due to his increased attack and magic power.

At the same time, the level of Weapons Mastery and Magic Mastery rose steadily. The level of the monsters was over 400, but the Mastery skills were only beginner level, so the increase in experience was bound to be large.

Grid was thrilled with his growth.

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Two months ago, the Overgeared members had difficulty hunting in the vampire cities. But this was old news. The Overgeared members had overcome various trials in the Behen Archipelago and made remarkable progress. No vampire except for Beriache's direct descendants could threaten them.

A vampire city.

The members of Overgeared, who became stronger in the Behen Archipelago, were massacring the vampires.

-Kyaack!

-H-Hiik!

"..."

The expression 'the monsters have dried up' seemed to be used in this case. Lauel frowned after seeing the disappearing vampires and expressed his doubts.

"Everybody, didn't you buy a East Continent Portal Scroll?"

"Huh? Of course."

"After the elixirs and skill books, I used the remaining points to buy a portal scroll."

"Then why are you here? Why aren't you going to the East Continent?"

Lauel was once known as the hero of the Ten Rookies. If he had chosen a combat specialist class as his third advancement class, he would've become much stronger. But Lauel sacrificed himself.

Rather than enhancing his individual strength, he chose the 'Flow Master' class. He could temporarily change the weather and terrain, but his combat power was the lowest.

"I have been lagging behind for a while and can only hunt vampires, but... why are you raising your level here? I will pass this area by releasing my sealed self and causing bloodshed. You should go on a new adventure."

"..."

Anyway, Lauel's tone was really annoying. The Overgeared members scratched their heads like they were embarrassed by him and explained.

"Didn't we discover the presence of the Behen Archipelago because of Grid?"

"If it wasn't for Grid, it would be hard to figure out how to move the East Continent."

"Won't it feel like a mutiny if we go to the East Continent before Grid?"

"It's like pouring cold water on him."

"..."

Lauel's blue eyes shook as he heard the Overgeared members' explanation. He was thrilled.

"You were trying to maintain your loyalty to My Lord. Isn't this good?"

One of the basic conditions for establishing a strong force was camaraderie. And the Overgeared members already had it. Lauel smiled and proudly said, "How wonderful. Then stop your solo play and join a party with me."

"Eh...?"

"Shouldn't you be loyal to me as well?"

"..."

Party play had the advantage of hunting much faster than solo play, but it also had the disadvantage of sharing experience and items. It was a loss to do party play in an area where the number of monsters was limited.

But the Overgeared members couldn't refuse Lael's request. They knew better than anyone, even Grid, how hard he worked for the guild.

[Your level has risen.]

[12]

[Six points have been forcibly invested into intelligence due to the influence of the second class, Legendary Great Magician.]

The 59th island.

It was a hell-like space where monsters level 420 or higher popped up on a large scale. Grid had to deal with at least three or four monsters that were 114 levels higher than him. It was a desperate situation for anyone, but Grid could earn a lot.

The 400 extra points in agility and intelligence, as well as Weapons Mastery and Magic Mastery helped a lot.

[Weapons Mastery level is beginner level 6.]

[Magic Mastery level is beginner level 4.]

[The Sword Mastery of 'God Hand' has increased to intermediate level 7.]

[Your memphis Noe has risen to level 202.]

[Doppelganger Randy has risen to level 161.]

'It's hard.'

It was big. The difficulty meant that Grid achieved a fast and steady growth.

'It would be nice if I had more potions.'

In fact, Grid couldn't predict that the difficulty of the Behen Archipelago so much. He didn't have enough potions in the middle of his raid.

Chaeng!Chaaeng!

Grid felt regret as he was immersed in battle. Noe and Randy kept one monster tied up, while Grid faced two monsters at the same time. He faced each remaining monster one by one, as blue flames rose around it. He activated Blacksmith's Eyes, a skill that he acquired through a hidden piece like Item Combination.

[Blacksmith's Eyes (Lv. 1) has seen through the target's item.]

[You have explored the function of the armour that the Troll Lord is wearing!]

[Time Worn Leather Vest]

Defense: ???

Option 1: ???

Option 2: ???

Option 3: Reduce damage of stabbing attacks.

'Ah, I got it.'

He felt something was unusual when using Kill and Link.

Chaaeng!

Due to his rise in agility, he could swing Grid's Greatsword faster than before. The moment he defended against the troll lord's axe, he used Pagma's Swordsmanship, Pinnacle Kill.

Seokeok!

[You have dealt 90,300 damage to the target.]

[You have lost 4,500 health due to the influence of Pinnacle Kill.]

Kiyaaaaah!

Trolls were monsters with high health and regenerative ability. Among them, the troll lord was at the peak. But the boss was shaky in front of the destructive power of Pinnacle Kill, which completely ignored defense. Grid hurriedly withdrew from the monster that lost 90,000 health at once and scattered yellow blood.

"Ah, really."

Grid knew that he shouldn't give a troll a chance to act. However, the troll lord's blood was highly acidic. Blood sprayed every time there was an injury, so Grid couldn't easily link combos. He had to widen the distance.

Kudu!Kududuk!

The troll lord quickly recovered from Grid's wounds. It sent Grid a provocative smile. It was like saying 'you can never hurt me.' Grid thought it was ridiculous.

"You aren't a named boss."

What were the four God Hands doing while Grid was fighting?

Shuuuuong!

"...!"

The troll lord's eyes widened.

Flashing golden hands came out from a cave and gave a new weapon to Grid.

“This is called Item Combination.”

Kuoooooh-!

It was a blue shark-shaped greatsword with red lights scattered around it like cherry blossoms. It was the beautiful harmony of Iyarugt and Failure.

“Pagma’s Swordsmanship, Linked Kill Wave.”

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

“Ki...! Kieeeeeek!”

So what if it was difficult to get close due to the acidic blood? He would attack from a distance. Grid laughed as the troll lord turned to grey ash. However, he couldn’t laugh for long. His skills were on cooldown and new monsters were gathering.

[You have entered the 60th island.]

[This is a save point. Would you like to register?]

[You have been registered. When you enter the Behen Archipelago later on, you will start from the 60th island.]

“Heok... Heok... Wow, I thought I was going to fall behind.”

Grid broke through the 59th island and sat on the ground. He wanted to Meditate to restore health and stamina, but it wasn’t easy to enter the state.

‘I can’t adapt to the new skills.’

The condition to activate Blacksmith’s Eyes was to watch the equipment for at least 3 seconds. Was this hard? Of course it was difficult during a battle. His field of view narrowed and he often missed the target’s movements, exposing a gap.

The problems didn’t end there.

‘The information of the items covers my vision.’

During a battle, the item information window seriously disturbed his view. It felt like the navigation screen was hidden while he was driving. Anyway, it seemed like he would take a long time to adapt.

‘I can gradually adapt.’

Grid looked at his immediate problem. The islands in the 60s. Would he be able to progress through here? The difficulty of the Behen Archipelago was amplified every 10 islands. The last island in the Behen Archipelago was the 66th island.

It was possible to infer that the difficulty of the islands from 60 onwards would be incomparably higher than before.

‘Originally, I wanted to clear this place before the National Competition.’

It seemed to be an impossible task. Grid sighed as he thought about it. Did it read his anxiety? The cooldown time of Assimilation ended and Braham's soul woke up.

[Challenge it first.]

"Braham!"

Grid had increasingly started to rely on Braham. Grid welcomed Braham's voice and asked.

"Do you mean I can win if I challenge the Behen Archipelago?"

Braham scoffed.

[You are too arrogant. I said that this is a playground made by Pagma. You haven't reached Pagma's full capacity yet and don't have the ability to clear this place. I want you to challenge it to realize that you are still weak.]

"...I wondered about this before, but what do you mean by a playground that Pagma created?"

[Do you know about the original Behen Archipelago?]

"I heard from Sticks. It was a Hall of Fame that celebrated the achievements of legends and a training ground for current legends."

[That's right. It's a shameful place for those who are hostile to legends.]

"Those who are hostile to legends?"

[Great demons. They saw an opportunity to destroy the Behen Archipelago, which connects legends. In order to prevent this, Pagma installed various gateways.]

"A space created to prevent the great demons..."

Grid suddenly felt some doubts.

"How did Pagma make this space?"

Pagma was a legendary blacksmith, not a god. He could install various devices, but it wasn't possible to summon the monsters, reproduce past trials, or clone the contestants.

'It might be different if he was a magician.'

Then Braham spoke meaningful words to Grid.

[It's possible for a great demon.]

"What?"

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[It's possible for a great demon.]

"What?"

Pagma was a great demon? It was ridiculous.

'Wait.'

Grid attempted to deny it when he suddenly stopped. He didn't know enough about Pagma to judge, and Braham's nature was also odd.

'In fact, isn't Braham a vampire, rather than a human?'

A legendary great magician was a demonkin, so it wouldn't be strange if a legendary blacksmith was also one. But why?

'Why isn't it mentioned in the legends?'

Braham sensed Grid's confusion and laughed.

[Aren't you an idiot, to take my words at face value?]

Grid frowned.

"I have taken the intelligence elixirs, so why are you still seeing me as an idiot? No, what does that mean?"

[To put it more accurately, Pagma is a human who accepted the power of a great demon.]

"He accepted the power of a great demon?"

[Baal.]

"...!"

Grid was startled. Did he know the weight of the name Baal? No. It was because Grid felt Braham's anger. The anger was deeply imprinted in Braham's soul like an abyss and it slowly boiled up. Grid held Braham's soul, so he was also angry.

[Pagma was Baal's contractor.]

"...!"

Grid was once again surprised. Questions filled his eyes.

"What is Baal's contractor?"

[...Hah.]

It was the first time Grid discovered that souls could also sigh.

The 1st great demon, Baal. As the peak of the 33 demons, he reigned as the master of hell. It was easy to call him the demon king. He was an absolute existence that even the dragons guarded against.

[He is more faithful to his instincts as a demon than anyone else. He is proud, destructive, and does anything for pleasure. Plantings seeds of chaos through contracts with humans is very entertaining for him.]

"Why did Pagma sign with such a bad demon?"

[Ironically, he had to borrow Baal's strength to protect the Behen Archipelago.]

"Eh?"

The words were confusing. Pagma wanted to protect the Behen Archipelago from the great demons, so he borrowed the power of a great demon?

[It's as you said. Baal likes taunting and deception.]

"So?"

[It is irrelevant to Baal whether the target being deceived is a human or a great demon like himself.]

"..."

The Grid in the past would've been frustrated without understanding to the end. But now it was different. He properly interpreted Braham's remark using his developed thinking ability.

"Baal wanted to enjoy the entertainment of protecting the invasion of great demons with the power of a great demon, so he signed a contract with Pagma?"

[That's right.]

In other words, Baal screwed over his own people. Grid couldn't understand Baal. Braham laughed at his confusion.

[Don't look at great demons with the prejudice. Don't humans also betray and hurt their own people?]

"But isn't Baal the master of hell? Isn't he the king of the great demons? A king sacrificing his servants just for entertainment... I guess there are some."

When he thought about it, there were many crazy people in the world. Grid was convinced and defined Baal as a psychopath great demon.

"Um... Yes, this is why the Behen Archipelago changed in this way."

If so, there was another question. Why did Pagma leave the Behen Archipelago in this state? He protected the Behen Archipelago with a contract with a great demon, and then the Behen Archipelago eventually deteriorated and the original function was lost. If Pagma truly wanted to protect the Behen Archipelago, he would've returned it to its original state after the great demons were repelled.

But he didn't...

'Was there a chance that the great demons would invade again?'

Or maybe Pagma had no more power left.

Grid asked a question.

"What happened after Pagma contracted with a great demon to protect the Behen Archipelago? Did he die? Or is he still alive?"

[Why do you think he is still alive?]

“He contracted with a great demon, so wouldn’t his lifespan increase?”

[That’s a ridiculous notion. The reason why demons contract with humans is to basically take their life force and soul.]

“Isn’t something strange? Pagma lived for a long time, right? Didn’t you say that he lived for hundreds of years? Wasn’t it because of his contract with the great demon?”

[You are mistaken. Pagma made the contract with Baal 100 years ago, not 300 years.]

“...Ah!”

Grid belatedly recalled that Sticks mentioned the Behen Archipelago being fine 200 years ago. Then a new question arose.

"Does that mean that Pagma can live for hundreds of years, regardless of the contract with a great demon?"

What was Pagma’s identity?

“How can a human live that long?”

[...]

The silent Braham didn’t answer, anger filling him again. Grid’s spine became soaked with cold sweat before Braham finally broke the silence.

[The reason why Pagma could live for hundreds of years, despite being a human, was because my lifespan was taken.]

“What?”

His words didn’t make sense. Obviously, Braham was a vampire. Unlike humans, they had a life expectancy close to infinity so there might be a way to transfer his lifespan to someone. It wasn’t strange for a non-human and legendary great magician to do something that was beyond common sense.

However, Braham said that his lifespan was ‘taken.’

“Does that mean you didn’t give it willingly? Weren’t you and Pagma close friends?”

[What if I was deceived and betrayed?]

"..."

He wanted to hear more of the story. Grid was curious, but Braham didn’t want to talk about it anymore.

[Well, if you want to know more about Pagma, reach the last island. Move to the 61st island. Then after experiencing the difference between your skills and Pagma’s, see if you can challenge it again.]

What on earth was on the islands in the 60s that Braham was so sure he couldn’t overcome? Braham spoke to the troubled Grid.

[It is your duty to break through this place, so don't think about giving up.]

"I won't give up, even if you hadn't said this. I'm just a little worried about how dangerous it can be."

[What do you have to fear with an immortal body? As I said repeatedly, challenge it once.]

It was as Braham said. The Behen Archipelago was deeply related to Pagma, and there was a high possibility that a quest related to Pagma's Descendant was hidden here. Grid felt a need to investigate the islands.

"Okay."

Grid moved towards the gate of the 61st island with determination. Then Sticks, who had been watching silently, urgently called out.

"Braham is a demonkin. You must not be misled by him."

"I know that elves and demonkin have a bad relationship. But shouldn't you cool your head? Aren't you the one who is the most desperate for the Behen Archipelago to be purified? I can also get rewards, so I have to move forward."

"..."

That's right. He wasn't someone who would be dazzled by Braham's existence.

The enlightened Sticks followed behind Grid.

[You have entered the 61st island.]

Kuoooooh!

An island covered with fire. The lush forest was burning and the river running through it was an ominous red.

[The temperature is very high.]

[You are affected by the heat.]

[Health and stamina are being continuously consumed.]

[You have resisted.]

'The legendary passive is a scam.'

Satisfy fully implemented the five senses. Users naturally felt the heat and cold, causing climate to be a disaster to them sometimes. However, Grid didn't feel it due to being Pagma's Descendant. He was able to maintain a proper body temperature and play the game in a much more pleasant environment than others.

"Pant pant..."

Unlike Grid's refreshed face, Sticks standing behind him was sweating like a dog. It wouldn't be strange if he collapsed immediately.

"If you're a sage, shouldn't you have a countermeasure for the heat?"

"There are a few ways, but I don't have the materials..."

"Can't you use magic?"

"It's hard to use mana because of my illness..."

"..."

Please don't die. Grid desired Sticks as a tutor for Lord, so he prayed while moving forward.

'There are no monsters or missions.'

The shape itself seemed different from the other islands.

"..."

Grid crossed the blazing island, looking to the left and right. His attitude was more cautious than ever. He was extremely concentrated as he prepared for any sudden attacks. However, it was meaningless in front of a strong enemy that couldn't be defended against.

Step, step.

The footsteps moving through the forest sounded relaxed and proud. The owner of the footsteps didn't seem to care at all that Grid discovered his position.

'Who?'

Grid turned his gaze in the direction of the footsteps. Then he frowned. He couldn't see anything because of the smoke.

'The smoke has thickened?'

Step, step.

The footsteps were getting closer. Grid urgently pulled out his weapon and was surprised when he used Magic Detection (Enhanced) Lv. 2.

[No life has been detected.]

'What?'

There was no life detected despite the footsteps? Grid was baffled, but he wielded Iyarugt in the direction the footsteps came from. But the smoke. No, it was darker than mere smoke and he couldn't properly see the target.

Puok!

[You have suffered 50,040 damage.]

"Keook...!"

The enemy had moved? The attack was supposed to be in front of him, but it turned in a flash and struck his back. Grid's eyes widened as he lost more than two-thirds of his health with one blow.

[That's right. It's Lantier.]

Braham penetrated the identity of the enemy hidden in the smoke.

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"Lantier?"

It was a familiar name to Grid.

'Where did I hear it?'

He thought about it, but nothing came to mind. He summoned Noe and Randy, placed the God Hands all over the place, took a defensive position and asked while drinking a potion.

"Who is Lantier?"

[Lantier isn't an individual's name.]

Eclipse, the strongest and worst assassination group believed to have existed more than a thousand years ago.

[Lantier is the name that has been passed down to the leaders over generations. But there is only one Lantier that I know.]

Suuuuuh.

The black smoke started to become thicker. As the black smoke became thicker until Grid couldn't see in front of him anymore, Braham spoke shocking words.

[The legendary assassin.]

"What...?"

The moment Grid felt astonished.

Peeng!

One of the God Hands protecting Grid was struck by a weapon. It couldn't deal with the shock and went flying. It was the first time that the God Hands had this strong reaction to an attack instead of stiffening. He could infer how high the enemy's attack power was.

"Kuk!"

Grid narrowly twisted his head to avoid the hand flying at his head. Noe hurriedly yelled as he looked at the God Hand.

"Behind you! Nyang!"

'Again?'

When it first appeared, it instantly moved from the front to the back. It seemed to have a troublesome skill to instantly appear behind the target.

“Save me!”

Once Grid commanded, the God Hands moved all at once and gathered behind Grid. At the same time, it happened.

Chaaeng!

The dagger that flew like lightning and tried to pierce Grid’s neck collided with the God Hands instead. A shock wave occurred and cleared the smoke, allowing Grid to confirm Lantier’s appearance.

‘Skeleton?’

That’s right. Lantier wasn’t a human. He had died a long time ago, becoming a skeleton. Lantier was moving with such a body.

An enemy who competed with the four God Hands with the dagger held by thin finger bones. There was an aquamarine light shining eerily in their eye sockets.

‘Undead...! This is why I couldn’t detect it with magic power!’

[No, the result would be the same even if Lantier was alive. It isn’t easy to find Lantier when he doesn’t want to be found.]

The basics of an assassin was hiding. They had the ability to erase their presence. Lantier was a top assassin who got the title of a legend, so it wasn’t just at the level of erasing himself. He could deny his existence in the world.

On the other hands, Grid’s Magic Detection was only at level 2. It was virtually impossible for the current Grid to find Lantier, let alone when he was undead.

Sururuk.

The skeleton, Lantier, disappeared into the smoke again. Grid tried to find him using his high insight and the Slaughterer’s Eye Patch. But it was wishful thinking. Grid lost Lantier and asked Braham.

“Why is he an undead?”

The answer was simple.

[Baal’s contractor has the ability of a necromancer. Pagma found Lantier’s body and turned him into a death knight.]

“Heok.”

In other words, Pagma was a legendary blacksmith, a great swordsman, and a necromancer?

‘It’s a scam.’

He also helped neutralized the invasion of the great demons alone. Grid felt desperate because of this. If the legendary assassin’s death knight emerged on the 61st island...

'It is likely that other legends will emerge on the 62nd~66th islands.'

The difference between the power of the previous legends and the current legends was remarkable. The previous legends were regarded as complete, while the current legends were still growing. Grid's level was low and he hadn't finished all his class quests yet.

'How do I clear this place?'

Braham gave hope to the frowning Grid.

[The undead legends are very weak compared to their complete state. On the other hand, you have me. If you rely on me and keep learning magic, one day you will be able to beat them.]

"That's right."

Pagma might be a legendary blacksmith and necromancer, but Grid was a legendary blacksmith and magician. He was also qualified to become the strongest, and had the potential to overcome any trials. Just...

[I just question if you can even learn Fireball.]

"..."

This situation wasn't positive. Then Braham whispered to the frustrated Grid.

[He's coming back.]

It was true. The God Hands that Grid scattered in all directions sensed the enemy and flinched. They were like a spider web. And a spider web was weak. A spider web might be strong enough to hold a small bird, but it was easily torn by beasts.

Syuk!

Lantier's black cloak flapped as he appeared through the smoke. He easily shrugged off the God Hands flying from all directions and broke through Noe and Randy. Noe's claws tried to slash it, but it seemed like the cloak had a high resistance. Lantier's dagger was then captured by Grid using the Slaughterer's Eye Patch.

'Okay, I read the orbit!'

This was the synergy between his high insight, the Slaughterer's Eye Patch, and Iyarugt. Grid moved quickly and successfully avoided it. But the problem occurred next.

Pahat!

Lantier once again appeared behind Grid and stabbed. Grid wouldn't suffer from this again.

"I'm not an idiot who will fall for the same trick three times!"

Grid had already used the footwork of Revolve and planned to return Lantier's strike back to him, causing 50,000 damage. Braham clicked his tongue.

[This obvious tactic is a trap.]

Chaaeng!

Lantier was blown away by Iyarugt. Grid smiled with satisfaction as he looked through the scattered red afterglow, only for his eyes to widen.

'Fake?'

Lantier disappeared like an illusion after being hit by Revolve. He appeared to the side of Grid. Grid tasted a terrible pain the moment he realized.

Puok!

[You have been hit by a lethal blow!]

[A legend doesn't die easily. You can resist all attacks for 5 seconds with a minimum of health.]

"Hat!"

Grid could only laugh. It was only two blows and his immortality passive was activated. The strength of the opponent was too surreal.

[You have inherited Pagma's power, but this is reality. As you are now, you can't even win against a creature made by Pagma.]

Why did Braham want Grid to realize his own powerlessness? It was simple. Braham wanted Grid to crave magic. In other words, he would want to grow as a magician now.

Why? Did Braham want to resurrect himself faster by raising Grid's intelligence? Of course, that was one reason. Rather, it was more because he believed that a magician was greater than a blacksmith.

Braham thought it was better for Grid to grow as a magician. But Grid was a blacksmith to the bones. Right now, he was thinking from the perspective of a blacksmith.

'Lantier is strong for a reason. His basic abilities and skills are excellent, but he also has good items.'

The dagger shone with a white light. Grid just guessed, but it was probably made from adamantium. Assuming that the weapon was made by Pagma in his prime, the attack power of this dagger was probably far superior to Grid's Greatsword.

'The cloak also has high defense, so I can't imagine the defense of the armor.'

Thus, his conclusion.

'In order to beat this place, do I need stronger items?'

Unlike Braham's intentions, Grid's desire as a blacksmith was ignited as he activated Blackening and fought with Lantier for five seconds. The result was, of course, was a total failure. Lantier didn't allow Grid to hit him once. Noe, Randy and the God Hands were obsolete in front of the legendary assassin.

[You have died.]

[Returning to the 60th island.]

“This game is truly about items.”

Level, stats, skills, and magic growth were just the basic premises. Later, when Grid once again challenged the Behen Archipelago, the most important thing to pay attention to was items.

‘Let’s assume that the legends on the 62nd~66th islands are also undead.’

He needed to make items that would be deadly to the undead.

‘I also need to make items for Noe and Randy.’

In retrospect, Noe always used his claws to fight and Randy used the copied weapon. They would become much stronger if he equipped them with items.

‘As a bonus, I will learn magic.’

That would be the icing on the cake!

“Kukukuk!”

[...]

Grid laughed because he had tasted failure and frustration many times. This point of view was quite different from what Braham predicted.

‘Has he lost his pride after the fight?’

Braham didn’t know anything about psychology and had this absurd thought. His anger soared into the sky.

‘He considers magic a bonus.’

Braham’s affinity for Grid fell by 2. As a result, Braham’s affinity for Grid was at 68 points. If the two of them were the opposite sex, it would be high enough for marriage.

It was an joyous day for Reidan.

Lord Grid returned after a long time.

"Dear husband!"

Irene, the heir to the best family in the kingdom and lady of Bairan, as well as Grid’s duchess. She rushed to the outskirts of the city and greeted Grid. She was still bright, beautiful, and lovely.

“Irene.”

"Dear husband~!"

Irene had become more aggressive after giving birth to Lord. She didn’t care about the residents and soldiers watching as she hugged and kissed Grid. Grid was feeling embarrassed when Lael sent him a whisper.

-In order to raise Reidan's fertility rate, you must set an example as the lord. Please share your hot love even more where people are watching.

"..."

Chapter 405

-In order to raise Reidan's fertility rate, you must set an example as the lord. Please share your hot love even more where people are watching.

Lauel meant to actively express positive affection. A simple example was to stroke her cheek or whisper loving words in her ears. He wanted to engrave the perception 'this couple's relationship is beautiful and happy!' into the public.

But Grid misunderstood.

'This guy has seen too many Japanese videos.'

Why would he share a hot love in front of everyone? Wasn't a hot love beyond kissing? Doing this act in the middle of the city, not the bedroom, and in front of more than 20,000 people? It was impossible unless he was a complete pervert. It was a completely crazy idea.

-W-What is it?

Lauel saw the contempt in Grid's eyes and panicked. It was the day when the pure youth Lauel was labelled as a pervert.

And on this day. Lauel was disappointed with Grid's uncooperative attitude and made a pledge.

'I will take initiative for My Lord.'

Lauel's project to create a second generation had begun. It was at this time that the legendary 'Reidan's Female NPC Strategy' was written.

It was only six days before the National Competition and Grid was supposed to leave for France in four days.

Based on Satisfy, Grid had 12 days to spare.

'I must finish all the preparations.'

Thus, he hurriedly returned to Reidan. Now wasn't the time to be like this.

"I love you, but I'm sorry. Please be satisfied with this today."

Time was short. Grid saw Irene's nakedness after a long time and used his hand techniques. After a while.

"...I love you, dear husband."

Grid's dexterity stat had long gone beyond the realm of a human. Grid satisfied Irene in a short amount of time and left for the smithy.

Reidan's super large smithy.

Khan and the young blacksmiths welcomed Grid, who had been missing for a few months. Grid observed Khan with the Great Lord's Sword and felt admiration.

'Advanced level 8?'

In fact, Grid had thought Khan's blacksmithing skill would stagnate at advanced level 7. But in contrast to his expectations, Khan was steadily developing. The process of training talented young blacksmiths seemed to give Khan a new understanding.

"Maybe you have a chance to become a craftsman?"

"Huhu, you are overrating me."

Historically, only 10 blacksmith craftsmen had emerged. Khan didn't dare aim to be recognized as a craftsman. But Grid thought differently.

'Khan is Albatino's descendant. He comes from a long bloodline of blacksmiths and has more passion than anyone. If I support him well, he can become a craftsman.'

Maybe he would be reborn as a named NPC. Grid felt greedy as he headed towards the furnace located in the innermost area of the smithy. A typical furnace was always dirty, but Grid's was clean. It was thanks to Khan always cleaning it for him.

'Really, I'm touched by that old man every time.'

His first friend, Khan. He prayed for the old man to live as long as possible. Grid's eyes were red as he started to prepare the firewood, while the young blacksmiths freaked out.

"Duke Grid! Let us do these menial tasks!"

"It isn't your duty!"

It was impressive. Two years ago in real time, he had been told by the old blacksmith in Bairan that he couldn't even cut firewood. Now he was in a position where he shouldn't be cutting them. He realized that he had become successful.

Grid laughed and waved to the young blacksmiths.

"You can go and do your work. Today, I want to go back to my state of mind as a beginner."

Grid thought that going through all the blacksmithing processes would improve his concentration. He prepared enough firewood and lit the furnace.

Tak!Tatak!

The flames in the furnace started to slowly rise. Grid controlled the temperature of the flames and suddenly laughed.

'If Braham saw this, he would be laughing at me.'

He would've argued that he could've raised the temperature of the flames instantly with magic power. But right now, Braham was silent. To be precise, he fell asleep just after using Assimilation.

Did this mean that Grid used Assimilation recently? No. Grid hadn't use Assimilation during the past fortnight. The reason why Braham was exhausted and sleeping was due to what happened when Grid died on the 61st island some time ago.

'I don't want to go to hell.'

Grid had used Blackening against Lantier, and was in danger of falling into hell due to dying in the Blackening state. Braham said that if he fell into hell in this state, he would fall prey to the great demons. Therefore, he suppressed the dark gate trying to suck Grid into hell with magic.

In exchange, a message was added to Grid's current status window.

* Braham has 69 days, 9 hours, 3 minutes, and 15 seconds left to restore his magic power and wake up. You can't use the Assimilation skill until Braham wakes up *

By the time 69 days passed in Satisfy time, the National Competition would be coming to an end. In other words, Grid had lost a powerful weapon in the National Competition. But Grid wasn't shaken. He believed he could play a role in the National Competition alone, without Braham's help.

'I will make that belief come true.'

He needed items. He realized that there was a limit to developing his control. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn't be a genius like Kraugel and the Overgeared members. Therefore, he needed to make the best items.

'Horse knight's helmet, troll lord's vest, crying ogre's gauntlets and golden crown's leggings.'

In addition, Lantier's cloak. Grid wanted to reproduce some of the items of the monsters he met in the latter half of the Behen Archipelago. It was because he needed new, more powerful armor.

'The Holy Light set is really good. But...'

The Holy Light Armor had a high probability of resisting dark magic, increased the effectiveness of healing magic by 300%, and increased resistance to physical attacks. The Holy Light Gloves raised attack speed and accuracy, and had a low chance of activating the 5 Joint Attacks skill. The Holy Light Crown raised his intelligence and dignity stats.

Once these three items were worn as a set, defense and health rose significantly. It was why Grid had been steadily using it since level 170. Yes, the Holy Light Set was very good.

'If it was half a year to a year ago, I would still be able to call it a top-class armor.'

But not anymore. As the level of monsters and users increased, the value of the Holy Light set was falling. He was able to realize it after meeting Kraugel and experiencing the Behen Archipelago.

'The problem is that the basic defense is too low.'

In particular, the crown and gloves had poor defense. It was almost defenseless. In the case of the Holy Light Armor, it wasn't bad, but the defense wasn't very high for armor. If there was no set effect, he wouldn't have used it from the beginning.

'The 5 Joint Attacks of the gloves isn't too bad.'

At this point, the only advantage of the Holy Light Set was for healing or when facing magic. This thought became more widespread after dying from two of Lantier's blows.

'I have to make an armor set for defense.'

Monsters easily neutralized his attacks in the Behen Archipelago. He would gather the characteristics of the armor they were wearing.

'First.'

Grid confirmed that the furnace was at the right temperature and extracted the black iron and ogre blood.

'Let's make the troll lord's breastplate.'

From the time he became duke of Reidan until the present time, he'd earned around 147,000 gold from hunting and various quests. Of course, there was a separate sum that he invested into Reidan.

In any case, 147,000 gold was approximately 200 million won. Grid was planning to pour all of this gold into making items.

'I will use the finest materials.'

The National Competition. It was the best stage of Satisfy that the entire world was paying attention to. Grid needed to invest enough to prove his worth on that stage. However, the concept of 'enough' wasn't understood properly by Grid.

In fact, 200 million wasn't a big sum. The rankers of various countries participating in the National Competition poured at least billions of won into upgrading items and skill books. Were they crazy?

Not at all. This was a realistic amount. There were many sponsors attracted to the rankers participating in the National Competition, so money poured out abundantly. Of course, many companies offered to sponsor Grid.

However, Grid refused. It was because the amount was too small. None of the companies set a high price on Grid, who had been nerfed. Most companies predicted that Grid would lose his events, so the average value they offered was 300 million. This was low compared to rankers like Chris and Zibal, who had been offered 12 times as much.

Grid's pride was hurt and he had to refuse the offers. Someone might think he was stupid for kicking away 300 million because of his pride. But Grid thought differently.

'I will get the best result.'

Companies that sponsored him would get astronomical results. Grid knew this fact, so accepting only 300 million won would make his stomach cramp with irritation.

Grid vowed again. He would prove his worth to those who underestimated him and make them shed tears..

the day.

Chapter 406

Scale armor.

As the name suggested, it was armor similar to the scales of a fish. Several small pieces of iron plates were put on leather straps and then joined together with thick cloth or leather. The range of activity was high because it allowed free movements of the body. In addition, it was good at deflecting swords and other sharp weapons. It had resistance to stabbing and slashing as options.

But the basic defense power was inferior when compared to other heavy armor. In particular, it was difficult to avoid a fatal injury if the joints where the iron plates were joined together were attacked.

‘In the end, the gap between iron plates is the biggest problem.’

That’s why tankers hardly wore scale armor, despite it being classified as heavy armor. The scale armor had obvious advantages, but there were also obvious limitations. However, Grid thought of a way to overcome the limitations of scale armor. It was thanks to the hint from the troll lord’s breastplate.

‘If I make multiple layers of iron plates, I can maintain the advantages of scale armor while covering the deficient defense.’

Typical scale armor was one layer of joined iron plates. The moment the weapon struck between the plates, the defense was forced to fail. The troll lord’s breastplate minimized this weakness with a double layer of iron plates. Was it possible that blacksmiths had never thought of this idea?

No. Existing blacksmiths also knew that multiple layers of iron plates would increase the defense. The reason why they didn’t make it...

‘The higher the iron content, the higher the weight and the more limited the movements.’

In other words, it lost the advantages inherent to scale armor. Heavy and movement-limiting scale armor? Who would want to use it? If it was going to be inconvenient anyway, they might as well wear heavy armor with much higher defense.

‘But the items I make are different.’

Black iron was two times harder and three times lighter than iron.

‘I can use this to make the plates as thinly as possible.’

He would make scale armor that was light and easy to move in, even if the iron plates were doubled or tripled. This wasn’t an easy task. Black iron smelting was seven times more difficult than iron smelting. Even Khan, whose blacksmith skill was advanced level 8, wouldn’t be able to smelt black iron so thinly and shape hundreds of scales.

However, Grid was different. Grid’s blacksmith skill was legendary level 7 and his dexterity was close to 3,000. For him, smelting black iron was just as hard as ordinary blacksmiths smelting iron.

'I'll prove why I'm a legend.'

Compared to other legends, it was true that he was lacking many things when it came to combat. However, as a blacksmith, he could proudly say that he was the best.

Ttang!Ttang!

The taste of holding minerals in his hands was the best. The pleasure was greater compared to when killing monsters. Grid's concentration rose rapidly as he started hitting the black iron on the anvil.

'The width of the iron plate shouldn't be too wide.'

The joints between the iron plates increased the flexibility of the scale armor. Grid wanted the iron plates to have a narrow width, in order to maximize the characteristics. However, the smaller the plates, the longer the working time.

In particular, the number of iron plates increased because he needed to make three layers. It was impossible to make hundreds of small iron plates and join them together, even if it took two full days.

But Grid was a craftsman. The increasing workload? It didn't matter. It was necessary if he wanted to make better items.

Ttang!Ttang!

Small and thin black iron pieces were refined in Grid's hands. The appearance, size, and shine reminded him of black dragon scales.

'Beautiful scales.'

'The scales are at least three times smaller than the scales of typical scale armor, but the details are much better. The technique of the duke is really delicate.'

'Wow... It seems like he has made over 100 already? How many is the duke planning to make?'

'This would be incredibly boring and difficult work for me.'

Khan and the young blacksmiths were amazed at Grid's workmanship and care.

[The Legendary Blacksmith's Patience skill has been activated.]

[Concentration, stamina and defense will rise to the extremes for one hour.]

[The Legendary Blacksmith's Breath skill has been activated.]

[The Legendary Blacksmith's Breath has increased the effectiveness of your production items]

The roosters cried out at dawn. Beyond the blacksmith's window, the spires of the castle rose in the distance. However, Grid didn't take a break.

Ttang!Ttang!

Grid relied on his high stamina to continue making the iron plates. He devoted himself to work, despite the day passing and it becoming night again. Excluding meal time and sleeping time, he never released his hammer.

Then two days later.

[You have successfully made the 'Scale Armor.']

[The structure is different from the 'Scale Armor' on your production list.]

[Analyzing the scale armor.]

[The function of your scale armor is phenomenal.]

[Scale Armor (Enhanced)]

Scale armor modified by the legendary blacksmith Grid.

Unlike conventional scale armor, it has a triple layer of iron plates.

Black iron is used to minimize the weight, and 621 iron plates were made as small as possible in order to increase the range of movement.

"...?"

[Scale Armor (Enhanced)]

Scale armor modified by the legendary blacksmith Grid.

Grid felt a sense of déjà vu from these words. At first, he couldn't think of anything, but then he remembered.

[Magic Missile (Enhanced)]

A magic missile developed by the legendary great magician who has completely overturned the activation formula.

Yes, it was Braham's magic. Just as Braham strengthened existing magic, Grid was able to strengthen existing items. At this moment, Grid was able to truly understand why he was a legendary blacksmith.

[Please decide the name of the item you have created.]

The system asked before listing the item's ratings and options.

"Um."

Grid thought carefully and came to a conclusion.

'I made three layers of iron plates.'

It matched well with the three-layered meat that Koreans were familiar with.

"Let's call it Three Layers."

It was the worst. Lael would've tried anything to stop Grid if he was present. Unfortunately, Lael wasn't here. For the sake of Reidan's future, Lael was busy interacting with female NPCs and didn't care about Grid. It was really a pity.

[Have you decided on 'Three Layers?']

“Yes.”

[‘Three Layers’ has been added to the list of item production methods!]

[Three Layers has been completed.]

[Three Layers]

Rating: Legendary

Durability: 721/721 Defense: 1,115

* 30% reduction in damage from physical attacks.

* 50% reduction in damage from stabbing attacks.

* Passive skill ‘Sword Breaker’ will be generated.

* Strength +50

Scale armor modified by the legendary blacksmith Grid.

The 621 small, iron plates made by hand and joined into three layers has ensured a high defense and range of movement.

In addition, each iron plate has a small groove. If the enemy’s weapon strikes it, there is a certain probability of the weapon being damaged.

Like the black dragon scales, these 621 iron plates will shine whenever the wearer moves.

Ogre’s blood was used to increase the durability of the leather straps, slightly increasing the strength of the wearer.

User Restriction: Level 320 or higher. 1,500 strength. 1,830 stamina. Advanced Heavy Armor Mastery Level 5 or higher.

Weight: 2,501

[A legendary rated item was produced, so all stats have permanently risen by +10 and reputation throughout the continent has risen by +500.]

“Wow.”

It had been two and a half years since he became Pagma’s Descendant. Not in game time, but in real time. Grid had made a huge number of items in the meantime, but only 12 legendary items so far. He had no luck, despite being a legendary blacksmith.

Thus, Grid cleared his mind. In the process of making items, Grid didn’t dare think about making legendary items.

But today. He had a hard time over the past few months due to the Behen Archipelago, and now he made a legendary item after a long time. Grid was filled with anticipation.

“Finally... Finally, the heavens knows my skills and heart.”

Being rewarded for their efforts, it might be natural for geniuses, but not ordinary people. No matter how hard they tried, they often didn't get reasonable rewards. It was particularly bad for Grid.

But now Grid's efforts were seeing results. It was a result achieved through Grid's growth.

"Okay... Keep this momentum going."

Grid was very pleased with the result. The material used for the Holy Light Set was adamantium, so the options and durability were much better. However, the defense of the Three Layers was superior.

"Next is the helmet and leggings."

The balance patch to the National Competition that nerfed him?

[Grid's attack power, which is his biggest weapon, is suppressed.]

Grid smiled as he recalled that headline.

'I'm not a damage dealer.'

Items were flexible. An overgeared person could be a damage dealer or tanker. In this National Competition, Grid was planning to show off an attack power that didn't yield to the patch, as well as his defense. In other words, he would be a flawless damage dealer tank that would overturn the world.

Ttang!Ttang!

The helmet, leggings, and gauntlet were gradually completed, while Lantier's Cloak was reproduced through Item Creation. It wasn't long before he would become a matchless overgeared person.

Chapter 407

Cloak.

It referred to a coat hanging from the shoulders without any sleeves. From a general point of view, tailors made cloaks because the commonly used materials were cloth and leather.

But blacksmiths also knew how to make cloaks. It was natural. Blacksmiths made all types of leather armor, and due to this they were also skilled at making cloaks.

Of course, it was a reality that the options and designs lagged behind cloaks made by tailors, since they were specialists in cloth and leather. However, the blacksmith cloaks had better basic defense.

From that point of view, Lantier's Cloak was clearly made by a blacksmith.

'The cloak stopped my blade.'

What was the quality and elasticity of the cloak that it couldn't even be torn by Noe's claws? Grid thought about it during his return journey to Reidan. He actively used his knowledge and experience as Pagma's Descendant, looking at every type of leather. The leather he came up with?

'None.'

Of course, there were some leathers that were as hard as rocks that were excellent in defense. Typical examples were minotaur leather and blue griffin leather. In fact, they were used as materials for the best leather armor. But they weren't appropriate as a material for a cloak.

'It's too thick and heavy. They aren't soft enough, despite being leather.'

Making a cloak with it? Rather than a cloak, it was more like a box. There was no utility as a cloak. If so, what was Lantier's Cloak made out of?

'I bet it isn't cloth.'

Pagma had prepared the equipment for Lantier, who became a death knight. Pagma was a blacksmith, so he couldn't handle cloth at a high level.

'Wait.'

A smile appeared on Grid's face as he recalled something. He remembered that with Lantier's Cloak, the inside and outside were different colors.

'The outer part is black.'

And the inner lining was red.

'Pagma used two types of leather to increase the defense of the cloak.'

Once he realized this, he knew that he didn't have to cling to minotaur or griffin leather. The durability might be lower, but there were more suitable leathers to make the cloak. Now Grid went through the different types of leather to find a red and black one.

'...None?'

The black leather wasn't too much trouble, but there was no red leather. The only one similar to red leather was the pink leather of the lizard queen.

'The lizard queen's leather is too hard to be used as the inner lining of the cloak...'

In the past week, Grid had completed his armor, helmet, and leggings. He faced a challenge when he tried to recreate Lantier's Cloak using the Legendary Blacksmith's Creation skill.

Her eyes were confident and her mouth relaxed. Yura was filled with unique intellectual charm and was the most beautiful woman in Asia. Her hairstyle had changed somehow. Her ebony hair fell down and reached her chest.

'I am ashamed.'

Yura blushed as she stood in a full-length mirror. The pink flush on her white face was reminiscent of a peach.

'It feels awkward.'

Her short dress revealed her thighs. It highlighted Yura's ideal figure. Yura normally wore jeans, simple t-shirts, or suits, so she couldn't adapt to her appearance in the mirror. She shivered shyly at the thought of going out with her body exposed. Honestly, she wanted to change her clothes right now.

'But.'

Today she was meeting Grid. In other words, she was meeting Shin Youngwoo. She wanted to increase her favorability with the first man she was interested in. Therefore, she changed her style. It was to match Grid's taste.

The problem was her breast size. Didn't Grid like at least a D cup?

"..."

Yura thought about borrowing the power of items, but shook her head. It was a matter of pride. She was already bigger than average.

On this day.

"Heok..."

"...Wow."

"I don't care if I die right now!"

The men who witnessed Yura on the streets cried out emotionally, regardless of their age. There were some people who vowed never to wash their eyes.

Ding dong~

There were 3 days remaining until the National Competition.

Someone visited Youngwoo's house.

"Ohh~! God Grid!"

It was Peak Sword.

Youngwoo frowned in dislike at his loud voice.

"You're as lively as ever."

"I have to welcome God Grid, so of course I will be energetic!"

"Ah, really."

Peak Sword was like Khan. They were people who had an infinite affection towards Grid. He couldn't be disgusted by such people. Shin Youngwoo laughed and wore slippers onto the porch.

"Hoh?"

Light blue old slippers and a green training suit. Peak Sword was impressed as he looked Youngwoo up and down. Youngwoo's body was much fitter than it was several months ago. His broad shoulders and thick thighs were very good.

"Last time, you were jogging every morning. Now it seems like you are constantly working out as well?"

"I need to be healthy so I can focus more on the game."

That's right. He couldn't play the game without stamina. In particular, the fatigue of virtual reality games was very high.

"This is a very good attitude. But what are those severe dark circles under your eyes? Have you been sleeping lately?"

"I'm making a few items before the National Competition... Huh?"

Youngwoo, who came out of the house, discovered the car that Peak Sword was standing next to and felt astonished. Peak Sword saw his expression and asked earnestly.

"How is it? Isn't my new car very good? It is a rare sports sedan that can stand side-by-side next to God Grid's 800 million won 13 series. Right?"

"...Moonlight blue."

Youngwoo was paying attention to the color of Peak Sword's car. It was blue under the sunlight, but black when in the shade.

'Don't tell me...!'

The red leather that made up Lantier's Cloak. It might not be red. After remembering that the 61st island was covered with flames, Youngwoo was enlightened and rushed into his house.

"I'm going back into the game!"

"Eh? H-Huh?"

Peak Sword panicked. Wasn't today the day when he promised to attend the operational meeting with the participations of the Korean national team? Now he was going to one-sidedly withdraw from that promise?

"We can work out the plans, but Yura will be disappointed..."

Yura and Peak Sword were friends since a long time ago. Peak Sword one-sidedly followed Yura after joining the 'Do you know club?', but he could still be regarded as a friend. In particular, after their reunion in the Overgeared Guild, they became closer and Peak Sword was able to notice that Yura was attracted to Youngwoo. She would be worried about what to wear today, but Youngwoo...

"Well, this is fine."

This was God Grid, who broke the sky. The only Korean player who could be viewed as Satisfy's best. Peak Sword didn't want to disturb him. He respected Youngwoo's choice, since it would eventually boost the status of South Korea.

As a result, Yura became depressed.

"...Youngwoo-ssi isn't coming?"

"Ah, eh, yes..."

"..."

The finest Korean restaurant in Gangnam.

Yura, who was waiting for Youngwoo and Peak Sword with the other participants of the National Competition, changed clothes. She put on a white shirt and jeans instead of the alluring one piece dress that showed off her body.

The men in the room were forced to blame Youngwoo, while the women could be freed from their feelings of self-consciousness.

"Yes, this is it! Why didn't I think of this?"

Reidan's super large smithy.

As soon as he reconnected to the game, Grid opened the 'Item Production List' and cheered. The item he was looking at was the leather armor that he gave to Faker a few months back.

[Chameleon Armor]

Rating: Epic ~ Legendary

Epic Rating Information:

...

...

Unique Rating Information:

...

...

Legendary Rating Information:

Durability: 390/390 Defense: 539

* 35% reduction in damage from stabbing, cutting, and throwing attacks.

* There is a normal chance of disrupting the enemy's gaze.

* The effect of the 'Stealth' skill will rise.

* Various resistances will increase depending on the climate.

Armor made from the skin of the chameleon lord.

It boasts excellent elasticity and changes color and options depending on the surrounding materials and climate.

...

...

Chameleon. The chameleon was around 2 meters in size and had muscular human limbs. Their leather was very resilient, making them resistant to physical attacks. Their color and nature changed instantly in order to protect themselves from danger.

It was shown that Lantier's Cloak could neutralize Noe's claws and stay in the blazing fire.

'Due to the high elasticity, a synergy will occur when it is attached to other leather. Then wouldn't it be good to use the leather of the puri minotaur?

Grid smiled with satisfaction and recreated Lantier's Cloak using the Legendary Blacksmith's Creation skill. The result was a great success.

[Lantier's Cloak]

Rating: Unique ~ Legendary

Unique Rating Information:

...

...

Legendary Rating Information:

Durability: 153/153 Defense: 206

* 20% reduction in damage from stabbing, cutting and throwing attacks.

* There is a 10% probability of deflecting the enemy's attacks.

* Various resistances will increase depending on the climate.

The puri minotaur leather is used as the outer material, while the chameleon lord's leather is used for the inner lining.

The chameleon lord's leather slightly alleviates the rigidity of the puri minotaur's leather.

The cloak boasts an unbelievable defense and is especially strong against blades. There is a low probability of blocking the enemy's attack.

The chameleon lord's leather isn't exposed to the outside, so the effect of disturbing the line of sight and increasing stealth can't be expected.

User Restriction: Level 320 or higher.

Weight: 690

"Good!"

This was an excellent protective cloak that all Overgeared tankers should have. There were 10 hours before his departure to France.

Grid was becoming a complete tanker. His thorough preparations for the National Competition were complete.

Chapter 408

“What? 9 hours?”

9 hours.

It was the time it took to travel from South Korea to Paris, France. This was even non-stop.

"We aren't riding a boat. Why does a plane ride take so long?"

“France is at the western end of Europe. It only takes 9 hours because this is a new passenger plane. It takes around 12 hours when flying on an older passenger plane.”

“Kuk.”

The road to Incheon International Airport. Youngwoo felt uncomfortable as he rode in a car with Peak Sword.

‘Isn't 9 hours 27 hours in Satisfy time?’

27 hours was a long time. Based on his level 307, hunting for 27 hours was enough to raise his experience gauge by 1.5%. What about blacksmithing? He could use that time to complete Noe and Randy's items. Maybe he could even enjoy a hot love with Irene.

He had to waste that time stuck on a plane? It was especially painful for Youngwoo, who used time and effort to cover his lacking talents and skills. It was enough to make him tremble.

"Anyway, I can just go online from home. Why do I need to gather in Paris?"

Shin Youngwoo muttered from the passenger seat. Peak Sword couldn't concentrate on driving and turned on the self-driving capabilities of the vehicle.

"What don't you like? Tell me what it is that makes you uncomfortable. I'll resolve it for you! Ah, are you worried there won't be any kimchi in Paris? Don't worry! I wrote out a list of Korean marts and Korean restaurants. If you want, I can even cook kimchi stew in front of the Eiffel Tower!"

"..."

Youngwoo was reminded that Peak Sword was someone who grabbed foreigners on the street and asked "Do you know kimchi?"

"...No, please don't do that. I just don't like that I can't play the game while stuck on the plane for 9 hours."

"Ah, I see." Peak Sword understood Youngwoo's feelings and smiled. "You're really diligent. Then should we use Yura's private plane?"

“Private plane?”

"I heard it in the meeting yesterday. There are Satisfy capsules on Yura's private plane, so if you want to play Satisfy while travelling to France, you can use Yura's private plane."

“Wow.”

The fact that she had a private plane was surprising, and there was also a Satisfy capsule on it? It was an unrealistic world for Youngwoo, despite being the owner of a 10 billion won building that would be completed in the near future.

‘How rich is she?’

Yura's astronomical strength was shocking. Youngwoo was at a loss for words as Peak Sword asked again.

"How about it? Do you want to take Yura's private plane?"

There was no need to think.

“I will.”

“Okay, I'll contact her. Yura will be very happy.”

Youngwoo didn't question why Yura would be happy, because his head was filled with the National Competition. He was looking forward to it. He wanted to show his worth to the people of the world who kept denying him.

"Welcome."

It was a long flight to France. Yura was originally dressed comfortably, but she changed once she heard the news that Youngwoo was coming. Her short skirt caught Youngwoo's attention.

‘Really pretty.’

Like everyone else, Youngwoo couldn't help feeling admiration every time he met Yura. Hers was a timeless beauty that transcended the concept of race, causing everything in her surroundings to fade away. Jishuka was the only one who didn't lose to Yura when it came to beauty.

‘No, Marie Rose as well.’

Marie Rose combined Yura's simple and intelligent charm with Jishuka's provocative beauty. She might be an NPC, but he couldn't understand how she could be so perfectly beautiful.

‘There is an effect.’

Yura saw that Youngwoo was staring at her and felt delight. She thought it was correct to choose clothing that suited Youngwoo's taste. But that joy was brief.

“Where is the capsule?”

"..."

Yura felt ashamed as Youngwoo looked at her chest for a moment before asking. Youngwoo's taste was firm.

Grid sighed with relief as he connected to Satisfy.

"Hah, I'm nervous."

He knew that Yura was pretty from the moment he saw her on TV. But he never saw her wearing these types of clothes. He felt a new charm from the always neat Yura.

'Her body is so pretty that my ideal type might change.'

That's right.

It wasn't because of indifference that Grid ran straight into the capsule without having a long conversation with Yura. Rather, he was too conscious. She was too pretty. He couldn't face her head on. Yura was a burden for Grid, who still lacked resistance to 'real women.'

'What is this? Yura wouldn't be interested in me.'

Yura always showed a positive attitude, but it was a type of partnership rather than a crush. He couldn't misunderstand.

'Why would a woman like that like me?'

Yura's perfect man had to be smart, sweet, handsome, rich, and have a good family. As Grid was recognizing Yura as part of a different world, Peak Sword sent a whisper to him.

-Did you read the article that was announced a month ago?

-Article?

-It said that due to reducing the number of participants for each country, the chances of winning medals will increase.

-I don't think I saw the article since I was in the Behen Archipelago...In what way?

-The 1st National Competition had a maximum of three events for one person, regardless of individual or team events. Meanwhile, the 2nd Competition doesn't have a limit on the number of team events.

-Team?

-Boss raid, target match, and siege. The rules of these three events have been changed in order to allow all participants from all countries to participate. That's why the participants gathered together for an operational meeting yesterday.

-Hoh.

A smile appeared on Grid's face.

-If I win three gold medals individually and three gold medals in the team events, does this mean that South Korea can win the National Competition?

-It's possible.

-But it isn't realistic.

Despite the presence of Grid, Yura, and Peak Sword, South Korea was classified as weak because the level of the other participants was poor. In addition, unlike Grid, Peak Sword was greatly weakened by this patch. South Korea was forced to be weak in team events.

-Unfortunately, in the siege and target match, there's no way for us to win the gold medal. But the boss raid is different.

Peak Sword had been watching Grid all the time. Grid's harsh raid experience was much more than common users, so Peak Sword placed hope there.

-I believe that if we support you well during the raid, we can get a gold medal.

Grid couldn't understand it.

-I don't know the siege rules, but why not the target match? Can't we get a gold medal in the target match?

Yura was a long distance damage dealer with her magic gun, while Grid could release Magic Missile with the God Hands. Grid judged that if the two people combined powers, they would be able to play an overwhelming role in the target match. But Peak Sword thought differently.

-I don't have the ability to protect you and Yura from the other participants.

-Hrmm.

-I'm sorry to be holding onto your ankles.

"..."

Grid didn't like Peak Sword's attitude. Who was Peak Sword? He might be ridiculous, but Peak Sword was a proud Korean. It was disturbing to see him shrink back like this.

-Is the damage from the patch that big?

Grid spoke in a serious voice.

Peak Sword replied honestly.

-It's the concept of my class. My base damage is very high compared to other combat classes, but the delay after an attack is big. If I can't deal a fatal blow with one strike, it will be counterattacked and I will be defeated. If my damage is halved in the National Competition...

He stopped talking.

"Umm..."

Grid thought for a long time before asking.

-Is the delay after an attack affected by the attack speed?

-The delay is reduced if my attack speed is high. But the minimum length of a weapon that I can equip is 1 meter and 50 centimeters, and long swords have a limit on their attack speed.

'That's prejudice.'

In the past, Grid had made the Ideal Dagger when he first faced Euphemina in the blacksmith match. It was a weapon with an excellent buff that raised his agility and attack speed. If the options of the Ideal Dagger could be reproduced with a sword, it would be worth using as one of his flagship weapons. However, it wasn't possible to maximize the effect if he gave the option of the Ideal Dagger to a heavy sword.

'I thought of a longsword.'

Grid wasn't in a hurry to make it. Grid had concentrated on producing armor instead of the National Competition was because he was fully satisfied with the weapons he was currently using. In particular, Iyarugt's experience was at 83%, so it was likely that it would grow to a legendary level during the National Competition. PvP weapon experience gain was similar to PvE experience gain.

'I don't think I will lack attack power, because I also have Item Combination.'

But wouldn't it be better to be properly prepared? He should speed up the production of the Ideal Long Sword.

-I will be working on a sword until we get to Paris.

-Sword? F-For me?

-Don't get me wrong. It isn't just for you. Now get the materials I need.

-Yes, I understand! I will acquire them for you now!

Just like Grid upgraded his items before the National Competition, the members of Overgeared also wanted to upgrade their items. But they didn't ask Grid because they were likely to be his enemies in the National Competition.

Grid also knew this fact, but Peak Sword was different. At the very least, he would be an ally in the team event.

"I should increase the power of the same side."

People who played the game knew this feeling.

Chapter 409

Paris, Charles de Gaulle International Airport.

It was one of the busiest airports in Europe, with around 530,000 planes landing and taking off every year. It was always bustling with people. It was good to see it crowded.

"It was large and scary."

Korea's national team descended from Yura's private plane and entered the 2E terminal. Their mouths dropped open as they saw the interior.

“Doesn’t it seem bigger than Incheon Airport?”

"That’s right. It’s two times bigger than Incheon National Airport.”

“Wow, look at the map. It takes an hour to walk to the nearest exit.”

Yura explained to the astonished group.

“Don’t worry. We can catch a bus.”

Yura was the best beauty and ranked 5th in the unified rankings, so she had always been an object of interest and was invited to many countries. This was already her 9th visit to Paris. She was familiar with the landscape, and after following her, the group of people walked 20 minutes to a bus stop and boarded a bus.

Due to his habit from his school days, Youngwoo sat directly behind the driver’s seat and sighed.

“Are we moving to the city with this bus?”

He was worried about moving through a large airport, so he was glad that they could move relatively comfortably. Yura spoke shocking words to the relieved Youngwoo.

“This is the airport shuttle bus.”

"Airport shuttle...?"

"Yes, we will take this to the nearest taxi stop and take a taxi to the city.”

"..."

The airport was enough to make a person tired. Youngwoo looked out the window and pledged not to visit Paris again. Paris was one of the world’s top tourist destinations, but Satisfy had a lot more beautiful spots. Therefore, he didn’t feel any inspiration.

On the other hand, Yura was sitting next to Youngwoo and smiling softly. Youngwoo’s forearms were now solid and burly, different from when they first met. It was a pleasant and reassuring sight.

‘Why is she sitting next to me when there are plenty of empty seats?’

It felt good to touch Yura’s soft skin. From the side, her nose was as beautiful as a sophisticated artwork. There were no spots on her white skin, making her look like a pure snow field.

Thump thump thump thump.

Youngwoo’s heart started beating faster as he became conscious of Yura.

‘Remain calm, calm.’

The nervous Youngwoo formed tight fists. He was worried about what might happen if he moved a finger by mistake and touched Yura’s body.

The Korean team travelled 40 minutes by taxi from Charles de Gaulle airport and arrived at their hotel.

Shang X Lila Hotel. It was a 5 star hotel located 600 meters from the Eiffel Tower. The luxurious interior was reminiscent of a palace from medieval times, and the guest rooms had a view of the Eiffel Tower and Montmartre.

"Furthermore, the restaurants in this place made it into the Michelin Guide?"

"The rate for the rooms is probably ridiculously expensive."

"I heard that the cheapest room rate is 2 million won per night, while the expensive rooms are priced at 30~40 million won."

"30~40 million? F-For one day...?"

"Yes."

"..."

A total of 224 people were participating in the 2nd Satisfy National Competition. The S.A. Group provided accommodations at 5 star hotels for all of them. It was for 16 days. Indeed, this was the power of the world's number one group.

'It would've been great if Sehee could participate in this tournament.'

Youngwoo admired the luxurious room assigned to him and was reminded of his sister Sehee. He imagined how delighted Sehee would be to see this place.

'Well, there's no urgency. I will be with her starting from next year's National Competition.'

Currently, Sehee was a student. She had little time to play Satisfy because of her studies, and her level was low, so she couldn't participate in the National Competition. But it would be different starting next year. Sehee had a good understanding of the value of Satisfy and her Saintess class. Therefore, she was planning to concentrate on Satisfy after she entered university.

"By the way, what are these clothes?"

Youngwoo frowned as he unpacked his clothes. It wasn't the training clothes and slippers that he normally wore. Instead, there were sneakers, slacks, cotton shirts, and jeans. There were even nice shoes.

'You want me to wear something like this?'

Youngwoo dressed just for convenience. Style? He had no interest in that.

He was traumatized by being ignored by his first love Ahyoung after wearing fashionable clothes to pursue her, and he didn't pay attention to fashion after that. In particular, he hated the cramped nature of the collared shirts.

Sehee knew these tendencies and still packed these clothes?

"Sehee, this girl..."

She pretended that she wanted to pack because he would be gone for a while, but it was just a trick? Youngwoo complained as he showered and changed clothes.

He selected one of the coordinated sets that Sehee had arranged from 1 to 19. He chose the 1st set because it had number 1 on it. Today was his first day in Paris. He would wear set 2 on the next day.

[Roll your shirt up to your elbow and tuck it in your pants! Wear this watch!]

"...Wow, the man who will be her husband later on will really be tired."

Youngwoo checked the note that Sehee left and dressed according to the contents of the note. He stood in front of the mirror and his eyes widened.

'Don't I look very handsome?'

In the past, Youngwoo had heard many times that he was ugly. The protruding cheekbones, high T zone, and eyes without double eyelids gave him an overall nervous impression. His skin was rough and his shoulders were hunched over, so he gave off a bad impression.

But in the past year and a half, Youngwoo had gained weight and trained his body through exercise. His features also matured as he got older and his skin care was good compared to the past.

No, even if he didn't compare to the past, he looked good when compared to the average Korean male. His high T zone and filled up cheeks emanated a Western charm, while his wide shoulders accentuated his masculinity. In particular, his eyes were sexy to women.

Due to Sehee's styling, Youngwoo was able to show off his charms.

Knock knock.

Youngwoo was staring blankly in front of a mirror and became astonished at the sound of knocking.

"Come in."

"Are you ready?"

Peak Sword came into the room and felt amazed.

"Ohu, you're dressed properly for once."

Peak Sword raised his thumb. Youngwoo felt better and left the room. The two people headed to the ground floor of the hotel, where the press conference would be held. The US, British, and Turkish teams, who were also staying at the same hotel, were seated already.

"Grid!"

Regas waved from where he was sitting as the representative of the British team. On the other hand, the US team leader Zibal was indifferent to Youngwoo, and Bubab, the Turkish representative, was staring at Youngwoo.

"Huh? I'm South Korea's representative?"

He was confused when he saw 'Shin Youngwoo' as the Korean team leader and Yura belatedly explained.

"We decided that at the meeting."

“Why? Heok.”

Youngwoo swallowed his breath at Yura’s appearance. Yura appeared wearing a dress, looking like the goddess of beauty had descended. Youngwoo couldn’t take his eyes off the neckline that was revealed by her tied up hair.

“You are the strongest among us, and aren’t you also the master of Overgeared? Who else would be the representative?”

‘Do I have leadership?’

As the master of Overgeared, all he did was make items and hunt. Youngwoo wasn’t convinced, but Yura’s evaluation was different. During the Elfin Stone raid, Youngwoo showed unexpected leadership that minimized the damage to his colleagues.

Yura was very appreciative of Youngwoo’s potential as the leader, so she aimed to train this potential in the National Competition.

“Yes... Eh... Um...”

Youngwoo was swayed by the unexpected praise and Peak Sword pushed him.

“What? Everybody is waiting for you, God Grid.”

“Kuk.”

In the end, Youngwoo sat in the seat of the Korean team’s representative. At that moment.

‘His expression changed?’

The hundreds of reporters and staff gathered at the meeting place were surprised at the same time. Youngwoo’s silly expression changed as soon as he sat down. His eyes gazed sharply as hundreds of eyes focused on him.

“Sorry I’m late. I am Shin Youngwoo, also known as Grid, the Korean team’s representative.”

An ordinary person would be nervous in front of the public. It was hard to maintain their spirit while being burdened by the many gazes focused on them. Especially the Youngwoo of the past.

He lacked confidence, so he had trouble communicating with someone in front of his eyes. He always looked at the ground. But he had developed since starting Satisfy. He realized his value and found his confidence. He became familiar with the public gaze as duke, hero of the kingdom, and head of Overgeared.

Grid was the leader of more than 20,000 people and hundreds of guild members. How could he shrink back in front of hundreds of journalists? It was impossible.

"Is this a live broadcast? I would like to say hello to all the people who are watching me right now."

Relaxed eyes and stable intonation. It was incomparable to the Youngwoo from the 1st National Competition.

“God Grid, this is why I decided to follow you.”

Peak Sword knew how rare it was for a person to grow and change quickly. Peak Sword once again felt inspired to follow Youngwoo.

“Great.”

Today, from Youngwoo’s style to his attitude, everything was Yura’s favorite. On the other hand, the Korean people watching the press conference live on TV and on the Internet were impressed.

“Was Grid’s personality always so intense?”

“Last year, he seemed like a child, but now he clearly isn’t.”

“Doesn’t he look handsomer than before? Plastic surgery?”

“How is that plastic surgery? He used to look like that from the beginning, but it was just his style. You should go in front of a mirror and look at yourself. You look stupid.”

“I think he did a lot of exercise.”

“A diamond in the rough...”

Satisfy had a culture beyond a simple game. And the representative of Satisfy in South Korea was Grid.

Ttiring~

Ttiring~

The rankings of the search portals were renewed about Grid. Youngwoo’s parents watching the TV in their vegetable store was also impressed.

“Our son has become more dependable... Our son is the representative of South Korea for two consecutive years...”

“We gave birth to such a good son. Right?”

The National Competition hadn’t even started yet. However, Youngwoo had already become prominent. Not as Grid, but as ‘Shin Youngwoo.’

One foreign reporter didn’t like it and threw a provocative question at him from the beginning.

Chapter 410

“Mr. Grid, you didn’t fight back despite the one-sided damage caused by this patch. Are you admitting that it’s reasonable for you to be nerfed?”

Last year, Grid was able to play a role in the National Competition due to his class and items. The result wasn’t due to Grid’s skills. This patch was to eliminate that unreasonable thing, so even Grid couldn’t complain if he had a conscience.

The reporter interpreted it this way according to his taste.

From Youngwoo’s position, it was an unpleasant attitude. He had great pride in himself, so if it was one year ago, he would’ve immediately become angry at the reporter. He would’ve snapped angrily.

But now Youngwoo didn't do that. He represented Overgeared and South Korea, and this press conference was a live world stage. Therefore, Youngwoo took a deep breath and watched the reporter. The ID hanging from the reporter's chest had their name, the name of their media company, and their country.

'French.'

One of the candidates to win in the 1st National Competition. The French pointed out Bondre as the person to win the championship for their country. However, Bondre was defeated in four seconds after meeting Youngwoo in PvP. This shocking disgrace moved France further away from the championship.

The antagonism that originated at that time, as well as vigilance and anxiety that the same thing might occur this time, dominated the French reporter. The enlightened Youngwoo felt more sympathetic towards the reporters.

'His self-esteem is low.'

Just like Youngwoo in the old days. As a strong winner, Youngwoo was able to respond to the reporter in a calm tone.

"Everyone seems to have misunderstood. I'm not a victim of this patch."

"Huh?"

The French journalist was embarrassed and the audience was agitated.

A confused Chinese reporter asked.

"Mr. Grid, isn't your greatest strength your unbeatable attack power? Due to this patch, you lost that strength and will inevitably be in a disadvantageous position in PvP. Compared to the other rankers, isn't your control relatively lacking?"

"Why is my strength seen as attack power?"

"You're the one who logged out Hurent of the United States in just 5 seconds and Bondre of France in just 4 seconds. Attack power is naturally your greatest strength."

"Hrmm."

A smile appeared on Youngwoo's face. The people watching the broadcast and the reporters couldn't understand the meaning of this smile. But Yura, Peak Sword, and Regas knew the meaning of Youngwoo's smile.

'It's ridicule.'

'How absurd.'

'The worst personality.'

Youngwoo enjoyed the questions spreading through the reporters and opened his mouth.

"You are pure."

“Yes?”

Suddenly calling them pure? That smile seemed to be laughing at them. Youngwoo asked a Chinese reporter who had an unpleasant expression on his face.

“What is the source of my strong attack power?”

“It’s obviously your strong items.”

“In other words, the power of items. That is the right answer.”

“...?”

Youngwoo explained to the bewildered reporter.

“My strength isn’t attack power, but items. And items aren’t just limited to weapons.”

“...!”

The eyes of the Chinese reporter widened. He understood the meaning of Youngwoo’s words.

Youngwoo turned his gaze away from the reporters and declared towards the camera.

“If I can’t reproduce the strongest attack power because of the patch, then I will show the strongest defense. I will thoroughly use this patch to look much better than last year.”

The nerf sniping at him? He would easily pass through it.

“Pfft!”

The reporters laughed. Youngwoo’s words were too ridiculous.

“The blacksmith class is known to have low defense and because of the inherent limit of production classes, I don’t think a legendary blacksmith will be much different.”

“I’ve never seen you use defensive skills.”

“It’s common sense that you can’t play as a tanker by just relying on armor, without any defense skills?”

“You might’ve overcome the limitations of your class with items during the 1st National Competition, where there were only second advancement users, but this year will be different. Other participants have grown stronger by leaps and bounds.”

“Mr. Grid, you are too obsessed with items.”

The reporters weren’t wrong. The reporters were experts in Satisfy and had a basis for their words. However, the problem was that Youngwoo was a special case.

“You will soon see. Ah, I will tell you this ahead of time.”

Youngwoo scanned Zibal and Bubal with ridicule.

“I don’t think anyone who participates in this competition isn’t equipped with items. The high rankers received a lot of money from sponsors, so it is irresponsible if they don’t have good items. Don’t use bad items as an excuse later on if you have a conscience.”

The tone was provocative.

Bubat responded to the taunt.

"Aren't you the one who relies on items? Don't speak nonsense! I bet that this year, you will earn 0 gold medals!"

Zibal was the same.

"A person who only relies on items is saying this... I guess there isn't a lot of talent in South Korea. There is a rumor that Yura, who disappeared from the rankings after obtaining a hidden class, isn't as good as before. Well, I think it is good enough for South Korea to maintain a low profile in this competition."

After that, the reporters didn't ask Youngwoo anymore questions. It was an attitude like they were no longer interested in South Korea. Thus, a Korean reporter asked Youngwoo a new question.

"Grid, do you plan to participate in the blacksmith production competition? As a legendary blacksmith, you will surely get a gold medal if you participate."

The reporter wanted to show to the world that Korea could also get a gold medal. The international reporters read his intentions and stiffened.

"A gold medal doesn't have the same value."

"Winning a gold medal in a non-popular event isn't a big story."

"So what... Whether it is a gold medal in a popular or non-popular event, it still shows in the score. It looks like South Korea won't leave completely empty."

"No, that's wrong as well. Have you seen the performance of the items made by the top ranking blacksmiths lately? There's no guarantee that Grid can get a gold medal, even if he's a legendary blacksmith."

"..."

The Korean reporter's face reddened with shame as the reaction was different than what he thought. It was a fact that anyone knew, but most of the Korean people watching the press conference were angry at the insult.

Knowing this, Youngwoo abandoned his patience and revealed a bit of his true nature. He would give a thrill to the Korean citizens, as well as enhance the image of himself and Overgeared.

"If I participate in the blacksmith competition, isn't this too unfair?"

"...?"

It was natural for blacksmiths to participate in the blacksmith competition. But it was too unfair? Grid was extremely arrogant. Just because he was a legend, he assumed that all blacksmiths were below him. It was a higher assessment of himself than necessary.

In front of the frowning reporters, Youngwoo raised five fingers.

"This is the minimum number of gold medals South Korea will be able to win in this National Competition without me participating in the blacksmith tournament. Expect it."

"What...?"

Everyone was silent from the crazy nonsense.

[Grid, he declared that he will win at least 5 gold medals.]

[Grid won't participate in the blacksmith competition. Can South Korea win a gold medal?]

[The importance of representatives... South Korea will suffer a great disgrace due to Grid's arrogance.]

The media headlines of each country were dominated by Grid. On the other hand, there were only a few small articles about the 2nd ranked Zibal.

"Grid, this guy..."

Originally, he was supposed to be the main character of the press conference, but that changed due to Grid. His ego was badly hurt as he threw the newspapers to the side with a red face. Then he asked the young man with silver hair who was enjoying his tea.

"What do you think are the five events Grid is talking about?"

"Boss raid, target match and siege."

"What? The team events?"

"And all other combat-related individual events."

"..."

Lauel, the youth with silver hair drinking expensive black tea, just spoke ridiculous words. He was the chief of staff of Overgeared and Grid's chief aide, the person closest to Grid. Still, he was from the United States.

"I knew that Grid was arrogant, but this... Does he really believe that he's the strongest?"

No, Grid always thought he was lacking. That's why it was scarier.

'He's someone who has already broken the sky above the sky.'

Lauel shook his head and explained.

"Grid said this based on his skills."

"Ah, really?"

Zibal thought it was absurd.

"How can you evaluate Grid's skills so highly? Now that the average stats of users are going up and the value of items is decreasing, why are you so obsessed with Grid, who has nothing except for items?"

“Hahat!”

Lauel burst out laughing and swept back his hair. He covered half of his face with one hand, his blue eyes peeking out from the gap in the fingers.

“This is why I don’t appreciate you, Zibal. Your zeal to judge people and circumstances based on prejudices just proves your limitations. The brightest moment for you is the present, not the future.”

Zibal’s face turned completely red as he shook. He tried not to get angry at Lauel, who was disparaging him. Then Lauel spoke some shocking words.

"Tomorrow, in the target match, the US is looking for a silver medal."

“What?”

It was natural that the US would win gold at team events. The US team’s overall ability was high when taking into consideration the average level, equipment, and skills of the participants. Yet they were looking at a silver medal?

Lauel continued to speak nonsense.

"When I pierce through the world with my eyes, the winner of the gold medal is South Korea."

Kung!

Zibal pounded on the table, standing up and glaring at Lauel.

"I know that you’re loyal to Grid... But keep in mind that your country is always your priority. You are Grid’s enemy in the National Competition. Don’t mislead your allies and encourage confusion with your words."

"I will keep that in mind."

Lauel laughed excitedly, like this was refreshing. Zibal hurriedly left this place. It was because he would crush Lauel’s pretty face if he stayed any longer.

And the next day. After the grand opening ceremony, which was much bigger than the 1st National Competition, the first scheduled event began. It was the target processing match. The rules were simple.

The S.A. Group designated 21 uninhabited islands for this National Competition. The representatives of 32 countries would be on the uninhabited island called ‘Tira.’ Each representative had to destroy small targets 5cm in diameter that were moving at a speed of 40m per second. Each target would give points, and the representatives could be attacked and logged out.

Destroying one target gave one point, and no additional points were gained by logging out another user. The country that earned a total of 400 points first would win.

『 Which country will be the first to win 400 points in this match? 』

-Waaahhhhhhhh!

Hundreds of thousands of spectators cheered in the Stade de France National Stadium as the host raised the atmosphere. Among them, very few people were paying attention to South Korea.

Despite Grid's declaration at the press conference, almost no one predicted that South Korea could win a medal at the team events.

But let's go back to the situation from the beginning.

Peng!

Pepepeng!

White flashes emerged from four golden hands shining brilliantly under the sun. At the same time as the signal to start the match, the small targets were destroyed. The speed was fast enough to be unmatched by other teams.

"Stop him!"

The bewildered representatives from all over the world surrounded Grid.

"Linked Kill Wave."

Grid used his strongest skill while feeling thankful to the enemies coming at him all at once. The result? Silence filled the agitated Stade de France National Stadium.