

Overgeared 811

[Chapter 811](#)

Piario was sitting in the moonlight while moving the hand plow. The result of his experiments in the vampire city... No, the full moon tonight was enough to plant a 'bloody tomato' he had developed with the help of a colleague.

"Field work is fun."

Piario felt this every time, but farming wasn't a joke. He had to dig at the hard ground, plant seeds in it, and cover them with soil again. The more he repeated this series of exercises, the more efficiently his muscles were trained and the more strength he gained.

"It is thanks to the health and clean outdoor air."

He sucked the clean air deep into his lungs. It might be exaggerating but he felt that his life was extended by one day every time he took in a breath. It was a sensation he couldn't feel in the vampire cities. The vampire cities were underground, and the flow of air wasn't smooth. He also never got sunburnt because it wasn't sunny. However...

"I'll have to go back soon..."

He couldn't avoid it just because he didn't like it.

Noll's blood was an enormous help for farming because it contained a large number of nutrients. Thanks to Noll's help, Piario could improve the new variety of potatoes that he was planting. Ultimately, he might be able to get a hint on how to grow the golden walnuts.

'I have to say goodbye to His Majesty tomorrow.'

The reason why Piario had briefly returned to Reinhardt was due to Grid's safety. He had waited in Reinhardt so he could receive Grid's call at any time when Grid was in the empire. Grid had returned unharmed today, meaning Piario no longer had a reason to stay in Reinhardt.

'I want to go and see him.'

However, the time was too late. It would be rude to find Grid now. Recently, Piario had been planting potatoes in the middle of the night, causing him to wake up late.

"Hmm?" Piario was wishing that morning would come soon when he suddenly stopped moving his hand. He felt turbulence in the atmosphere a few hundred meters away.

"..."

Yet the silence of the night continued. The only sound in the serene farmland was the cries of the night owls. However, Piario felt certain that... something was approaching. Was he mistaken? No. Piario farmed using the power of the sun, the earth, the water, and the wind. His keen senses precisely captured the changes in the atmosphere.

"Over there!"

He knew it. Piaro could hear the cry of a woman coming from far away. Her silent footsteps seemed like she was secretly approaching, but her shout showed that wasn't the case.

'It was a subconscious hiding of her presence...'

It was at a considerably good level. The moment Piaro felt admiration...

"Stop!" A cry came from the woman's right side.

"...Huh?" Piaro was startled. It was because the woman's movement speed was fast enough to exceed his awareness. Her presence had been dozens of meters away, and now it was right in Piaro's field of vision.

"This is an unexpected guest." A smile appeared on Piaro's face as he confirmed the woman's face.

"P-Piaro?!" Mercedes' eyes widened as she grasped the identity of the person digging the tunnel. What method had she used to train? Piaro burned with an intense fighting spirit and cried out excitedly, "You have grown a lot in just one month!"

He didn't ask trivial questions about why Mercedes was now here. Piaro only swung his hand plow with the dream of dueling with a strong person.

"What...?" Mercedes panicked. She had reunited with an old hero in a totally unexpected manner. Rather than feeling joyous, he attacked her randomly? Moreover, it was with a hand plow!

Mercedes frowned as she defended herself with her sword. 'He seems different from before?'

One month ago, Piaro had attacked her under Grid's orders, so Mercedes had already experienced Piaro's power. His attack power with a sickle and a hand plow, instead of a sword, had been surprising. However, Mercedes had been promoted and was now a legend. As long as Piaro didn't pull out his sword, it should be expected for Mercedes to overtake his hand plow.

Yet it was impossible. Why? It was because this was farmland, and farmlands were Piaro's field. The aura of nature made Piaro even stronger, like how Demon Slayer Yura who became more powerful in hell. This was something Grid had overlooked because he didn't become stronger when fighting in the smithy.

"Kuk...!" Piaro continuously took advantage of the hand plow's short reach and quickness to attack. His attack power was even more threatening compared to one month ago. The fast and powerful Mercedes hurried to defend herself. "As expected from Piaro...! You have become stronger in such a short time!"

Facing a legend with farming equipment...!

Mercedes felt a sense of discomfort and didn't question why Piaro attacked her. She was well aware of Piaro's obsession with the strong. Pulling out one more sword, she cried out as she defended against Piaro's hand plow, "Are you finally reaching the level of a Sword Saint?"

If it was like this...

"I'll help you!"

She would duel wholeheartedly so that the old hero could reach a higher level. A silver sword energy sprung up behind Mercedes. It was in the shape of beautiful wings, reminiscent of an angel. The silver wings—Mercedes' wings—spread out. She had some capacity for flight, and she also constantly released sword energy from the wings in order to deal damage to a target.

Mercedes' great power collided with Piaro. Strong winds like that of a storm rose and ruined the farmland, swirling the grains in the air.

"I'm no longer the young girl from your memories. Draw your sword," Mercedes suggested. However, Piaro was stubborn. Instead of a sword, he drew a sickle. Now, he struck back with a hand plow and sickle.

Mercedes' expression stiffened. "...You will regret it."

Mercedes felt the need to convince Piaro that she was no longer a young girl. She didn't just want to be acknowledged. It was necessary to validate her skills with her future colleagues.

"Sword of Honor."

Then something amazing occurred. Mercedes' two swords hit only one point. Her swift assault with her flapping wings rushed toward Piaro, forcing him to defend.

'Ha!' Piaro defended against a stab that couldn't be followed with an ordinary person's eyes. The hand plow and sickle had been made personally by Grid, yet cracks started to appear on the farming equipment made of materials from Great Demon Belial. The reason for this phenomenon wasn't because Mercedes' two swords were better than Grid's hand plow and sickle.

It was just the limits of farming equipment. Farming equipment used a much smaller amount of metal than weapons, making them less durable. This was a flaw Mercedes had already discovered.

'I didn't expect to be attacked with this strategy.' Piaro admired the fact that Mercedes truly had an amazing insight as he twisted his crossed hand plow and sickle.

Then...

Kakakang!

"...!" Mercedes' sword was pushed to the side. Piaro expected Mercedes' stride to become twisted and lose balance. "Hah!"

However, Mercedes' used transcendental movements to keep her balance. She swung her other sword and grazed Piaro's chest, turning her upper body along with the sword.

"Draw your sword now, please."

"The hand plow and sickle are my best weapons. Why should I draw a sword?"

"Stubborn to the end...!"

During the past 12 years, had Piaro become like this to cope with the terrible suffering? Mercedes was convinced of this. 'It is clear that Piaro has regressed.'

How could he have made progress? How could he have afforded to train his mind and body when it was hard just surviving? Mercedes determined that Piaro had become narrow-minded due to what had happened.

“Knight’s Resolution.” An energy sword formed on her chest, and her mind and body became stronger. Mercedes felt a sense of obligation. She felt obligated to defeat Piaro to remind him of the painful reality and give him a chance to develop further.

‘Piaro must become a Sword Saint.’

What about Kraugel? She couldn’t accept a person she hadn’t heard of suddenly becoming a sword saint. The moment Mercedes made her resolution...

“Free Farming 7th Style.”

Thousands and then tens of thousands of seeds were scattered in the aftermath of the battle.

“Polishing.”

“...?!”

Pepong! A series of explosions occurred on the ground and in the air. There were literally thousands or even tens of thousands of explosions. The seeds were what exploded, so the size of each explosion wasn’t great. However, it was big enough to compare to magic.

“Ugh...!” Mercedes was trapped in the blast and couldn’t take a single step. She wrapped her body with the silver sword energy to minimize the damage.

‘What is this...?’

The seeds suddenly exploded? Was it possible to take advantage of sword energy to do something like this?

‘It can’t be!’

Mercedes shrank back in her wings and belatedly realized that Piaro had already reached the same realm as herself. In other words...

“A Sword Saint...” The explosions ended, and Mercedes’ expression became jubilant as she opened her ragged wings. “Are you already a Sword Saint?” Mercedes asked.

She was expecting a brilliant resurrection of the old heroes. However, Piaro brutally destroyed her expectations.

“No, I am a farmer.”

“...?”

Was he still joking around right now? The baffled Mercedes tried to open her mouth to speak. Then Piaro pulled out a pitchfork. “Free Farming 4th Style, Plowing the Field.”

Supapak!

The ground around Mercedes was quickly cleared.

“Sowing Seeds! Grow!”

New crops were planted, and Piaro used the energy of nature to make them grow.

“...” Mercedes was stunned as she was suddenly surrounded by a golden wheat field. It was a nightmarish night.

[Chapter 812](#)

They were the people who were praised as ‘pillars’ for supporting the empire. However, Mercedes and most of the empire didn’t acknowledge the Five Pillars. No, to be precise, they couldn’t acknowledge the Five Pillars. It was because the Five Pillars didn’t have anything to show. They were strong, but they hadn’t achieved any particular feat.

Well, it could be said that they strengthened the emperor by protecting the emperor’s side, maintaining the empire’s balance as a result. However, on the other hand, what about the former pillars called Piaro and Asmophel? They had defeated countless enemies and protected countless people. They were a paragon of the people and the nobles, saving the empire whenever it was in a crisis and giving courage to the imperialists.

Piario and Asmophel were great people.

“...A farmer.”

‘Don’t joke around.’ Mercedes couldn’t speak her wishes and hopes. It was because her insight was telling her that it was real and not a trick. Piario’s farming power had indeed created a new field in an instant.

“Why...” Mercedes was pale as she bit her trembling lips. She wanted this moment to be a nightmare. However, this was reality. It was terrible.

“Why are you a farmer?”

The occupation of a farmer was exclusive to the peasants.

Mercedes cared for the people but she was still a noble. She had been taught that there was dignity in every profession, and she acknowledged it. However, Mercedes was nobler than anyone. She couldn’t understand or acknowledge that the Piario she had long admired was now a humble farmer.

Piario understood her feelings as he was also from the nobility. However, now Piario realized that... “I like being a farmer better than a great swordsman.”

Piario held the pitchfork and pulled out a flail. It was a tool used to thrash grain. “There is no job that is better than another. If we have to discuss it, a farmer is nobler than a great swordsman or Sword Saint. Without a farmer, there is no food for daily use. If there was no delicious food, humanity couldn’t have developed this much and be happy.”

“...”

After all, if there was no hunter, meat or leather couldn't be gathered. Mercedes rejected Piaro's extreme remarks and felt a sense of duty instead. During the past 12 years, she had felt a sense of duty to help the 'broken' Piaro recover from his hellish life.

"There isn't the time for questions and answers."

Her torn silver wings shone brilliantly again.

Kuoooooh!

Mercedes' two swords started to glow. The pure brilliance filled the darkness of the night and swallowed up the moon.

"Piaro! Regain your mind!"

Mercedes' attacks were exceptional. The white light attacks created numerous wounds on Piaro's body. Piaro was only wearing thin cloth clothes and couldn't resist Mercedes' sharp attacks. However, there was a bigger problem. Mercedes started to swap weapons. She accumulated damage on Piaro without giving him time to rest and opened the distance to avoid a counterattack.

Of course, Piaro was persistent. He used his rapid growth ability to create a barrier of plants and cut off ranged attacks. Rice, wheat, potatoes, and cabbages flew in the air.

"...!" Mercedes withdrew. The grains and vegetables contracted like they were going to explode. However, this time they didn't explode. They struck her body instead. Piaro linked this attack with the Free Farming 6th Style. It became a barrage of attacks!

Mercedes shook as the flail hit her back. Her defense was quite weak since she was only wearing old leather armor, so she felt great pain. It was more painful than when she was stabbed by a sword or spear. For a noble knight to be beaten by a farmer... Her mental suffering was incomparable.

"How about it? This is the power of a farmer! I am much stronger and healthier than I was during my days of a great swordsman. I can bring happiness to more people! This is it!"

"Kuk...!"

"This is my new path!"

The earth was in turmoil. The effects produced by two legends fighting was gorgeous enough to be compared to the raid of a great demon. It was on a different scale as all the farmland in the path of the two people disappeared. Grid watched the two people fighting from a distance and gulped. "A dragon and tiger fighting...!"

A dragon and tiger...

However, that wasn't Grid's problem right now. He was too busy feeling in awe.

'Was Piaro always this strong?'

The grains exploded without a break. Crops rose from the ground and stretched around Mercedes' body. Mercedes' actions were severely restricted as her wrists and ankles were caught by the crops that

kept growing. Mercedes' perfect balance of swapping between all types of weapons—sword, axe, bow, shield, spear, and so on—on a case by case basis collapsed before the crops.

In the end, was this another nerf? Had Mercedes weakened the moment she became his ally? No, that wasn't it. Mercedes was still strong. It was just that Piaro was stronger than her.

Grid noticed belatedly, "The farmland..."

These were the fields that Piaro had been working on for years. This place...

"It is Piaro's field...!"

Piario was already beyond the standards of an NPC. The legendary Piario was now a boss monster. Grid's heart beat excitedly as he had great confidence in Piario who always showed overwhelming strength. He felt that he could infinitely count on Piario.

As for the regret that he felt about Piario becoming a farmer? That had blown away. It would be strange if Grid felt regretful about it. After all, Piario was now fighting several times better than Sword Saint Kraugel!

"Piario!" Grid's cry resonated in the farmland. "Show me the power of the strongest!"

His shout echoed. It pierced through the sound of the hand plow and sword colliding in the air and into Piario's ears. Piario's hands trembled as he held the farming equipment. "If this is Your Majesty's wish...!"

The wind raged, and Mercedes' silver wings fluttered like in a storm. Piario's hands rotated. "Free Farming!"

"...!!" Mercedes' eyes widened. It was because her two swords were sucked into Piario's rotating hands.

'Supreme Swordsmanship 4th style...!'

Piario's old swordsmanship had been a great contribution to bringing down the great demon Astaroth.

"Watermill!"

It was sublimated and expressed as a more powerful agricultural method. This was enough to neutralize Mercedes' weapons and cause the ground to shake. Then a water pillar erupted and struck Mercedes' body.

"Ah..." As Mercedes flew through the air, she realized, 'One occupation isn't more noble than another.'

Her way of thinking expanded. At this moment, 1st Knight Mercedes set up her first chivalric code.

'Don't be prejudiced.'

At this moment...

[Legendary Knight Mercedes had created a new chivalric code.]

[All of the legendary knight Mercedes' stats will increase by 10% and the chance of weak spots being exposed will decrease by 80%.]

"...?" Grid's expression became one of astonishment as he watched the two people duel. Mercedes crashed to the ground and bowed her head to Piaro. "We have been reunited after 12 years. I wasn't able to show my development but I received your teachings. I am ashamed and thankful."

"I have also learned a lot. I can't be assured of victory if you fought with all your power."

"No. I would've lost anyway."

"Huhu, you are too modest."

The night deepened with a warm sight.

"Are you just leaving?"

After the battle was over, Mercedes and Piaro unburdened their hearts all night and came to Grid in the morning. Piaro said he would leave for the vampire cities. "Yes. Now that the best knight is with Your Majesty, I can leave feeling reassured."

"Why are you so diligent? Hasn't it been a long time since you reunited with Mercedes? Why don't you stay for a few more days?"

Piario was a valuable person to Grid, so he didn't want Piario to be stressed. Piario spoke a surprising name to the concerned Grid, "I was shaken when I heard the news about Khan. If I had succeeded in growing the golden walnut a bit sooner... If I had, Khan might've been able to live a bit longer."

Grid's grief and suffering at Khan's sudden departure was passed onto Piario, who lived with regret.

"Your Majesty, I am going to be more diligent."

"..."

Piario's true heart was transmitted to Grid, and Grid could no longer stop him. Feeling thankful, Grid grasped Piario's hands. "Thank you. But keep this in mind. Don't overdo it. I won't forgive you if you leave like Khan."

"...Yes."

It was a touching scene. Mercedes smiled as she saw the leader and subordinate caring about each other.

"Piario, wait!" Someone's shout rang out. The person who showed up was Administrator Rabbit. He first politely greeted Grid before handing a piece of paper to Piario. "This is the cost of the damage dealt to the farmlands yesterday! I'll get it from your pay!"

"..."

The reason why the Overgeared Kingdom had been able to make steady progress during Grid's absence was thanks to all the people who worked so hard.

“What amazing children.” Sage Sticks was now the principal of the Overgeared Academy, and the smile couldn’t disappear from his face. “They were a bit slow to learn at first. But once they got the hang of common sense, they evolved remarkably. All 23 children will surely grow into great scholars and magicians.”

They were talking about the children Grid had brought over from the Tower of Eternity. The children, who had been misunderstood as Grid’s children, had recently been the topic of discussion in the Overgeared Kingdom. It was because all the children had genius brains.

A smile appeared on Grid’s face. “This is good news. Are the kids healthy?”

“Yes. The shades in their hearts have been removed. I think that the affection Your Majesty showed while bringing the children here healed many of their wounds. You did well. You did very well.” Sticks’ eyes were warm as he gazed at Grid.

The noble elf species—they disliked the selfish and violent tendencies of humans. Were they any elves in history who felt great affection for humans? There were none. Yet Sticks felt great affection toward Grid who gave him new feelings. Thanks to Grid, Sticks got rid of his prejudices against humans. It was a hasty change.

Simultaneously...

“I finally found it.” Merchant King Kir was the first player to find the World Tree’s Forest. A species quest was about to be opened by a player, and it was actually in the worst form.

[Chapter 813](#)

According to last year’s statistics, the number of players who chose a merchant as a class was 41,715,997. It was comparable to the most popular combat classes such as swordsman and magician. Why? That was because it was a class that gave hopes and dreams to ordinary people. In modern society where in-game goods were traded for cash, it was natural that a merchant class which was meant for making money would be popular.

Of course, reality was tough, and most merchants didn’t make money. However, a few merchants gained fame by accumulating a huge wealth. A typical figure was the 1st ranked Kir. As he was the first player to make a company, he had been accumulating wealth steadily. He had tens of thousands of people under him, and some people called him the merchant king.

“I finally found it.”

The forest of the world tree—it was also known as the Elven Forest, and Kir was the first player to step foot in there.

[You are the first player to discover the elves’ territory!]

[It is an achievement that will remain in history! The first discovery will give you various benefits!]

[You can easily raise affinity with the elves, and you will receive a 20% discount on the prices of items purchased in elven villages. There will be 20% more profit when selling goods.]

[Hunting in the elf territory will increase experience rate by 20%, and item drop rate will increase by 10%.]

[Mana regeneration rate is permanently increased by 8%.]

“Hoh! This is more than I expected.”

With platinum hair, emerald eyes, and pure white skin that blended beautifully, Kir seemed like a typical handsome nobleman in movies and novels. He checked his first discovery benefits and glanced behind him. “You can come in now.”

As soon as Kir gave permission...

“Isn’t the air somewhat different?”

“It is sweet every time I breathe. The sunshine is exceptionally pleasant. I’d like to build a house here.”

A group of people entered the forest. They were players who were armed with high-level equipment. Among them, the man with the ID of Boutian used magic. “Magic Detection.”

Supaak! His mana extended a few dozen meters and searched the surrounding life forms. Boutian reported, “There are many small animals. It seems that the elves have no defenses at the boundaries of the forest.”

“It is peaceful.”

The elves had been living in this forest for hundreds of years. It was hard to expect them to be vigilant when they had been completely cut off from the outside world and lived their own lives. Of course, this was a good thing for Kir.

“I am sorry that I can’t enjoy the bonus game but...” Kir’s mouth spread into a deep smile as he stopped talking. It contained a meanness that wasn’t shown before. No, it was right to say that his true nature was being expressed.

Who was Kir? He was a person who deceived others, trampled on them, and accumulated wealth from stealing in order to reach the 1st merchant ranking. The most appropriate description for him was ‘evil.’ The usual mild and remote impression? It was just a mask to distract the other person.

“Let’s get started,” Kir gave the order. His silent colleagues started to slash at him with a sword.

“Cough! Kuaaaaak!”

Merchants had no way to invest points in stats to increase their physical abilities. Kir’s defense was terrible due to his low stats. Despite the expensive armor he was wearing, his health fell to the bottom in a flash, and he started to flee. His colleagues, or former colleagues, chuckled as they watched him flee into the forest.

“It is useless trying to escape with such slow footsteps. Won’t he be caught by us very quickly?”

“If he wants to run away, shouldn’t he run away faster?”

“D-Dammit! S-Save me! Anyone out there?” Kir shouted in every direction, but there was no reaction. His shouts just echoed in the forest. The laughs of the traitors grew louder.

“There isn’t anyone here except us. Who are you asking for help from?”

“Do you want a bear to show up and protect you? Stupid! Kakaka!”

The fierce pursuit of Kir followed. Kir had no time to breathe as he ran. The pursuers, who were faster than him, hummed as they slowly gave chase without killing him.

“Shit...!” Frustrated, Kir’s eyes reddened as he was constantly hit by bushes and branches. The pursuers closely followed him.

“I’m tired of this. Let’s finish this fun game. Yes?” This was spoken by a woman who destroyed every bush in the way because she didn’t want to become dirty. Kir saw the killing intent in her eyes and cried out desperately, “Why? Why are you doing this all of a sudden? We’re colleagues! Why are you suddenly attempting to harm me?”

Deep in the forest, Kir’s unfortunate cries rang out in the middle of the world tree forest. The woman shrugged. “What colleagues? We just wanted your money from the beginning. Now, do you know what you have to do?”

The woman placed her scimitar to the neck of the frightened Kir. “If you want to live, give me money. I will spare you if you give enough money to satisfy us. Okay? Rich. Man.”

“Ick...!” Kir gritted his teeth. The horror and frustration that filled his expression vanished like they had been lies, and anger took their place. “Using people for money...! You are worst than beasts!”

“Oh, my. What is this? Beasts? We are people. Most people are greedy like us, apart from freaks like you. Aren’t we normal?” The woman’s scimitar neared Kir’s neck, soaking Kir’s collar with blood. “Give me your money.”

Kir was at the crossroad of life and death. He gulped as he feared death. “I don’t want to...!”

“What?”

“Justice is shouting in my heart! I would rather choose an honorable death than listen to the demands of people like you!”

“Are you crazy?”

“No! I’m fine! I am sane! I absolutely won’t succumb! If I surrender, you will keep doing this and new victims will appear!”

“Hah, you are really a freak. Then die.”

Tsk. The woman clicked her tongue and raised her weapon.

Puk! An arrow flew without a sound and penetrated the woman’s shoulder.

“...?” The woman and all her colleagues were amazed.

“Who is it?”

“There are people in this forest?”

A breeze blew in the chaos. The bushes swayed, and a woman who boasted a perfect beauty emerged. Her perfect ratio and pointed ears revealed her identity.

“E-Elf?”

“Is this an elf forest?”

The number of elves was so small that it couldn't be compared to humans. There was a rumor that there were only 100,000 elves on the continent. Nevertheless, why was it that the elves could protect their territory from the greedy humans? That was simple. It was because they were strong. The elves' innate archery and spirits were so great that humans couldn't afford to go against them.

The groups of humans who tried to kill Kir stopped immediately. They put away their weapons and raised their arms while the elf pointed a bow at them.

“Leave this sacred forest right away. This isn't a place to be corrupted by humans like you.”

“H-Hik!” Grateful that they could escape alive, the humans no longer clung to Kir. They didn't look back as they ran away.

“Allowing access to humans... Are the wards old?” Beniyaru, the white-haired elf who gave off a haughty impression, muttered something about ‘wards.’ Then she gazed at Kir. Kir bowed his head. “T-Thank you for your help! I will definitely pay you back!”

“There is no need.”

“Ah! I-I'm really sorry. I'll leave right away... Ugh!” Remembering that this was a place where human access wasn't allowed, Kir got up hurriedly, only to flop down again. He couldn't support his body due to all his wounds. “I-I'm really sorry. I will take a short break and then leave immediately.”

With a good face and a pure attitude, Kir's appearance was different from the ordinary humans in the elves' memories. Unable to catch a glimpse of any mean desires, Beniyaru said, “I heard your conversation with them. You would rather choose death than listen to such a vile request?”

“...You can call me stupid. I dislike greedy people. It would be better to die than to give money to them.” A small smile crossed Beniyaru's mouth.

“Follow me. I'll guide you to the village.”

“Huh? Can I visit your village despite being a human...?”

“I think you will be okay. You are the first guest in hundreds of years. Stay in the village and heal your wounds until those greedy people waiting outside the forest have left.”

“T-Thank you!” Kir's face brightened. His innocent smile didn't induce any rejection in the elf. The merchants' high charm stat, friendliness, and the first finder's benefits overlapped together, producing an excellent effect.

-Wait one more day before leaving, Kir sent a whisper as he followed the elf.

-Yes, I understand.

The whisper was sent to the person who betrayed him just a moment ago. In other words, Kir gave a command to the woman who had placed the scimitar at his neck. It was all an act...an act to approach the elves naturally!

-List of people who can be appointed as leader of a knights division-

[Mercedes]

[Mercedes can lead a total of 50 knights.

Mercedes' knights will have physical damage increased by 12%, defense by 12%, attack speed by 5% and movement speed by 7%.

The effects are permanent as long as the person belongs to the knights division.

Knights Division's Passive Skills: Increased Health Regeneration (High), Increase Mana Regeneration (Medium), Decreased Stamina Consumption (High)]

"..."

Until now, only Piaro and Asmophel had been able to be appointed as a knights division leader. Even Chucksley couldn't be appointed despite being one of the best knights of the Eternal Kingdom. In other words, any NPCs who could be appointed as the leader of a knights division meant they had great value. However, Mercedes passed the level of 'great.'

'It is the level of a complete scam...'

Piaro increased the group's attack power by 10%, attack speed by 3%, and movement speed by 5%. Meanwhile, Asmophel increased magic damage by 5% and reduced skill cooldown by 8%. The presences of those two were great enough. However, the effects of Mercedes' presence was twice as great as theirs.

Increase attack and defense by 12%...It was comparable to enhanced items. This was huge when the effects were applied to high-level players like Chris and Pon.

Gulp! Grid swallowed his saliva. He looked solemn for a moment before opening his mouth, "Mercedes."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

"Can I join your knights division?"

"...?"

"It... isn't possible? Haha." It wasn't a genuine laugh. Grid trembled with a terrible regret.

[The Legendary Knights' Overgeared Division has been created.]

The third Overgeared Knights Division was born after the Overgeared Knights and Overgeared Magicians. Only the best members of the Overgeared Kingdom could join this new division. Lael joined it due to his skill level and was stunned. "I... The Legendary Overgeared Knights Division...!"

He should be happy when he looked at the stats, but why were tears flowing from his eyes? Lael was sad.

[Chapter 814](#)

This was after forming the knights division.

"Are you talking about my armor?" Mercedes responded to Grid's call and was confused. "Your Majesty will make armor for me?"

"Yes."

Mercedes' reacted to Grid's words like a bolt had come out of the blue, "That is ridiculous. Your Majesty can't work for your subjects."

Of course, Mercedes knew that Grid's root was a blacksmith. However, she was currently talking common sense. Which king in the world would put in labor for their subjects? A king's subjects couldn't be given priority over a king's convenience.

"Please reconsider."

Grid shook his head at Mercedes' concern. "In the end, it is for me. The stronger you are, the stronger I am. Don't feel burdened."

Mercedes' main armor was heavy armor. It was right to say that she wasn't complete when wearing leather armor. Nevertheless, she had competed with Piaro for a while in his field. She was a really lovely person. Grid wanted to make her complete as soon as possible. "Let's go. There are many things I have to make in addition to your armor."

"...I understand." In the end, Mercedes was unable to break Grid's determination and bowed deeply. Her liking toward Grid was growing day by day.

"Will your parents be happy if you die in a place like this?"

"You...! Don't mention my parents!"

"I sincerely pity your parents. How sad would they be because their child committed a crime and ended up in prison?"

"..."

A terrible criminal was trapped in Reinhardt's dungeon.

Reidorn—he was the worst criminal who had tried to assassinate Grid during the founding of the Overgeared Kingdom. They wanted to find out who was behind him. This was left to the 1st ranked orator, Huroi. Huroi's daily routine began with him questioning Reidorn.

“If you want to see your parents again, then tell me! How dare a motherless person like you try to assassinate King Grid?!”

“Kuk! Kukuk! You stupid person. How many times do I have to tell you? It was my own plan. I didn’t receive instructions from anyone.”

“The king of a nation... It was your own idea to attempt assassinating a king on the day of the founding ceremony? Who would believe this obvious lie? Your parents won’t believe it!”

“You bastard!” Reidorn wanted to regain his composure, only to become agitated again. “I told you to stop bringing up my parents!”

“Why do you get angry every time I talk about your parents? Am I cursing your parents?”

That was right. Huroi wasn’t cursing Reidorn’s parents. He just frequently mentioned them. However, it was strange. Reidorn snapped every time Huroi mentioned his parents. This was the power of Huroi’s Taunt skill. Huroi used Taunt every time he mentioned Reidorn’s parents. So, why did he bother doing this? It was related to Huroi’s personal taste, not out of any particular efficiency.

“Hrmm...” Huroi faced the growling Reidorn, who was tied up. He was forced to acknowledge Reidorn, who had been imprisoned for more than half a year and never opened his mouth. “I didn’t want to do this... Tsk.” A shadow fell over Huroi’s face. He looked reluctant.

Reidorn’s heart became anxious. ‘Did he prepare a terrible torture...?’

Gulp. Reidorn swallowed his saliva as his body shook. However, his mind became stronger. ‘I will never yield.’

Reidorn never intended to reveal that he was Red Knight and also a solo number knight. No, he couldn’t say it. His attempt to assassinate Grid had been purely from his own thoughts. That’s right. He hadn’t received any commands. Reidorn had tried to assassinate Grid because he thought Grid would become a threat later. If Reidorn’s identity were revealed, a diplomatic problem could occur. It could even cause damage to the empire. After all, Grid’s power, which Reidorn had personally experienced, was a threat to the empire!

‘I would rather die!’ Reidorn pledged to keep his mouth shut.

Duguen! Duguen! His heart beat faster. In the midst of his growing fear...

“Bring it in,” Huroi ordered.

Then guards entered while carrying a small box.

Gulp!

What was in this box? Was it a tool to dig out his eyeballs? Reidorn’s imagination was moving toward the negative things. His face paled as Huroi opened the box in front of him. In the box...

Chirp! Chirp!

There was a chick. It was a small, yellow, and cute chick.

“...?” Reidorn was confused. How did a chick pop out of a box that he thought would contain torture tools? Reidorn was puzzled as the chick moved toward him.

Chirp chirp! The chick’s little black eyes looked up at Reidorn. He seemed to mistake Reidorn as his mother. Reidorn had faced torture every day for a long time. Now that he saw a cute animal, he couldn’t help smiling. He felt a desire to touch the chick’s fur.

Huroi’s cold voice entered his ears, “Something urgent happened. I won’t be back here for a while. Enjoy a few days of peace.”

“You, what are you planning? What is this chick?”

“You don’t know?”

Huroi didn’t answer and left with the guards.

Chirp chirp!

Reidorn was left alone with the chick and felt peace for the first time in ages. His heart was warmed. Meanwhile, the prison guards questioned Huroi.

“Can I ask what the meaning of that chick is?”

“Why are you giving the wicked criminal time to heal his heart?”

“Sigh...” Wanting to smoke a cigarette, Huroi gave a deep sigh before replying to the confused guards. “I will eat that chick when it is a bit older.”

“Yes...?”

“It will be in front of Reidorn.”

“...”

“The chick he shares a deep bond with...!”

“...”

“...I will put it in various vegetables and boil it.”

“T-That...!”

“You are worse than a great demon!”

The guards got goosebumps. The method of psychological torture that Huroi planned was so horrific that it was creepy. Of course, Huroi didn’t feel comfortable doing this. However, what could he do?

“He is the one who made me evil...”

“Ahhh...”

It would be a perfect scene if there was the sound effect of thunder, but today was a clear sky without any clouds.

“Where are you going?” Mercedes asked as she followed Grid. She thought Grid would go to the smithy, but he walked out of the castle instead.

‘Is there a smithy outside the castle?’

Grid explained to Mercedes, “Starting from today, I will do the work of a blacksmith more efficiently.”

He consumed a lot of time and effort whenever he made an item. Additionally, he had to maintain his concentration for several days. The result was often good, but there was a big problem with this method. There was no time to hunt. In the last few months, Grid had been in a stagnant position. He would soon be pushed out of the top 10 of the unified rankings.

This was the limit of a non-combat class. Unlike the combat classes that could devote themselves to hunting, Grid also had to act as a blacksmith and had too little time to concentrate on leveling up. In this regard, Grid worked hard. The idea which came to mind was the portable furnace. Thanks to the white phosphorus wood, he could get the desired firepower whenever and wherever he wanted.

“In the future, I will make items at the hunting grounds.”

Grid had tried to challenge it in the past. He’d made items in the hunting area while Noe, Randy, and the God Hands hunted. However, it hadn’t been effective. At the time, he hadn’t had white phosphorus wood, so there was a limit to the firepower that a portable furnace could exert. He had only been able to produce low-level items.

‘But it is different now.’

Grid made a confident smile and pulled out the map. His destination was the new hunting ground Kraugel had given him—the Boundary Forest. Due to unknown wards, it was said that the deep parts of the forest were unable to be accessed.

“A forest with unusually sweet fruits...”

If Grid took out the ‘Media Mountains Honey’, a monster called ‘bear-wolf’ would appear. It was very powerful and took strong players a long time to hunt. However, Kraugel said the monster gave the experience of a field boss.

“Is the information reliable? How does Kraugel know the method to summon the bear-wolf?”

“He was taking a break and eating honey bread.”

It was valuable information that Kraugel had given Grid in return for the White Tiger Sword.

“In any case, he is a good friend.” Grid always felt proud when he thought about Kraugel.

Mercedes was filled with a strange jealousy when she saw Grid’s smile and gave negative feedback, “I am aware of the bear-wolves. They are monsters that combine the destructive power of a bear and the agility of a wolf. It will be stronger than Your Majesty anticipates.”

Yet Grid wanted to hunt these monsters while making armor? That was impossible to do. Grid made a confident expression as he looked at the worried Mercedes. “I have you by my side, so why do I need to be worried?”

“Don’t you need experience? If you don’t hunt the bear-wolves yourself, will you be able to grow?”

“No, you won’t be hunting. You just need to season them for me.”

“Season... what are you saying?”

Why was he suddenly talking about cooking? Grid explained to the baffled Mercedes, “You will hit the bear-wolf as hard as you can when it appears. Then won’t it be angry at you?”

“Yes, I see.”

“From then on, you just need to tank. While you tank, I will finish it off with my pets, the God Hands and the Overgeared Skeletons. Then I can get experience while sitting down and making armor, and my pets and the Overgeared Skeletons will grow as well.”

“I understand. I will do so,” Mercedes responded energetically! Despite being the strongest person, her role was to assist. This was the legendary knight bus, and Grid was the only passenger on the bus she was driving.

[Chapter 815](#)

“It is tougher than I thought.”

He didn’t know how many times he had checked the map during the last four days of the journey. It was difficult to find the right path. Grid was still unable to find his destination. However, it wasn’t because he was lost. Grid had a good sense of direction. It hadn’t been a fluke that he discovered the North End Cave and Pagma’s Rare Book.

“Um...” Grid’s gaze fell on the map again and again.

Kraugel said that the Boundary Forest was right there at the point where the Beldon Volcanic Zone and the Lilton Desert overlapped. That’s right. The Boundary Forest was a place not marked on the map, so it was no wonder that it was hard to find.

“Go east from the Beldon Volcanic area, west from the Lilton Desert...” Grid’s eyes narrowed. It was irritating since the schedule was different from what he had planned.

The silent Mercedes finally asked carefully, “Is Kraugel a credible person?”

“Huh? Why are you asking all of a sudden?”

“I can’t believe that there is a forest here.”

This was a volcanic area where lava flowed, a desert where not a single blade of grass could be found. Yet there was a forest at the center? How could vegetation grow in this hot temperature? Grid replied to Mercedes’ reasonable doubt, “You can trust him.”

Of course, this world wasn’t nice enough to have unconditional beliefs just because a person was a friend. Still, Grid didn’t doubt Kraugel.

“He is a friend with high pride. It isn’t in his nature to lie.”

“He is a... Sword Saint?”

“You know?”

“Yes. He has been famous in the empire for several months already.”

The empire showed a lukewarm attitude toward Pagma’s Descendant, but they had a great response to a Sword Saint. Some people argued that the Sword Saint should be acquired while others insisted that the Sword Saint should be eliminated. The emperor’s choice was...

“Try and win him over.”

“I see. Well, it is natural for Kraugel to be coveted by the emperor.”

Grid had heard rumors, but to think that Kraugel was given such special treatment...? Grid’s pride wasn’t hurt even when he realized this fact. Was it because he acknowledged that a Sword Saint was a better class than Pagma’s Descendant? No. It was because Grid had a great pride that wouldn’t be swept away by the evaluation of other people. So what if he was given a low evaluation? The truth was different.

“Kraugel rejected the emperor’s offer?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“Weren’t you quite angry?”

“...”

Grid was well aware of Mercedes’ personality from the first time they met. She had an excessive loyalty and felt unconditional resentment toward those who went against the will of her master. From the position of an enemy, it was a terrible personality, but it was great now that they were allies.

“You can relax your emotions and fight when you meet later. One or two years later, you will be so strong that victory will be guaranteed.”

‘Please don’t incite an unnecessary fight.’

Grid had already experienced several times that a confrontation between the strong and the strong was a great help to each other. As such, seeing that Mercedes could go one step further, Grid wanted to set up a confrontation with Sword Saint Kraugel for her.

‘It will be a great help for Kraugel as well.’

Duguen! Duguen! Grid’s heart beat faster as he imagined a confrontation with the further developed Kraugel. His obsession with Kraugel was a reaction to the regret he had felt in the 3rd National Competition. Why did he feel sorry as the winner? It was because he had won before he revealed his true power. Truth be told, Grid felt empty after the finale match with Kraugel. It was different from the exhilaration he felt during the 2nd National Competition.

‘It is an undeniable fact.’

He had reserved his strength and won against Kraugel. However, who could he tell this truth to? No one would believe him if he said it.

‘There is no need to speak in the first place.’ It would just be seen as a useless pretense.

The grinning Grid stopped walking. He was at the end of the lava zone, which was also at the end of the desert. Then an unexpected phenomenon occurred.

[The World Tree's Necklace is responding!]

Grid pulled the necklace out of his inventory.

[World Tree's Necklace]

[Rating: Legendary

Durability: 20/22

* 20% increase in strength and agility in elven territory.

* 150% increase in mana regeneration in elven territory.

* 1.2 times increase in movement speed in elven territory.

Before she became a legend, Povia was a loner who wasn't recognized by humans or elves.

This necklace was given to her by the world tree, her only friend.

Weight: 50]

A necklace made from tree bark being weaved together—it was one of the rewards he had gotten from Death Knight Povia on the Behen Archipelago. This response meant...

Gulp!Grid made a guess and wore the necklace. Then...

[Strength and agility will increase by 20%.]

[Mana regeneration rate will increase by 150%.]

[Movement speed has increased by 1.2 times.]

"Indeed...!"

Grid realized two facts. Firstly, he was already in the Boundary Forest. However, it was impossible to perceive it because of the wards. Secondly, the Boundary Forest was the forest of the world tree. It was the territory of the elves!

"Now if I can release the wards...!"

...But how? Kraugel had only shown him the location of the Boundary Forest, not how to enter it.

'Why?'

Did he want to provoke Grid? Or was it a test? That was impossible. Kraugel had given him the location of the Boundary Forest out of pure kindness. He wouldn't hide something from the information he had given willingly.

"Maybe..."

Could the wards around the forest be stronger than when Kraugel visited here? It was a reasonable hypothesis when he recalled the rumor that elves hated humans.

"I'm certain. The elves must have been disturbed by Kraugel's movements in here and strengthened the wards."

Grid was confident of this. His difficulty was on how to release the ward.

"The general information on how to release a ward..."

It was to grasp the principle of the ward or release it with magic. These two methods were widely used. Grid hadn't learned the magic associated with releasing wards, so he had to solve it with the former method. It meant he had to use his head, and that was terrible.

"F... Um..." Grid was about to curse only to close his mouth with an awkward expression. He couldn't curse in front of a person who had just become his subordinate.

"Kuoong." He became more frustrated because he couldn't swear. Grid was struggling when Mercedes asked him, "Is there anything I can help you with?"

"I want to release the ward here but I don't know how to do it..."

Mercedes' thin eyebrows rose. The fact that her master didn't expect anything of her touched her pride.

"I will just smash it," she spoke in a cold voice.

"Huh?"

Smashing the ward...? Grid didn't understand and made a strange expression.

"If my physical strength is three times stronger than the person who made the ward, I can just destroy it with force. Shall I test it out? Let's see who is better."

Kuwooooh!

Mercedes pulled out her swords while energy blades bent around her. She swung them once at the air, creating an opening. It was as if Grid was looking at Kraugel's Space Sword. The sky, the desert, the volcanoes, and the earth split in half. Then the desert area and volcanic area disappeared like they were mirages. After that, a huge forest appeared in the place where the volcanic area and desert had been located. The scale of the forest was too large to determine. It was like a country in itself.

"...Amazing." Grid was marveling at Mercedes' swordsmanship, not the size of the forest. The elves' magic had created a perfect ward. Grid realized that the heat of the volcano and the desert was a lie and asked, "Is this the elemental magic that I have only heard about?"

"I think so. They seem to have borrowed the power of the fire elemental to make the volcanic zone and the power of the earth elemental to make the desert. They were different from simple hallucinations."

"Elementals... Have you ever met them before?"

"No."

“Ah.” Grid belatedly noticed that the sun flowing through the green leaves shone on Mercedes’ face. Yes, Mercedes was also shaken.

‘Right...’

They had discovered the territories of the elves who had been separated from humanity for hundreds of years. How could anyone be calm before this amazing discovery? Grid watched Mercedes’ cute appearance as she looked around the forest and felt warm.

‘I didn’t receive the first discovery reward, so someone else came here before me.’

It wasn’t Kraugel. Kraugel didn’t even know that this was the territory of the elves.

“Kraugel couldn’t enter the forest? Or did he simply lag behind others? If it is the latter, the world was very wide.”

It was amazing that there were people ahead of Kraugel. Who could it be? Grid’s eyes shone as he pulled out the portable furnace and started to place firewood inside it. On one side, he prepared an anvil, a hammer, and a huge bucket for quenching.

“...” Mercedes felt it was absurd as she watched Grid turn the forest into a smithy. “Your Majesty. This is an ideal opportunity to meet the elves. Isn’t it right to look for the elves first?”

Some people misunderstood the elves as a species from fantasies. Thus, they were unfamiliar with elves. The elves were targets of great interest. Even Mercedes wanted to meet an elf right away. However, Grid had no interest in this.

“I can meet an elf every day.”

“Huh?”

He could meet an elf on a daily basis? Mercedes didn’t understand what Grid was saying.

“Moreover, it is a high elf. He is Sage Sticks. You didn’t know that he was in the Overgeared Kingdom? Doesn’t the empire know anything?”

“...Ah.” Mercedes couldn’t be unaware of this. In fact, she had forgotten due to an incident from a few days ago. Five days ago was the day that Grid had arrived in Reinhardt.

“Grid!” Sticks had run to find Grid. “Increase the number of teachers at the academy! I have to teach 12 classes a day alone, 12! I don’t have any time to rest!”

“I understand. Tell Administrator Rabbit.”

“No, he is the problem! He says that he can’t increase the number of teachers due to a lack of finances! He is an unscrupulous human who is abusing me to save money!” Sticks cried out, feeling it was unjust. He seemed like such an ordinary person that Mercedes had forgotten... She had completely forgotten the fact that Sticks was a high elf and sage.

“...I understand.” Mercedes was reminded of the memories she had instinctively sealed. She nodded as if she understood. “Then you have no reason to look for the elves.”

“Right? In any case, they will just be men.”

“Men?”

“Ah, there was something like that. In any case, let’s begin in earnest.” Grid rolled up his sleeves and handed Mercedes some Media Mountain honey which he bought with a lot of money. Then he held a hammer. “I will do the hammering while you eat honey.”

This was the first important mission she had received since she started serving Grid, but why did she feel that it was somewhat lacking?

“Yes...” Mercedes responded weakly and pulled out her swords. Simultaneously, an arrow flying through the air was split apart.

“What is this rudeness?” Mercedes looked sharply in front of her. The appearance of elves with angry expressions entered her field of view. The white-haired elf named Beniyaru shouted, “We hate you...! Humans deserve to be extinct!”

“Wow.”

Talking about extinction all of a sudden? Was creating a fire in the middle of the forest that big of a sin? Grid sweated as he belatedly realized, ‘...It is a sin,’

However, he didn’t know it yet... The reason why the elves hated humans wasn’t because of Grid and Mercedes.

[Chapter 816](#)

Let’s consider when it’s the most annoying time to play a game:

- When an enhancement failed...
- A player’s level not going up no matter how many mobs were killed, dying and losing experience...
- Failing a raid, or succeeding in a raid only to not get a jackpot...
- Struggling like a dog to clear a quest, only to receive a poor reward...
- Finding out that the class chosen was rubbish...
- Selling an item for a low price, only for the value to skyrocket a few days later...
- Witnessing someone else get a jackpot, and so on...

There were so many moments that they couldn’t be listed individually. The culture of the game brought players a lot of entertainment, but it also brought them extreme loss and stress.

“Ah...”

Grid was the same as everyone else, despite being at the peak of the players. He gained wealth and honor from the game, but he still felt loss and stress from it. The current situation was the same. The elves were another species that had been separated from humanity for hundreds of years. They couldn’t be met even when Grid wanted to meet them, so why did they show up right now?

“...Why did they come up when I am using the white phosphorus wood?!!” Grid screamed as an arrow swept past his cheek and struck his portable furnace.

Puk!

[The portable furnace is hit.]

[The portable furnace won't function properly.]

[You need to be careful.]

“Oh!”

The white phosphorus wood was still burning in the furnace that had a hole in it. The wood, which was difficult to transport from the East Continent, was consumed meaninglessly.

‘Now there are only 80 of them left!’

Since he needed a minimum of three or four pieces to achieve the desired firepower, the limited number of white phosphorus wood gave Grid considerable pressure. Moreover, as he couldn't cross to the East Continent currently due to danger from the yangbans, the white phosphorus wood was truly a valuable resource.

Yet the elves had suddenly appeared and caused him to waste four pieces of white phosphorus wood. As such, Grid couldn't help feeling heated up. “You are just pretty!”

It seemed that the rumor of how Kim Taehee and Kim Yisun were just like potatoes when compared to the elves of the elven kingdom was true. Among the elves who appeared in front of Grid, there were none who weren't beautiful. The elves' perfect beauty was comparable to the beauty of the best beauties he had seen so far—Yura, Jishuka, Irene, Sua, Mercedes, and so on. It wasn't at all difficult to make a comparison since Mercedes was right next to him.

However, so what if they were pretty? They weren't his anyway!

“Their chests are also small... Ugh!”

Puk!

[You have suffered 8,980 damage.]

“Your Majesty!”

“God Hands!”

Arrows flew without any sound. Grid could figure out the orbits of the arrows using his high agility and insight, but it was impossible to pick out the arrow that came flying immediately after the first one.

‘It is like archery from the movies.’

If an arrow was shot first and then another one, the second one would closely follow the target and hit the target a second time. Since ancient times, archery had been said to be the best on the Korean peninsula, and this was a high-level archery technique. The Korean players were proud of this.

'Bullshit!' Grid didn't care about such things. "Pagma's Swordsmanship!"

Tang! Tatatatang! Grid started a sword dance as Mercedes and the God Hands protected him.

Puk! Then an arrow flew through a gap in the God Hands and pierced his thigh, interrupting the skill casting. This was the moment when he was caught by the deadly disadvantage of Pagma's Swordsmanship.

'Shit! The arrows are too fast!'

The power, speed, and coyness of the arrows were topnotch. The elves' archery reminded Grid of the death knight of the legendary archer Povia. This meant that the skills of the elves were greater than the rankers. Arrows started to pour down like rain. The God Hands couldn't endure the cumulative damage and fell into a stiffened state, exposing Grid to danger.

"Vaintz' Swordsmanship 3rd style."

Right now, Grid had a knight as a bus... No, it was a legendary knight. Mercedes appeared in front of Grid and protected him. "Fly Sword Energy."

A storm occurred along the direction of Mercedes' rotation. It was a silver storm that crushed the bushes, trees, and rocks equally well.

"Kyaaack!"

Kwang!Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The elves were hit by the storm of energy swords and fell in all directions. Their sharp screams echoed in the vast forest. However, there was something even more surprising.

'Their health only decreased by half?'

All the elves survived, and their health was even maintained at 50%. They had an unbelievable defense despite the fact that only leaves were barely covering their bodies. It was also a persistent vitality that didn't fit their delicate bodies.

'These are elves...! Then how strong is that elf?' Grid's gaze was focused on the white-haired elf. The elf called Beniyaru was a named elf, and her name was in a golden color.

"Your Majesty, you better avoid them." Mercedes was also aware of the seriousness of the situation. The elves were stronger than rumored. Mercedes decided that protecting Grid while dealing with them was virtually impossible. Then...

"Avoid them?" Her judgment scratched Grid's pride. Grid stared straight into Mercedes' eyes. He used Quick Movements and spoke as two arrows flew, "You are mistaken. I'm not a weakling to be protected."

Grid's footwork accelerated. It was the effect of Quick Movements. He avoided the flying arrows and safely used Pagma's Swordsmanship this time.

"Uh!"

“What...?”

The elves who were hiding behind a tree and sniping were amazed. Their behavior was being controlled by an unknown force, and their fingertips couldn't move. It was an oppressive authority that couldn't be rejected unless they had a status resistance. The bows and arrows in the hands of the elves fell to the ground.

“Pagma's Swordsmanship!” Grid had been dressed for comfort when making an item, but he now swapped to Valhalla of Infinite Affection. He did this quickly with the help of the God Hands. Grid quickly moved while the elves were showing a gap. “Wave.”

“...!” The elves and Mercedes were startled because Grid's momentum was reminiscent of a volcano. Strong, destructive, and widespread—the elves were swept away in it, suffering a lot of damage while losing their swiftness.

“Now!”

Who was the cry meant for? Naturally...

“Yes!” It was Mercedes. She was amazed and thrilled at the grandeur of the king she served.

“Vaintz' Swordsmanship 4th style, Raising the Sword Energy.” A storm of silver sword energy sprang up from below. Swept away by the attacks of the two people, the bodies of the elves flew through their air.

“Pagma's Swordsmanship, Transcended Link.”

“Vaintz' Swordsmanship 5th style, Sowing Sword Energy.”

Grid and Mercedes chose ranged skills as the final blow and aimed at the unaware elves. No, they attempted to start a rampage.

“Kuk...!”

“Uh!”

Grid and Mercedes groaned at the same time.

This was due to Beniylaru. Her bow struck Grid's neck while her fist, which contained a fire elemental, slammed into Mercedes' abdomen. Grid flew back into a rock while Mercedes flew toward a tree to the left, stopping with the power of her silver wings. Meanwhile, Beniylaru restrained her fellow elves, who landed safely on the ground with the help of the wind elementals.

A smile emerged on Grid's face. ‘It is a sign.’

The fact that the heavens had brought him a legendary knight was preparation for a greater threat. How many of them were hidden in every corner of Satisfy's huge world? Grid judged Beniylaru to be on the same level as Mercedes.

‘However, Mercedes has the disadvantage.’

It was natural as this was the world tree forest, the home of the elves. Furthermore...

‘Just like me, Mercedes doesn't know anything about elementals.’

It was an unknown power. As Grid watched Beniyaru alternate between the fire and wind elementals, respectively called 'Yutan' and 'Sulle', his regret toward the white phosphorus wood disappeared. At this moment, Grid was purely focused on the enemy in front of him.

Beniyaru' ridiculing words entered his ears, "She is a pretty decent human, but you aren't."

Elves were classified as a superior species to humans, like the water clan, vampires, and the evil eyes. Beniyaru's self-esteem as one of the 12 Te was extremely high. (TL: Te= a one-word character that has multiple meanings, none of which seem to fit. I've decided to just translate it literally)

A human was just an oddity from her point of view. She didn't like that the weak male was looking at her with challenging eyes.

"Yutan, Sulle."

The elementals were the symbol of the elves' strength. Among them, there were only 15 elves who had two or more elementals. They were the 12 Te and three kings.

"Help me."

The bowstring Beniyaru pulled back was surrounded by flames. Suddenly, a wind blew from the south, and Grid's hair moved. Then Beniyaru let go of the bowstring. The fire arrow accelerated with the wind and reached Grid.

"How dare you?!" Mercedes was moving even before Beniyaru fired the bow. Her sword appeared before Grid and cut the two arrows. A huge explosion occurred. Mercedes' leather armor was swept up in the explosion and became rags.

"You—!" Mercedes was furious as her milky-white shoulders were exposed. If an elf were killed here, wouldn't the diplomatic relationship between the Overgeared Kingdom and the elves become completely impossible? Mercedes wasn't concerned about this and revealed her power. She had no intention of forgiving Beniyaru for attacking her king.

However, Grid acted before she did. As he entered the Blackening state, he stepped across in front of Mercedes and arrived before Beniyaru.

"Trivial thing!" Beniyaru hated both humans and demonkin. From her point of view, the blackened Grid was an unacceptable existence. Her fire and wind elementals responded to her rage, causing her body to be surrounded by a burning vortex. It was a powerful shield that couldn't be pierced with ordinary physical and magic forces. The shield was also a weapon that swallowed up nearby objects.

"Your Majesty!"

Then just as Mercedes was wrapping her silver wings around Grid to protect him, lightning struck.

'What?'

Wasn't the sky clear a little while ago? The elves' gazes headed to the sky and saw a completely grey sky peeking through the thick leaves of the forest. Grid whispered to Mercedes who was holding him, "You should get far away if you don't want to be hurt."

“...!”

A knight who existed for her master was told to get away? Mercedes was about to refuse, only for her eyes to widen as she hastily escaped. This was because she detected an unfamiliar energy from the sky. It was almost as if...

‘Astaroth?’

Demonic lightning bolts were aimed at the feet or heads of the elves.

“What...?!?”

Beniyaru’s ward was knocked down with a single blow. She was confused by the transcendent power and tried to escape using the power of the wind elemental. However, her body was heavy as the storm was holding her down. Meanwhile, Grid’s body was infinitely lighter. “You won’t die from this much right? Let’s talk after this. Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle.”

He wanted to talk...?

A ferocious attack mangled Beniyaru’s body while the other elves became rags due to the thunderbolts falling from the sky. Rain and lightning bolts fell onto the middle of the forest.

[The title ‘One who Made the Elves Surprised’ has been acquired!]

[The elves feel awe toward you.]

[The elves aren’t hostile to you.]

Consequently, Grid gave a good impression on his first time meeting another species. And...

“Strong...!” Mercedes was unable to close her mouth from outside the storm. Then she finally remembered. Her new master was the first Hero King born in hundreds of years!

[Chapter 817](#)

Blackening had been strengthened by Grid’s rapid increase in demonic power during the Eternal War. After all his efforts, he managed to create Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle with the effect of the title Watched by the Gods. In addition, fighting energy had started to accumulate around him from the moment the elves appeared. Finally, there was the Weakened Great Demon Astaroth’s Power.

“Urghh!”

In the heavy pouring rain and the demonic lightning, Beniyaru hesitated. Her pupils, which could be seen beyond her disheveled white hair, were trembling.

‘How did this happen?’

It felt terrible to experience it personally. One of the 12 Te... One of the noble elves of the 12 families was forced to kneel before a human...? It left a big blot on the name of ‘Te’, which meant to protect.

“Did you sell your soul to the great demons?” Beniyaru’s gaze was filled with strong hostility as she glared at Grid. Her problem wasn’t with Grid’s demonic energy. Demonic energy wasn’t unique since countless people obtained it from black magic or artifacts in the past. However, this field was different. It

was an ability that raised a storm filled with lightning demonic energy. This was a force reminiscent of a monarch of hell!

“Wicked human...! You joined hands with a great demon to invade the territory of the elves! Isn't there a limit to your greed?” Beniyaru's sharp voice, which was filled with mana, penetrated through the storm. If Grid was an ordinary player, it was likely that the flow of his mana would've been disturbed and he would've suffered from all types of status conditions.

However, Grid stood firmly in place. “Why are you always jumping to conclusions?”

The rain stopped, and the sky which could be seen through the lush leaves was now cleared up. Grid couldn't handle the large mana consumption, so he stopped using Storm Demonic Energy Field. This caused Beniyaru to misunderstand. ‘Is he saving his strength? Didn't he want to kill us?’

This wasn't good news. Despair filled Beniyaru's face. “You...! You intend to sell us to slavers!”

“...”

The elves were truly narrow-minded toward humans. It was a biased negative view. Despite her strong force, Beniyaru seemed to be a coward.

Grid's eyes were filled with pity as he looked at her. Beniyaru believed her thoughts to be true, so Grid didn't blame her or feel frustrated. He actually felt pity because he was reminded of his past self.

“The reason for your twisted personality isn't just your own problem. I think you have been greatly hurt by humans.”

“...” Grid's kind voice caused Beniyaru to shake. She was dumbfounded for a moment before shaking her head again, filling it with hostility toward her enemy. “Don't tell me you understand when you don't know anything about us. I don't need gentle expressions or sweet whispers. I will never be deceived, no matter how you try to fool us!”

“Ah, what a mess.”

It was almost impossible to have a conversation with the elves, much like talking to a wall. This was a reality that would disappoint the many players dreaming about meeting a beautiful elf. However, Grid wasn't disappointed. After all, he hadn't come here to meet the elves.

“Well, let's not speak for too long. Listen up. I will state my position.”

Hearing Grid's domineering tone, Beniyaru and the other elves gulped. The tender skin of the female elves could be seen through the clothes made from woven leaves. They were afraid of the terrible sentence the human would hand down to them.

“First, I will introduce myself. I am Overgeared King Grid. I am a descendant of the legendary Pagma and the king of a human kingdom. I have not made a contract with a great demon. I used a power that I got in exchange for killing the great demon.”

“...!”

Then Grid came forward and said, "The reason I came to this place was to hunt the bear-wolves. I had no idea that this was your territory. I'm sorry if my actions frightened you."

"..."

"I don't want to be hostile to you in the future. As a king, I have an obligation to lead exchanges with other species in a positive direction. You can keep feeling doubtful and being wary. Just let me stay for a while to hunt." Grid was calm after introducing himself, and he shifted his gaze to the clear sky.

It was due to the way that the elves were dressed. They were half-naked with only a few leaves covering their important parts. Grid didn't have the courage to gaze at them from the front. He didn't want to be mistaken as a pervert in his first encounter with the elves or for distorted rumors to spread.

His decisive yet innocent appearance caused Beniyaru and the other elves to lower their guards slightly.

"Legend... I see. That transcendent force is convincing if you are a legend. Is she a legend like you?" Beniyaru's gaze shifted to Mercedes. Mercedes was still staring at Beniyaru because she couldn't forgive any attacks on Grid.

Grid grabbed Mercedes' hand to calm her down. "Yes, that's right. She is also a legend."

"I see..." In the end, Beniyaru was convinced of her defeat. She had no idea about the Pagma that Grid mentioned, but she knew about Povia. Povia was a child born between a human and an elf. She was a poor child who had lived an unhappy life without belonging to any society, until she achieved transcendent power and became a legend.

"...The legend that I knew was a sublime presence. You are credible. Okay. You can't be seen as a normal human. I will trust your words. As one of the 12 Te, I give you permission to stay here for a while. The bear-wolves are also a threat to us elves. It isn't bad if you hunt them."

"Thank you."

"However, don't go too deep into the forest. Your actions will be limited to this area."

"Yes," Grid answered readily.

Meanwhile, Mercedes was embarrassed. She stared at Grid's big hand that had wrapped around hers and whispered hurriedly, "Your Majesty, this is the perfect opportunity to peek into the elves' society and discuss future relationships with them. Are you going to miss this chance?"

The elves' archery was even more spectacular than what was recorded in history. It was clear that the elementals were beyond their expectations. Mercedes thought that the Overgeared Kingdom and the elves should develop a good relationship. Of course, Grid was the same. "I know, but look at their attitudes. If we rush our approach now, they will just raise their vigilance. We shouldn't be hasty. Another chance will come someday."

This was a situation where rushing it wouldn't end well. Grid had learned patience from numerous experiences.

"I think it is great enough just being able to stay in the elves territory."

“Yes, I understand.” Since the king had already decided, Mercedes didn’t sit down anymore.

“Then let’s get started.” Grid made a happy expression and pulled out his broken furnace and hammer. First of all, he would start with the repairs. However, the darkness of the forest disturbed him. It was so dark that any delicate work seemed impossible.

“The trees grow so thickly that the sun isn’t shining through well...” Grid hammered for a while before stopping and looking around the forest. All types of trees and bushes were growing wildly. The elves loved nature, so it was the aftermath of neglecting to control the trees and bushes.

“Hrmm...”

Grid had planted small maple trees, persimmon trees, and plum trees in his garden after building the penthouse. As such, he was familiar with pruning and could observe that the condition of the forest wasn’t that great.

He pointed to a giant tree in front of him where the surface was torn and said, “If you really care about the trees, you should prune them. The trees that grow indiscriminately have become intertwined with each other and are deformed. No sunlight can pass through, so the moss growing near the roots are deprived of nutrients, making them vulnerable to pests and diseases.”

“...?” Beniyaru and the elves were embarrassed as Grid started preaching to them. They couldn’t understand Grid’s words properly.

“Pruning? Pests? What are you saying?”

“A helping hand is needed to make the forest healthier.”

“What type of sophistry is this? Nature is perfect when it exists as it is.”

“Don’t pretend to know human subjects!”

There was a backlash from the elves. However, Beniyaru was different. She could see the glimpse of an old friend in Grid.

‘He is saying the same thing as Povia...’

Povia had claimed to have learned human knowledge from her human parent, yet the elves had laughed at her. Many people had ridiculed the pathetic half-breed, and Beniyaru had been one of them. She waved her hand, thinking she should believe in Grid. This was atonement for Povia. So, Beniyaru decided to make a request. “You... Overgeared King Grid.”

“...?”

“Can I hand over management of the forest to you?”

“Eh?” Grid was panicked over the sudden proposal.

Beniyaru bowed to him. “I think there is enough evidence for your argument. I would like to ask you to do the pruning.”

“...!!”

One of the elves, who were famous for their pride, was bowing down to a human while making a request...? Moreover, this was an elf who had tried to harm him just a little while ago! Mercedes' eyes widened as she stared at Grid, impressed by his greatness. 'His Majesty intended all of this!'

Mercedes was ignorant about plants and didn't know anything about this situation, but it was obvious that Grid was the one driving this situation. Grid started sweating as Mercedes' shining gaze focused on him. 'No, what...'

[Tend to the Elven Forest]

[Difficulty: A

Beniyaru, one of the 12 guardians who defend the elves, has a request for you.

She wants you to make this forest beautiful!

Quest Clear Conditions: Prune 2,000 trees (0/2000)

Quest Clear Reward: Affinity with the entire elf species will increase by 20. Leaves of the World Tree (20), Fruits of the World Tree (5).

Quest Failure: Your relationship with the elves will become hostile.]

"...I'm not a gardener."

Yes, Grid was a blacksmith. So, why did he receive a quest meant for a gardener? Grid had come here for equipment and to level up. He couldn't afford to waste time pruning 2,000 tree branches.

'How hard will it be to strike the trees?'

This quest should be rejected! Grid wanted to shout out loud.

However, the quest reward was the problem. The leaf of the world tree that he had given to Sticks was a panacea. Grid was intensely curious about what effect the fruit of the world tree would have, since it seemed more precious. Additionally, the increased affinity with the elves was also crucial.

'Why...?'

Grid didn't accept or refuse the quest. It was because one person passed through his mind.

'Piaro!'

He was a legendary farmer who knew crops! Maybe Piaro had also specialized in the management of other plants, including trees? Grid thought of this and immediately used Knights Summoning. The legendary farmer and the elves—this would be the first meeting between people who cherished nature.

Had Piaro thought his king was in danger? Piaro had felt anxious and immediately responded to the summoning.

"Elves..." He faced the elves while holding a hand plow and sickle in his hand. The elves sniffed him, and their faces became flushed.

"A wonderful man..."

“...”

The smell of soil around Piaro's body struck the elves' emotions. It was fortunate for Grid. "Okay. From now on, I will make armor while Mercedes will eat honey. Meanwhile, Piaro will prune the branches with the elves."

Grid's method of handling things wasn't wrong. In the first place, subordinates were meant to be used. However, Grid's subordinates were a legendary farmer and legendary knight...

[Chapter 818](#)

The branches, which were longer than humans, were as threatening as sharp blades, while the lush and overgrown foliage interfered with one's vision. The giant trees eagerly reached for the sky. Was there anyone who wouldn't feel reverence when standing before this scene? They would feel so overwhelmed that they couldn't breathe.

However, Piaro was a legend. Nature was familiar to him as he immersed himself in the fields. The clean air and nature stirred up his mind and body.

"I'll clean you up!!" Piaro yelled as he moved like a flying squirrel between the trees. Every time Belial's sickle moved through the air, the branches of the giant trees fell to the ground. It took less than 10 minutes for a giant tree to be trimmed neatly.

Grid's expectations were met. The legendary farmer had a high understanding of plants as a whole, giving him spectacular pruning skills. His hands gave life to the trees.

[Your subordinate, Piaro, has completed the pruning. (1/2,000)]

"Well done!"

Ttang!Ttang!Grid started hammering a metal plate on top of the hole in the portable furnace. It was a move that was more reminiscent of a drunk soldier dancing.

'Amazing!'

In the case of quests that required hunting a certain number of monsters, those killed by his party members who accepted the quest and his pets would also count. So, Grid had thought about it. Why did he need to do the pruning himself? Couldn't he get his pets or subordinates to clear the quest for him?

His idea was reasonable and actually came true. Thanks to the legendary farmer, Grid was able to proceed with the pruning quest much faster than if he did it on his own.

"Cool..."

"I didn't realize there could be a human who is so close to nature and understands nature better than us."

"Look at how he has become one with nature. He is a few times better than our elves. If I was going to have a baby, I would like to have that man's children."

It seemed there had come a day when the noble elves would fall in love with a mere human. The female elves now realized why the species called half-elves existed. Their eyes were wet as they watched Piaro

prune a tree. Mercedes felt a strange pride. 'This is the attraction of a true hero that transcends even species. Piaro is truly amazing.'

He was indeed the person she admired. Mercedes dipped a finger into the honey and licked it. She seemed to be the most leisurely one out of Grid's group. During a time when she should be protecting her king, she was actually eating honey? Anyone who didn't know the situation would misunderstand Mercedes if they saw this scene. However, Mercedes had her own troubles.

'I have to eat sparingly.'

The Media Mountain honey—this expensive honey that Grid was reluctant to eat was extremely fragrant and sweet compared to the premium honey Mercedes had tasted previously. It was so fresh that she could keep eating without getting tired of it. This honey was so delicious that the legendary knight Mercedes felt a desire to eat it indefinitely. Yes, it was hard to resist the honey which had a demon-like temptation.

Lick...

She wanted to eat it all at once! Mercedes looked more beautiful than usual as she barely suppressed this intense desire, taking a little bit of honey with her fingertips and bringing it to her tongue. Grid stared at her blankly while hammering and realized, 'Why haven't I seen a bear-wolf yet?'

It had been 20 minutes since Mercedes first started eating the honey. 100ml of honey cost a huge 50 gold. It meant that 60,000 won was wasted on the uselessly expensive honey.

'Am I going to waste money in vain?'

Ttang!Ttang! Grid kept hammering as his nervousness reached the peak.

Lick.

"Hah... Hah... Y-Your Majesty. It is difficult to endure any longer." The look in Mercedes' eyes changed. She started breathing hard, and more and more honey began to cover her fingers.

[Mercedes has entered the 'intoxicated' state.]

"What?"

It couldn't be resisted even with a legend's passive resistance. This was the terrifying power of expensive honey!

"N-No...! My money...!" Grid screamed as 60,000 won worth of honey was about to enter Mercedes' stomach at once.

Did his desperate cry reach the heavens?

Kwaaaaah!

Finally, a bear-wolf that Grid had been waiting for so long showed up.

[The bear-wolf is enticed by the sweet scent!]

[The atrocious cry incites fear in all those who hear it!]

[You have resisted.]

[The cry of an atrocious beast has filled the ears of those scattered throughout the forest. If you can't hunt the bear-wolf within five minutes, a new bear-wolf will pop up! Be careful! The bear-wolves have excellent collective hunting ability and will become stronger as their numbers increase!]

"Hah!" A smile appeared on Grid's face as he sighed with relief. As soon as an enemy appeared, Mercedes recovered from the intoxicated state. She licked the honey on her hand without swallowing all of it and pulled out a shield with her other hand. The bear-wolf leaped with a wolf's nimble body and struck Mercedes with a big paw that was reminiscent of a bear. Mercedes blocked it with a shield and took two steps back.

Grid, Mercedes, and Piaro, who was pruning the trees, were all surprised.

'Isn't this strength equivalent to an ogre's?'

At this point, it was difficult to classify the bear-wolf as a normal monster. If Grid couldn't hunt the bear-wolf within five minutes, a new bear-wolf would pop up. Grid had been glad about being able to save the honey by hunting the bear-wolves slowly, but now it wasn't a positive message.

"The bear-wolves are also a threat to the elves!" Beniylaru's shout rang out. She felt a great affinity toward Piaro and was concerned about Grid's party.

It was an urgent atmosphere. Grid was a bit embarrassed as he shouted the name of the skill, "C-Can you Become the King of the Dead?"

Clack! Clack clack!

Two skeletons rose from the ground. They were Overgeared Skeletons One and Two.

"Undead!"

The bear-wolf didn't respond to the skeletons, but the elves were different. The elves, who adored nature, disliked the undead that went against the providence of nature. As such, they aimed their bows at the Overgeared Skeletons reflexively.

"These children aren't bad undead, they are good undead," Piaro explained as he jumped down from a tree. There was no basis for his argument. Undead were undead. What was a good undead and bad undead? It wasn't logical at all. Yet the elves were persuaded to believe it. Words from those they respected were the most powerful thing in the world.

What would happen if an ugly man talked to a beautiful school junior? He could be called a molester. Then what if a handsome man was nice to the junior? They were likely to directly become a couple. It was similar to this.

"I see. They are good undead!"

"I looked again, and their appearance is really good!"

Haha, hoho! Piaro and the elves formed a cheerful atmosphere. Piaro was surrounded by a flower field, and this was a pleasant feeling for any man. Moreover, the elves had a much milder attitude than usual.

'Is he going to marry an elf?'

There had already been the precedent with Povia. Marriage between humans and elves wasn't impossible. It was good to see the affinity the elves had toward Piaro due to their common love of nature. Grid began to imagine it. If Piaro married the elves, an alliance between the elves and the Overgeared Kingdom would be born...

"No, now isn't the time to be thinking about this."

Mercedes' small shield cracked as she defended against the bear-wolf's paws. After leaving the empire, the equipment Mercedes used was terrible as they were what she had used during the days when Piaro was a captain. The level of the sword, shield, armor, boots, and gloves she used were all in the 200s. It was a level that would cause any poor man in the army to tremble.

"Kyaaak!" Randy was summoned after the Overgeared Skeletons. He fought the bear-wolf and was blown back. The good news was that the Overgeared Skeletons were still safe. The bear-wolves ignored them because their low-level attacks couldn't penetrate the bear-wolf's leather at all. It didn't care even when it was attacked by the skeletons.

In fact, the damage that the Overgeared Skeletons dealt to the bear-wolf was fixed at 1 damage. Not only did the bear-wolf's defense power exceed the attack power of the Overgeared Skeletons, the gap between their levels was overwhelmingly great.

As such, Mercedes' role became even more important. It would take at least 20 minutes to accumulate damage on the bear-wolf to the extent that the Overgeared Skeletons gained experience points. In the meantime, Mercedes had to steadily endure the bear-wolf's attacks as well as avoid the attacks of the new bear-wolves that appeared.

However, was that even possible? Mercedes' shield was about to break. It would be too risky for her to fight with just her swords if her shield broke. Grid couldn't let that happen and opened his inventory. The item he took out was the World Crushing Sword of the Noble White Tiger that he had designed with Sword Saint Kraugel.

"Mercedes!"

The usage condition of the White Tiger Sword was that the user had to be one of the top three rankers in each class capable of using a sword-type weapon. Could Mercedes meet this condition? Of course, Grid thought she could meet it. She was a legendary knight and would naturally be judged as the top ranker of her class.

It was as he expected. Mercedes caught the sword Grid threw over to her. She blocked the bear-wolf's paw with her shield without looking, while she examined the White Tiger Sword. Then Mercedes got goosebumps. It was the aftermath of examining the White Tiger Sword with her insightful eyes. The small shield could no longer endure the impact of the bear-wolf's paw and cracked, splitting apart completely.

Kwaaaaah! The bear-wolf roared as it swung its sharp claws. However, its claws couldn't reach Mercedes' face. Instead, the White Tiger Sword struck the bear-wolf's abdomen. Simultaneously, a stone

pillar rose and hit the bear-wolf's big body. The pillar was several hundred kilograms heavy and caused the bear-wolf's body to fly up five meters.

"Unbelievable...!" Mercedes was amazed by the power of the divine sword which couldn't be seen even in legends. Grid's voice entered her ears, "I congratulate you on becoming a legendary overgeared knight, Mercedes."

A product of the worst naming sense, which would've caused someone else to cry, made a stir in Mercedes' heart.

'Legendary overgeared knight...'

She was an overgeared knight of the Overgeared King. Mercedes felt a strong sense of belonging, and her loyalty to Grid increased even further. She was now a real member of the Overgeared Kingdom.

[Chapter 819](#)

The bear-wolves were gray wolves with a lot of fur, and they had a body length of around three meters. The first impression one would have of a bear-wolf was that it was a very threatening 'big wolf'. However, people would soon realize this was a big misunderstanding after seeing its thick paws. The bear-wolf wasn't just about size. The destructive power of its paws was more like that of a bear.

The bear-wolf was struck by the White Tiger Sword's pillar and flew up five meters. At first, it was confused by the power and instinctually rotated into a position to gain acceleration. This was a near explosive move. The bear-wolf borrowed the power of gravity, and its hundreds of kilograms fell toward Mercedes' face. It was an instant cast skill that couldn't be avoided by humans or even elves.

However, Mercedes avoided it with relative ease. Her insight and experiences allowed her to read the attack easily. Therefore, she narrowly avoided the bear-wolf's linked skills.

"...!"

As Mercedes avoided it, the bear-wolf used the wolf's agility to place a paw on the ground and did a wheel spin. The perfect conversion of the bear-wolf's missed attack aimed at the defenseless Mercedes. Mercedes sensed the attack late, so she gave up on counter-attacking and instead secured a safe distance away from the bear-wolf.

Grrrr...

Perhaps it was to gain leverage to leap forward...? The bear-wolf bent forward with its chest close to the ground.

'I think it will spin.

Mercedes recalled the bear-wolf's body structure and agility, using it to predict the power of the next attack. She held the White Tiger Sword in one hand and another sword in the other. This was the moment when the legendary knight went all out against a monster.

Ttang!Ttang! Grid couldn't hide his embarrassment as he almost finished repairing the portable furnace.

"What type of monster is that?"

Grid imagined himself in the situation that Mercedes had just been in. He might've been able to avoid the first strike, but he likely wouldn't have been able to escape the pivoted paw that followed immediately afterward and would be thrown into the air. Grid would've ended up being battered.

'Kraugel wasn't exaggerating.'

Sword Saint Kraugel had called the bear-wolf 'strong' and said that they wouldn't be easy to hunt. How could a field mob be a threat? Grid had jokingly thought this at the time. However, he now realized it was true. If Grid hadn't brought Mercedes here, he wouldn't have been able to raise the level of his Overgeared Skeletons alone. He wouldn't be able to control the Overgeared Skeletons while hunting the bear-wolves at the same time.

Beniyaru's admiring murmur entered his ears, "Going up against an ancient species..."

"Ancient species?"

"I am referring to beasts or organisms that have been present since the beginning of the world tree's existence. The bear-wolves are one of them. The damage they suffered during the elves' thousands of years of history hasn't been severe, but for a human to be facing them..."

One person was dealing with the bear-wolf alone. She even seemed to have room to breathe.

'Truly a legend...' Beniyaru was reminded of the half-elf Povia, the legendary archer. Then Beniyaru returned to her senses when she heard the bear-wolf's piercing scream. The bear-wolf had started spinning like a spinning top. It had expected to mangle Mercedes with its sharp claws, only for the situation to reverse. As its front paws were pierced by Mercedes' twin swords, the bear-wolf howled. The White Tiger Sword's rapidly rising weight pushed down on the bear-wolf's heavy body.

[There will be a one-second penalty in the recovery of the White Tiger Sword.]

This was the moment when the fatal disadvantage of the White Tiger was revealed. Mercedes couldn't retrieve the White Tiger Sword that was pressing on the bear-wolf. At this moment...

"Haaap!" Mercedes' two swords shone. She swung the other sword in her hand, leaving the White Tiger Sword in the bear-wolf. Then just as she was about to deal the finishing blow, she stopped. Mercedes was reminded of her mission. Her role was to attract the bear-wolf's attention, not hunt it. The finishing blow...

Clack! Clack clack!

That was for Randy and the Overgeared Skeletons to do. They unleashed an onslaught on the bear-wolf but the damage naturally wasn't high. The Overgeared Skeletons only decreased the bear-wolf's health by one, while Randy turned into Grid but could only deal damage in the thousands.

The bear-wolf jumped up, not even seeing the Overgeared Skeletons and Randy who were sticking close to it. It only rushed at Mercedes. This was like watching a bullfighter and a bull. As requested by Grid, Mercedes' drew the wolf's aggro.

Ttang! Ttang! The repair of the portable furnace was coming to an end. Grid determined that the bear-wolf didn't have much health left and began shouting orders, "Okay! Go!"

He was looking forward to the Overgeared Skeletons and Randy getting experience. In particular, he wondered what would happen once the Overgeared Skeletons reached level 100. Would their stats awaken like players? Additionally, would there be the concept of a promotion like how ordinary skeletons might become skeleton warriors or magicians? Grid had extremely high expectations for the Overgeared Skeletons.

There was a loud noise as forest trees broke and collapsed. At first, it was hundreds of meters away. Then it got closer and closer. A giant tree behind Mercedes fell down, and a new bear-wolf appeared. It pushed through all the trees in its way with extremely developed shoulder muscles and swung its paws at Mercedes.

Only five minutes had passed since the first bear-wolf appeared. It was okay up to here. Mercedes handled the first and second bear-wolves without much difficulty. She grabbed the aggro with constant damage, allowing the Overgeared Skeletons and Randy to concentrate on hunting. However, the situation became somewhat urgent after the third bear-wolf appeared.

“Ugh...!”

The three bear-wolves acted together like systematically trained soldiers. They attacked Mercedes relentlessly from every direction, and she was wounded for the first time. The bear-wolves became stronger every time their number increased. Still, Grid wasn't worried. He believed in the legendary knight.

“White Tiger's Attitude.” Mercedes used the skill of the White Tiger Sword at 100%.

[White Tiger's Attitude]

[Acquires the attitude of the White Tiger.

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

Skill Mana Cost: 17 per second.

Skill Cooldown Time: 30 minutes.]

The now more durable Mercedes endured the pincer attacks of the three bear-wolves. Her swordsmanship was optimized for defense. Grid finally finished repairing the portable furnace and put the white phosphorus wood inside. Then the temperature rose.

[You have defeated a bear-wolf.]

It happened when the fourth bear-wolf appeared. In other words, the first bear-wolf turned to grey 20 minutes after it appeared. The rewards far exceeded Grid's expectations.

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton One has risen!]

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton One has risen...]

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton One...]

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton One...]

.....

.....

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton Two has risen!]

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton Two has risen...]

[The level of Overgeared Skeleton Two...]

[The level of Overgeared...]

.....

.....

[Doppelganger Randy's level has risen!]

[Doppelganger Randy's level has risen...]

.....

The Overgeared Skeletons gained a huge 14 levels while Randy gained three levels! Was that all?

[39,000,100 experience has been acquired.]

As the master of Randy and the Overgeared Skeletons, Grid also gained experience. It was only a fraction of the experience, but it was still a considerable amount.

'It is worth the long hunt.'

This was as expected of the hunting ground Kraugel recommended. Grid commanded Mercedes, "Keep the number of bear-wolves to two!"

"Yes!"

In any case, the bear-wolves constantly appeared every five minutes. There was no need to play with three or more bear-wolves at the same time. Mercedes received Grid's order and showed her power for the first time. The ground around Mercedes shook due to White Tiger's Cry.

[White Tiger's Cry Lv. 1]

[Creates an earthquake with a radius of 5 meters.

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

Mana Consumption: 1,500

Skill Cooldown Time: 10 minutes.]

The bear-wolves stumbled! They wanted to resist the loss of balance with their innate athleticism, but Mercedes didn't miss this gap. A storm of sword energy swallowed up the bear-wolves.

Ttang!Ttang!

Grid watched Mercedes' movements. He intended to design an armor and shield optimized for her. However, there was something he had to make sure of first.

"Mercedes!"

"Yes!"

"Collect all the loot from the bear-wolves and give them to me later!"

"Yes!"

The bear-wolves' cries kept echoing through the forest as the hunt continued. Grid's experience increased by 0.5% and the Overgeared Skeletons reached level 100 even though Grid wasn't involved in hunting at all! Then...

[Overgeared Skeletons One and Two have received their first stats awakening!]

The Overgeared Skeletons' stats were awakened at level 100, just like the players'. Furthermore...

[Overgeared Skeletons One and Two can be upgraded. Please select the desired class.]

Upgrades were also available. Grid's expectations for the Overgeared Skeletons were perfectly met. What would be the secondary classes of the plain skeletons? Grid's heart thumped as he looked excitedly at the class list rising in front of him.

Clack! Clack clack!

Were they aware of their own growth? Overgeared Skeletons One and Two were also excited. They held hands with each other and danced around.

[Chapter 820](#)

[Overgeared Skeletons One and Two can be upgraded. Please select the desired class.]

The Overgeared Skeletons had reached level 100! Grid stopped for a moment after identifying that they could be upgraded. His extremely excited heart burned much hotter than his skin, which had been heated by the white phosphorus wood.

'Can they become a skeleton warrior or mage?'

Skeleton -> skeleton warrior -> skeleton knight -> death knight, dark knight, or reaper.

Or skeleton-> skeleton mage-> skeleton general general-> lich.

These were the evolution patterns of ordinary undead. Grid's idea that a skeleton warrior and skeleton mage would appear in the Overgeared Skeletons' upgrade list was plausible.

"Huhuhu..." A wide smile appeared on Grid's face as he thought about Overgeared Skeleton One being reborn as a death knight and Overgeared Skeleton Two being born as a lich. Extremely excited, he called Overgeared Skeletons One and Two to him.

Clack! Clack clack!

They were skeletons with a temperament and were like dogs or cats that followed people well. Clacking as they moved to follow Grid's call, the puppies came running.

"Now, let's see." Grid faced the Overgeared Skeletons with a warm expression and touched the golden exclamation marks above their heads.

[Possible class list for the Overgeared Skeletons One and Two.]

The list of classes he could choose from popped up. It was a list that would trample Grid's expectations.

[Possible Class List for Overgeared Skeleton One]

1. Skeleton Miner
2. Skeleton Dancer
3. Skeleton Destroyer]

[Possible Class List for Overgeared Skeleton Two]

1. Skeleton Miner
2. Skeleton Dancer
3. Skeleton Restorer.]

"No, isn't this crazy?"

Where were the skeleton warrior and the mage? What were miner and dancer? Grid doubted his eyes and started rubbing them. However, the list of possible classes for the Overgeared Skeletons didn't change. It wasn't an illusion.

"Why does this always happen to me...?"

No, it didn't make sense. The undead... Why was there a miner and dance on their list of advancement classes?

"This is a joke...!" Grid's entire body shook and he gritted his teeth as his mind entered a state of extreme anger. However, it was only for a moment. Grid checked up on Mercedes and Randy, who were dealing with the bear-wolves alone after the Overgeared Skeletons came over to him. Mercedes was worried that the Overgeared Skeletons wouldn't get enough experience, so she only defended. This made Grid concerned about her stamina, and he regained his calm.

'Calm down.' Grid took deep breaths and looked at the class information of the Overgeared Skeletons.

[Skeleton Miner]

[The Overgeared Skeletons were forced into mining by their master and have the qualities of a miner. They are likely to be relatively good miners.]

[Skeleton Dancer]

[The Overgeared Skeletons dance every time the wind blows and loves dancing. It is still weak but they have the quality of a dancer.]

“...There is a reason for everything.”

Grid found out why miner and dancer were included in the class list and regretted the past. If only he hadn't made the Overgeared Skeletons mine... If only he hadn't forced the Overgeared Skeletons to be blown by the wind, making them dance...

‘...No, it wouldn't have changed anything.’

In the end, Grid decided for the unique classes of the Overgeared Skeletons to be destroyer and restorer. Based on their names, they seemed to be unusual classes.

‘They might be better than ordinary classes like warrior or mage...!’ Grid gulped.

Anticipation once again filled the depths of his heart.

[Skeleton Destroyer]

[Overgeared Skeleton One has a history of destroying Overgeared Skeleton Two, giving it the ability to deal deadly wounds to the undead.

Even a death knight should be vigilant in front of the skeleton destroyer.]

“...”

[Skeleton Restorer]

[Overgeared Skeleton Two has been destroyed several times by Overgeared Skeleton One, using its high intelligence to learn a technique to quickly restore broken bones using mana.

It can be seen as a skeleton healer.

The presence of the skeleton restorer will greatly enhance the duration of skeleton-based undead.]

“...” Grid closed his eyes and several scenes came to mind. One was of Overgeared Skeleton One hitting Overgeared Skeleton Two in the back. Unable to deal with Overgeared Skeleton One's force, Overgeared Skeleton Two had been blown back...

Why...

“Why did I let them act like this...?”

That's right. The destroyer and restorer were also unique classes of the Overgeared Skeletons. They were manifested based on the Overgeared Skeletons' behavioral patterns. Grid got goosebumps.

‘How high is the degree of freedom?’

The classes were divided based on the growth environment? Wasn't there more freedom than what was given to players?

‘These guys are really...’

They were undoubtedly a super-named type of undead. Grid was feeling convinced of this while Mercedes and Randy continued battling the bear-wolves.

Mercedes endured the pincer attacks of three bear-wolves with White Tiger's Attitude, while Randy was assisted by the God Hands. As she waited for the Overgeared Skeletons to join the battle again, Mercedes' stamina was reduced to a level that couldn't be ignored. Having come out together when Randy was summoned, Noe now asked Grid a question, "Master, should I help?"

Grid shook his head. "No. You can just rest."

Noe had ingested a large amount of energy from the thunder stone during the Astaroth raid and evolved, showing a perfect strength. So, it wasn't urgent to level him up when he could hunt at any time. Noe could level up any time if he wanted. The two things Grid were aiming for in this battle were the growth of the Overgeared Skeletons and Randy, and watching Mercedes fight in order to design a suitable armor for her. As such, there was no reason for Noe to act.

"Change class."

Grid stroked Noe's soft fur and decided on the Overgeared Skeletons' classes. Overgeared Skeleton One would be a destroyer and Overgeared Skeleton Two a restorer! He had to be careful not to click on miner or dancer by mistake!

Flash!

Overgeared Skeletons One and Two were surrounded by a bright light, and numerous notification windows popped up.

[Overgeared Skeleton One has been converted to a skeleton destroyer.]

[The class compensation effect will increase Overgeared Skeleton One's strength and stamina by 10.]

[Overgeared Skeleton One has acquired the skill 'Bone Cracking'.]

[Bone Cracking Lv. 1]

[There is a low probability of destroying materials made of bone (undead, items, structures, etc.).]

Resources Consumed: None.

Skill Cooldown Time: 20 seconds]

[Overgeared Skeleton Two has been converted to a skeleton restorer.]

[The class compensation effect will increase Overgeared Skeleton Two's intelligence and stamina by 10.]

[Overgeared Skeleton One has acquired the skill 'Bone Sticking'.]

[Bone Sticking Lv. 1]

[Restores 20% of a skeleton-based undead's health. The damaged part of the target will be restored.]

Skill Resources Consumed: 20

Skill Cooldown Time: 30 seconds]

"..."

It was kind of funny. A skeleton that cracked bones and a skeleton that healed bones...

'If this continues, will Overgeared Skeleton One keep destroying while Overgeared Skeleton Two becomes capable of using wide-area heals?'

The future Grid would realize how poor his imagination was on this day. However, that was a story for when the Overgeared Skeletons have their second advancement classes.

Kyak kyak!Kyak!!

"...!" Grid was startled. After changing classes, the Overgeared Skeletons developed a capability to make sounds. Previously, they just moved their jaws, but they could now make kyak kyak laughs.

"Sigh, it is amazing."

This wasn't a horror movie. How were these guys cute? Grid was still suspicious of Mercedes' taste and gave an order.

"Move! Level up!"

Kyak kyak!Kyak!

Kyak kyak kyak!

They were really excited. Overgeared Skeletons One and Two rushed toward the bear-wolves and stabbed. Then something amazing happened.

[Overgeared Skeleton One has inflicted 4 damage to the bear-wolf.]

[Overgeared Skeleton Two has inflicted 2 damage to the bear-wolf.]

The Overgeared Skeletons' damage was several times greater than before!

'This is the power of the stats awakening...!'

Were damages of 2 and 4 that surprising? Of course, it was. The bear-wolves were presumed to be at least level 400, whereas the Overgeared Skeletons had just achieved level 100. The fact that the huge 300-level difference was slightly overcome suggested one thing.

'Normal monsters don't have the concept of stats awakening.'

Therefore, most monsters were weak compared to their level. The gap between named-grade monsters and ordinary monsters was almost certain to widen as the level increased. Then what about the Overgeared Skeletons, who were super-named monsters? Their level value was astronomical. At level 300 and 400, the Overgeared Skeletons were likely to be more destructive than boss monsters. That possibility was proven right now.

[Overgeared Skeleton One has used the skill 'Bone Cracking'.]

"...!?!?!?" Grid's eyes widened. Overgeared Skeleton One stabbed his blade deep inside the bear-wolf facing Mercedes. The skill was used as soon as it detected that its blade hit the bear-wolf's bone.

The aftermath...

[Overgeared Skeleton One has inflicted 10,500 damage to the bear-wolf!]

[The bones of the bear-wolf's lower body have been broken, and the bear-wolf is now permanently paralyzed! The bear-wolf's stats will drop by 20%!]

The bear-wolf's aggro headed toward the Overgeared Skeletons for the first time. The paw of the wounded bear-wolf hit the head of Overgeared Skeleton One. However, it was wishful thinking.

Kik!Kikikik! This was because Overgeared Skeleton Two laughed at Overgeared Skeleton One before using Bone Sticking.

Kyak kyak!Kya kya kyak! Confirming that its disappeared head was restored, Overgeared Skeleton One laughed. Then its hand hit Overgeared Skeleton Two, and Overgeared Skeleton Two's head flew off. Overgeared Skeleton Two was forced to remain silent until the cooldown of Bone Sticking ended.

"..." Grid was also silent. He couldn't open his mouth as he stared at the Overgeared Skeletons with affection. Even the sound of the Overgeared Skeletons laughing started to feel lovely.