

# **Level 4 Human in a Ruined World #Chapter 361 - Read**

## **Level 4 Human in a Ruined World Chapter 361**

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 361: Between Good Karma and Bad Karma (2)

Screeeech!

A deafening sound of something piercing the air reverberated through the walls and into the room.

The promotion grounds, which had looked so tiny beneath their feet moments ago, were rapidly expanding in size.

This meant only one thing: their altitude was dropping fast.

-D-Do you really intend to go down there?

Aldo twisted his head tightly as if begging for reconsideration.

Instead of replying, Yeongwoo stared intently at the map of the promotion grounds displayed in the waiting room.

As before, the map showed 50 numbered markers scattered across it.

Their landing positions could still be adjusted, and the markers shifted in real-time.

Among them, the most erratic activity was centered in the mid-west region, where Team 023 was heading.

There were currently 11 teams descending toward this area.

Of those, six teams kept moving their markers into the central area of the mid-west before retreating back to the outskirts in hesitation.

‘So those guys are still undecided.’

They were likely caught off guard by the unexpectedly high number of teams converging in the mid-west.

They seemed to be debating whether to stay in the outskirts and observe the situation or trust their combat prowess and land directly in the central zone.

‘Cowards.’

Not that Yeongwoo couldn’t understand their hesitation.

If all 11 teams landed in the mid-west, it would result in a chaotic melee involving 55 people.

No matter how skilled someone was, there was always a chance they could get overwhelmed and killed by dozens of attacks.

Moreover, the risk of losing a teammate in battle would increase significantly.

-...Shouldn’t we reconsider our landing spot?

Taru, who had been studying the markers alongside Yeongwoo, cautiously voiced his opinion.

Yeongwoo wrinkled his nose, watching the six hesitant teams finally opt for the outskirts of the mid-west.

“What do you think will happen if we stick to our current landing spot?”

-...Huh? Well...

Taru scrunched up the rocky features of his face, deep in thought.

Eventually, he gave an answer.

-A lot of teams... and they’ll probably be hostile?

“Fuck.”

Was this what happened when you never did anything bad in your life?

“If you don’t understand bad people, how can you predict their moves?”

Sighing in frustration, Yeongwoo pointed at the central area of the mid-west on the map.

“See this? Those five teams that haven’t budged an inch.”

Teams 023, 046, 037, 011, and 002.

“If we leave them alone, they’ll rise to the top of the rankings.”

Aldo, gripping the bench tightly, hesitantly raised his hand.

“Yes, Prince. Go ahead.”

- I... What is the reason for growing to the top?

“.....”

Yeongwoo felt his energy drain for a moment.

But he couldn't be annoyed.

After all, the three of them had amassed enough good karma to offset 170 million units of bad karma—a feat that was practically a universal miracle.

“Listen closely, Your Highness. And you too, Owl and Golem.”

Yeongwoo shifted his finger, pointing to the six teams that had retreated to the outskirts.

“These guys made the safe and logical choice. They backed out because there were too many teams converging in the mid-west. Their plan is probably to observe the central fight and decide their next move.”

Aldo and the other two teammates widened their eyes in understanding and nodded.

-Oh...

-That makes sense.

-Indeed.

“And these guys here?”

Yeongwoo's finger moved back to the five teams in the mid-west's central zone.

-Well... they must like fighting.

-Maybe they're just evil?

“No!”

Yeongwoo yelled, causing Aldo to sweat nervously, and Amana to clack their beak in agitation.

“They're not just evil. They're insanely strong! They're confident they can survive even in a fight involving dozens of people. That's why they're staying there.”

-Gasp.

-Is that even possible?

-A melee with dozens of people?

Yeongwoo ignored Taru's less-than-bright remarks.

"What did Vito say earlier? The rankings inside the promotion grounds are determined by points, right?"

-Yes.

-That's right.

-Correct.

"And our goal is to be first place. So how do we achieve that?"

Yeongwoo didn't expect an answer, so he continued.

"We need to eliminate anyone who can score high enough to threaten our position. Only then can we maintain our lead comfortably."

-Gasp...

-Eliminate them before they even start scoring?

-But they haven't even earned points yet...

At that moment, Amana clacked their beak and raised a hand.

-Wait, if those people in the central zone are so strong and evil, what about us?

"What about us?"

-Well, I mean... are you that strong?

Yeongwoo's face twisted into a scowl as he drew an imaginary blade to Amana's neck.

"You think my 200 million units of bad karma are just for show? How do you think I racked up a score like that?"

-Ah... I see...

Amana nodded hesitantly, pulling back slightly.

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By then, Vito's voice echoed through the room.

— Approximately 10 seconds until the waiting room reaches the promotion grounds.

“Whew.”

Taking a deep breath, Yeongwoo prepared himself.

Even though he had confidently declared his intentions to everyone, he wasn't a seer who could predict the future, and whether he could actually survive in the Midwestern stronghold remained uncertain.

The only thing he had to go on was the fragment of a future where he would marry the Princess of the Sun...

‘A predetermined priority future means there's at least a small chance it could be wrong. I can't make overly reckless moves because of it.’

Even so, giving up on the Midwest landing was not an option.

As he had said earlier, in this kind of game, it was crucial to eliminate top-ranked contenders early on before they had the chance to grow.

‘There might be extra resources or ways to enhance abilities within the promotion zone. Letting strong teams grow unchecked until the later stages could mean facing foes too powerful for me to handle alone.’

At least as far as 023 Team was concerned, this game was practically a four-on-two competition.

Yeongwoo had to drag around three burdens while maneuvering through the promotion zone.

That's why he determined that the best time to establish a combat advantage was right at the start.

‘Fighting aliens one against many? Sure, it's my first time, but it's the same for them too.’

Everyone here was a rookie planetary representative.

But when it came to a record of villainy...

'I am the top villain of the promotion games!'

As Yeongwoo silently shouted this to himself, the waiting room finally landed in the promotion zone.

KWA-AAAAANG!

With an earth-shaking roar, the waiting room trembled violently, and Yeongwoo barely kept himself from falling as he surveyed his surroundings.

"Seriously, is this a landing or a crash?"

The previously transparent floor of the waiting room now reflected an ashen rocky ground.

The Midwest promotion zone was a bleak, rocky terrain.

Then, suddenly—

Clank!

With the familiar sound of locking mechanisms disengaging, all four walls of the waiting room toppled outward.

—The waiting room is now open. Best of luck.

With those parting words, the guide, Vito, disappeared.

Immediately, the 023 Team could see another waiting room opening right next to theirs.

-Huh?!

-What the—!

-Right next door?!

While the three other team members were panicking, Yeongwoo was already leaping into the other waiting room, wielding Bastard and Aratubank.

-Y-Yeongwoo?

Aldo was stunned, watching Yeongwoo move as if he had anticipated this from the start.

Without looking back, Yeongwoo shouted:

“Other teams will swarm here soon to claim the finishing blows! If you don’t want to die like dogs, get ready to fight!”

Then he dodged the wall just unfolded toward the ground and sent Bastard flying into the opposing waiting room.

WHRRRRRT!

At that moment, a member of the opposing team, who was about to rush out, was struck down by Bastard and collapsed.

-Gah!

The fallen opponent was a lizardman marked with the number "011" above his head.

‘So, this is 011 Team.’

Somewhere nearby, 046, 037, and 002 Teams must be waiting as well.

-Who the hell is that guy?!

-It’s 023 Team!

-Kill him now!

Of course, there were still three members remaining in the 011 waiting room.

A hulking toad clad in heavy armor, a white-furred beastman with mechanical goggles, and an iron golem charging at Yeongwoo.

“What the hell is this?”

THUNK!

Yeongwoo smashed the iron golem’s head with Aratubank, then extended his free hand to retrieve Bastard.

WHOOOSH!

For a moment, everyone froze, their mouths agape.

Object Telekinesis.

At the level of rookie planetary representatives, such a skill was quite impressive.

‘These guys are all weaklings.’

Compared to Earth, where he had fought hordes of naked lunatics and even his mother, who returned as a dragon, the average level of this promotion zone didn't seem particularly high.

Two of the opponents, confident in their combat prowess, had been taken out in a single blow each.

SWISH!

Golden Trail protecting Yeongwoo's rear shifted to his flank, attempting to assassinate the hulking toad within the opposing waiting room.

However, the remaining two of 011 Team weren't pushovers.

"Not so fast!"

CLANG!

The toad used his thick steel arm guards to deflect the golden arc with ease.

"Oh?"

Yeongwoo, standing atop the iron golem's corpse, let out a small sound of admiration as the toad clashed his two fists together, growling:

-We already weeded out the weaklings on our side. Let's see how the real contenders fight.

"So, you two are the villains of 011 Team, huh?"

Yeongwoo smirked nonchalantly at his opponent's remark.

Then, the white-furred beastman adjusted the mechanical goggles on his face and froze.

-Th-this...!

His expression hardened as he reported to the toad.

-Count! That guy's Karma Index has an extra digit!

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Chapter 362: Between Good Karma and Bad Karma (3)

-What?

The iron-armored toad, referred to as a count by the beastmen, widened its eyes in shock.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo was already rushing past the corpses of the 011 Team members, closing in on the two remaining enemies.

“No time for introductions!”

As Yeongwoo shouted this, he extended Bastard to a length of 6.6 meters.

Upon seeing it, one of the beastmen opened his elongated snout wide in disbelief.

-What on earth is that?

And then—

Screeeeech!

With a chilling sound, Bastard slashed through, splitting the beastman vertically.

-Ack!

A short cry was all that escaped as the beastman's head split, and his mane was stained crimson.

The toad count, now clutching his fallen comrade's bisected body, wailed the beastman's name in despair.

-Poima...!

Poima.

A white-maned beastman from an unnamed planet.

-Poima, I swear I'll avenge you!

The toad's eyes grew wet as he glared at Yeongwoo, who merely shrugged while gripping Bastard.

"Why are you making me out to be the bad guy? We're both villains here."

-You despicable scum!

"Still, I gave you time to mourn. Why do I get the blame for that?"

As Yeongwoo said this, he glanced around once more.

Thankfully, no one had come to ambush him yet.

Meanwhile, the iron-armored toad raised both arms and assumed a combat stance.

-Hyah!

-I am Count Katissan from the distant planet Berek!

"....."

It was evident that the toad count specialized in close combat.

His peculiar stance alone made it clear that he practiced some unique martial art.

Could he steal that?

The arena, known as the promotion ground, didn't explicitly state whether spoils of battle could be claimed.

There was only one way to find out.

He would just have to take him down and see.

The moment Yeongwoo made this decision, Count Katissan charged forward, waving his arms wildly.

-Kraaaaah!

What was with this guy?

The clumsy-looking movements of Katissan made Yeongwoo furrow his brows momentarily.

Crunch!

“.....!”

From beneath Katissan’s shoulder blades and lower lats, additional arms suddenly emerged, bringing the total to six fists barreling toward Yeongwoo.

“You crazy toad bastard.”

Though it caught him off guard, Yeongwoo, having endured countless battles, wasn’t overly surprised.

Besides, he had a sword.

-Hyah!

Yeongwoo stepped back with his left foot, using it to stabilize himself as he swung Bastard, cutting through Katissan’s fists.

Screeech!

The newly sprouted arms, unprotected by iron armor, were severed instantly and spun midair.

However, there was a problem.

-Huh?

Even Katissan’s original arms, clad in iron armor, were flying off in the same direction.

Yeongwoo’s demonic sword had effortlessly sliced through the iron protection.

-How... How is this possible?!

As Katissan, who had trusted the strength of his armor, looked utterly bewildered, Yeongwoo thrust his blade into the toad’s abdomen and declared coldly.

Crunch!

“Head to hell first!”

-What?

With those final words, Yeongwoo’s Bastard rose from Katissan’s abdomen to the top of his head, splitting him in half.

Splat!

The thick skin split to either side, and the massive shadow he cast on the ground was also divided in two.

Thud!

With a dull impact, the entirety of Team 011 was annihilated.

Boom!

「023 Team achieves first elimination in the promotion ground!」

A system notification appeared high in the air for everyone in the arena to see.

So there was a 'First Blood' concept here, too.

As Yeongwoo tilted his head to read the message, another notification followed.

「011 Team has been eliminated.」

The system announced the complete annihilation of a team.

Moments later, a massive scoreboard appeared in the sky above the promotion ground.

[49/50]

Ah.

It seemed that the survival status was only displayed after the first team was eliminated.

There were still 49 teams left?

That was a lot.

As Yeongwoo stared at the survival count with a weary expression, the corpses scattered around Team 011's waiting area began to glow brightly.

Fwoosh!

“Huh?”

Hoping for loot, Yeongwoo approached the glowing bodies.

But instead of treasure, an unexpected message appeared before his eyes.

「Katissan04」

[This participant perished while striving valiantly during the planetary promotion trial. Though the registry will no longer record his future, the glory of his past deeds will remain forever.

Assailant: ||||I-Earth's Jeong Yeongwoo07

...Huh?

It was a type of eulogy.

Except, it also listed the killer, prominently and unapologetically.

Moments later, a holographic box appeared before Yeongwoo, accompanied by another message.

「Katissan04's body and equipment will be transported to Planet ||||I-Berek. Please input a eulogy to accompany the remains.」

Wait, "the person viewing this screen"?

They meat him, didn't they?

Who else but the killer would be standing in front of a corpse during a chaotic battle royale involving 50 teams?

So, they were asking the murderer to write the eulogy?

Even Yeongwoo, infamous as the "Greatest Villain of the Promotion Ground," was left speechless by this absurd rule.

Was this really necessary?

He didn't have time for this.

Yeongwoo glanced at the bisected bodies of Katissan and Poima.

The eulogy didn't seem mandatory, but remembering Katissan clutching Poima's lifeless body stirred a twinge of pity in him.

More than that—

-Ah...

-I can't believe they're sending the bodies back to their home planets.

-To witness a planetary guardian return in a coffin... I can't even imagine the pain of those left behind.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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The remaining three team members, having witnessed the eulogy system, were now either sweating profusely or shedding tears.

Yeongwoo swung Bastard at them and roared.

“Stop crying, you idiots! We’ve still got more fighting to do, and tears will blur your vision!”

Then, to quickly deal with Katissan’s remains, he began typing a eulogy.

[His six arms were surprising, but they didn’t seem particularly fast.

Send.

After confirming the eulogy, Katissan’s bisected body was enveloped in light and shot up into the sky beyond the promotion ground.

Fwoosh!

The remaining members of Team 023 raised their arms toward the heavens, bidding farewell to the fallen warrior.

-Oh, Katissan!

-He was courageous! I saw it myself.

-May he rest in peace!

‘What the hell? Aren’t these guys the real demons?’

Yeongwoo shook his head in disbelief as he glanced at his teammates, then hurriedly completed the eulogies for the remaining corpses.

[Your glasses were cool. You were killed by the strongest contender in the promotion ground.

|You were the second to die in your team. Honestly, you weren't going to be the one to secure a future for your planet anyway.

|I killed you so quickly that you likely didn't feel any pain. Consider it an opportunity to choose a better representative.

'There. All done.'

Send.

And send again.

Yeongwoo licked his lips as he sent off the eulogies along with the corpses of the deceased.

'Well, I guess if you die during a trial, it's only fair to recover the equipment. After all, it is the property of their planet.'

Flash, flash!

Three beams of light shot up into the sky.

The equipment within those beams would soon arrive on their respective planets, to be handed down to successors.

And, as Yeongwoo had written in the eulogies, perhaps this would pave the way for better representatives to emerge.

'...But my name and planet are fully listed on those eulogies. That's unsettling.'

He would have to send off at least dozens more corpses before this trial ended.

And what if one of those successors receiving the corpses decided to come back to Earth for revenge someday?

'How much bad karma am I stacking up today...'

Yeongwoo stared blankly at the sky—or rather, at the registry inscribed with their future.

At that moment, a change occurred in the survival status board hovering above the promotion field.

Pop!

[48/50]

“Huh?”

Just moments ago, the number had been 49.

Now it had changed to 48. S

hortly after, another message appeared.

「Team 037, annihilated.」

“.....!”

The number was familiar.

It was one of the five teams that had landed in the central area of the midwestern sector.

023, 046, 037, 011, 002.

Now, with 011 and 037 gone, the remaining teams were...

‘002 and 046.’

But it wasn’t just the midwestern sector where the real competition had started.

Bang!

A sharp, intense alert echoed, followed by consecutive annihilation notices.

「Team 009, annihilated.」

「Team 041, annihilated.」

Two teams wiped out almost simultaneously.

This was proof that battles were erupting across the entire promotion field.

[46/50]

Four teams had essentially been eliminated as soon as the trial began.

Finally realizing the violent and murderous nature of the trial, three of Yeongwoo’s teammates shuddered.

-W-what kind of battle is this...?



-It feels like we've only been here for ten minutes, and already four teams are gone?

-If we're not careful, we'll...

Sensing the growing fear among his teammates, Yeongwoo turned to them with a reassuring smile.

"Don't worry too much. I'll personally write your eulogies if the time comes."

-.....!

-W-what?!

-Eulogies?!

Then, as if remembering something, Yeongwoo turned to Aldo.

"Oh, and Your Highness is an exception. I'll do my best to protect you."

Aldo glanced nervously at the others before cautiously asking Yeongwoo:

-W-why is that?

"You must have a royal ship at your disposal."

-Well, that's true, but...

"In that case, I'd like you to visit my planet when this is all over. We could use some help."

Aldo was the second prince of Doatel, a planet known as the sanctuary of the galaxy.

If Yeongwoo survived this promotion grounds, he planned to send Aldo an invitation to his wedding.

As for the other two...

"I can't cover three people alone, so you'll have to fend for yourselves. But since we're teammates, I'll lend a hand if I can."

In essence, it was a declaration of self-preservation.

-...Ah.

-Seriously?

In this brutal trial, if they couldn't defend themselves, their bodies would be sent back to their planets accompanied by Yeongwoo's morbid eulogies.

"Well then, let's all get ready. We've got incoming."

Yeongwoo raised his Aratubank and turned to face the east.

From that direction, a group of ominous figures was swiftly approaching.

Crash!

Other than one figure glowing white all over, the rest wore black armor or draped themselves in chains.

And above their heads...

[002]

Another familiar number was displayed.

'002. These guys don't seem like your average team.'

Yeongwoo had a hunch that they were the ones who had annihilated Team 037, which had landed nearby.

And sure enough...

Zing!

".....?"

A sound came from their direction.

Swoosh!

A laser beam shot up into the sky.

"What?"

Then, a thin, guided strand descended from the sky, heading straight toward Yeongwoo.

Zap!

It landed right at his feet.

“Oh, crap.”

Yeongwoo’s eyes widened in realization.

Having faced a relatively weak Team 011 earlier, he had overlooked one crucial fact:

Everyone here was a representative of their respective planets.

Which meant that planetary bombardment weapons weren’t exclusive to him.

-Your Highness! Take cover immediately! It’s an airstrike!!!

As Yeongwoo shouted to protect his precious guest, the skies above the promotion grounds truly began to open.

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 363: Between Good Karma and Bad Karma (4)

Villain.

What exactly does it mean to be a villain in this vast universe?

In truth, Yeongwoo had never once considered himself a true villain.

Sure, he caused minor inconveniences from time to time, but in the grand scheme of the universe, his influence was barely a speck.

Besides, weren’t there countless individuals in this universe far stronger than Earth’s so-called greatest swordsman?

Take Lemu, who could even glimpse the future, or Chairman Dogo, who could beat Lemu to a pulp.

Even the things Yeongwoo had encountered so far were but a tiny fraction of the vast cosmos.

So, a feeble existence like Jeong Yeongwoo07?

'I'm just a guy trying to live my life as best I can. How could I be a villain?'

Jeong Yeongwoo07, a cosmic being with millions of evil karma points to his name, lunged forward with a fierce expression.

"Haah!"

His body and gaze were aimed at the spot where three virtuous aliens from Team 023 had gathered.

"It's already too late! Everyone, get over here! If you get hit by that thing, there won't even be remains to send back to your home planet!"

As Yeongwoo shouted, the area around him was already stained crimson.

It was due to the bombardment from Team 002, which had opened the sky above the promotion field and cast a fiery red light.

Whatever it was, the planetary weapon from the other side emitted a reddish hue.

'I've never seen anything like that before. Can I block it with this?'

Yeongwoo glanced at his only defensive mythical equipment, the Aratubank.

「Aratubank」 - Mythical Shield

【Immunity】

【Coffin】

【Shared Pain】

【Immunity】

| This shield cannot be destroyed and can block most non-physical damage and mental attacks.

According to its immunity effect, the shield could theoretically block that laser as well.

Of course, this depended on whether the bombardment fell under the "most" category of non-physical damage.

In any case, Yeongwoo had no other options.

Boom!

From the gaping sky above, a blazing red laser beam descended, and Yeongwoo immediately raised the Aratubank over his head.

Whoosh!

A semi-circular barrier unfolded around the Aratubank as it faced the sky.

"Whoa...!"

With a diameter of about six meters, the barrier was clearly the manifestation of the "Invulnerability" effect.

Without waiting for Yeongwoo's command, the virtuous aliens leapt behind him.

-Gasp!

-It's dangerous!

-Wait for us!

As the guardians and representatives of their planets, they had an overwhelming desire to survive—even if it meant hiding under the shield of a villain.

And then, immediately.

Thoom!

A tremendous pressure struck the Aratubank as the bombardment engulfed Team 023.

-Aaaagh!

-Oh no!

-Help...!

The three virtuous aliens screamed under the overwhelming pressure they'd never experienced before, while Yeongwoo turned his gaze towards Team 002.

'So, it's going to be melee combat now.'

The enemy, seemingly shocked that their bombardment had been blocked, simply stood and watched from afar.

And then.

“...!”

Among the dark-clad members of Team 002, a single figure emanating a bright light raised an arm.

Szzap!

From the end of their arm, a lightning spear began to form.

"Seriously? Are those bastards targeting me while I'm maintaining the barrier?"

True to form, the figure threw the lightning spear moments later.

Szzzzzz!

The lightning spear tore through the air of the promotion field's midwestern region.

As it hurtled toward him, Yeongwoo thought of twisting his body to block it.

Thunk!

Unexpectedly, Taru, a golem from the Pigot planet, stepped in front of him.

"...What?"

-I'm immune to elemental attacks.

"What?"

As Yeongwoo widened his eyes in shock, the lightning spear collided with Taru's abdomen and dissipated.

Sizzle!

As he claimed, Taru was indeed immune to elemental damage.

'So, this is why people in the universe prefer using ability attacks against beings like him!'

Yeongwoo couldn't help but marvel.

With Taru's immunity to all elemental damage, he was practically invincible against elemental-type dragons and similar foes.

'The universe truly is vast.'

While Yeongwoo was lost in thought, the laser beam that had stained the surroundings crimson finally ran out of energy and dissipated.

Fwoosh!

At that moment, Aldo and Amana, who had been crouching under Yeongwoo's shield, cautiously raised their heads.

Meanwhile, Team 002 started showing signs of movement.

'So it's really time for melee combat now?'

With two mythical pieces of equipment at his disposal, Yeongwoo felt supremely confident in close combat.

As he lowered the Aratubank he had held aloft and stared at Team 002, the enemy suddenly.

Swoosh!

Started running away at full speed.

'What?'

After witnessing Team 023 block both their bombardment and sniping attempts, Team 002 decided to retreat.

'Those guys... They're real experts!'

Clicking his tongue at their cold judgment, Yeongwoo quickly prepared to give chase.

"We can't let them get away! If we do, they'll become top-ranking teams. We have to catch and kill them now!"

Yeongwoo declared menacingly, clutching his weapon tightly, speaking of "death" yet again in front of the virtuous aliens.

Ordinarily, such words would have drawn resistance from his teammates.

However, fresh off the terrifying laser bombardment, their reactions were markedly different from earlier in the trial.

-Stand beside me.

Suddenly, Amana hefted the hammer she was holding onto her shoulder, spread her feathered arms, and looked toward the sky.

Though unsure of what was happening, Yeongwoo obediently stood beside her as instructed.

At that, Aldo and Tarudo silently followed Yeongwoo and stood nearby in alignment.

In that moment, the bodies of the four aliens were connected by a ring of wind.

Then.

Whoosh!

In an instant, everyone in the area was propelled dozens of meters into the air—at a tremendous speed.

“Huh?”

As Yeongwoo widened his eyes in astonishment at the incredible momentum, Amana spoke in a low voice.

-Today, I shall commit a duty I do not welcome.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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She then turned her gaze toward Unit 002, which had already moved far away.

Their mobility was extraordinary, and they seemed poised to disappear from view in a moment, but Yeongwoo instinctively understood:

The specialty of the Owlbear from the Sacred Planet Patrol was flight and acceleration.

Catching up to such an escape would be simple for him.

-Doing good deeds does not mean being weak. It simply means not being evil.

Amana, gazing at the sole villain of Unit 023, spoke as if offering a reminder.

Yeongwoo, flailing his legs in the air, shouted back.

“Do you think committing evil deeds makes one just evil? It doesn’t make you weak either! In this universe, if you’re weak, you can’t even commit evil deeds!”

He then pointed toward Unit 002, now just a tiny dot in the distance.



“Let’s go! I’ll take care of all the evil deeds myself!”

Finally, Amana’s eyes glinted fiercely, and her feathers bristled.

Flap, flap, flap!

Then.

Hahh!

With a powerful shout, she shot forward diagonally, carrying the three unit members bound by the ring of wind.

Whooosh!

It was a kind of gliding, but the speed was comparable to ultra-fast movement lanes.

The distance between them and Unit 002, which had vanished from sight moments ago, closed rapidly.

Naturally, for Unit 002, who was fleeing:

-W-what?

-Above us! What is that?

They couldn’t help but be startled as they saw Unit 023 flying overhead.

-Go, guardian of Earth.

As Amana spoke, she released Yeongwoo from the ring of wind that bound him and sent him plummeting to the ground.

Thud!

Right into the midst of Unit 002.

Boom!

“Seriously, just dropping me here like this?”

Despite his complaint, Yeongwoo began disrupting Unit 002’s formation the moment he landed.

Crash!

With his landing, he split a black-armored knight in half, making it clear to everyone:  
If they didn't deal with this lone intruder immediately, everyone here would die.

-Gunaki!

The moment the black knight fell, a frightened alien standing behind him shouted.

The alien was a steel humanoid, with heavy chains draped over his back like a cloak.

His dark gray skin, entirely made of steel, gave him an appearance of strength, but his face was full of fear.

The fact that their opponent had instantly killed another crew member made it clear he could do the same to him.

-Kill him! This one's dangerous!

As the steel humanoid shouted and drew blades from his fingertips, Yeongwoo's Aratubank struck his jaw first.

Crash!

"You bastards, don't even think about running anymore."

Sensing a sharp presence behind him, Yeongwoo turned and raised Bastard to block.

Clang!

Beyond Bastard's blade, a golden sword glimmered.

-You bastard...!

"What now?"

Yeongwoo blinked in surprise as he saw his opponent.

A navy-blue gorilla was locking swords with him.

The gorilla's strength was immense, enough to push Yeongwoo back bit by bit.

Meanwhile, to the side, another enemy who had thrown a lightning spear earlier was preparing an ambush, as the hologram had already warned him.

'The level here really is something else.'

Realizing he couldn't clean up the area at once in his current state, Yeongwoo rolled backward to escape from the gorilla.

Then.

Slash!

Using Bastard, he severed his own left arm.

Everyone, including the gorilla, froze momentarily, stunned by the sight.

-He... cut off his own arm?

-Who does that?

On their planet, meeting someone who would willingly sever their own arm was a rare occurrence.

But the true nature of Yeongwoo, who had lost his arm, was revealed.

Ssshhh...

**【Corrosive Blood】**

|Blood becomes corrupted, gaining corrosiveness.

The blood pouring from Yeongwoo's wound melted the ground beneath him.

A being whose entire body was essentially a weapon—this was Jeong Yeongwoo07.

-Did you see that?

The gorilla holding the golden sword took a step back, asking his teammates.

But before anyone could answer, Yeongwoo moved first.

Leap!

He swung his severed arm, spraying blood across a 180-degree arc, and charged toward Unit 002.

Screeech!

The gorilla, who was the first to be doused in Yeongwoo's blood, screamed and collapsed, and at that moment, a system message appeared in the sky above the battlefield.

「10 minutes have passed since the trial began.」

「The power and score rankings will be revealed shortly.」

「All teams are advised to finish their battles promptly and check the rankings.」

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 364: Between Good Karma and Bad Karma (5)

"What? A ranking board?"

Yeongwoo, standing atop the fallen gorilla, gazed into the void.

However, the ranking board had yet to appear.

Without hesitation, Yeongwoo drove his Bastard into the creature's neck.

Splat!

The gorilla's already melting skin, corroded by its own acidic blood, gave way like tofu.

-No... this is absurd.

-Oh my God...

The remaining members of Unit 002 were visibly demoralized by the spectacle.

Even the virtuous members of Unit 023, who were on the verge of descending to assist Yeongwoo, froze in their tracks.

-...Horrific.

Amana summed up the scene underfoot with a brief remark.

At that moment, a glowing entity from Unit 002, who had been wielding a lightning spear, glanced toward the plains behind them and muttered:

-I'm sorry.

Then, spreading its arms, it sent a current surging toward a chained knight who was still alive.

Crackle!

It had paralyzed the knight to buy itself time to escape.

-Damn it!

The chained knight stiffened instantly and fell to the ground, screaming in frustration.

Soon, the sickening sound of corrosion mixed with the pungent smell of blood emanated from right beside his head.

"....."

It was none other than Jeong Yeongwoo, the First Evil of Promotion.

-Pl-please spare me...

"There's a saying on Earth."

"W-what are you suddenly talking about...?"

-If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

"...What does that mean?"

-It means whether you go fast or far, you're dying at my hands."

Bastard pierced the chained knight's forehead in an instant.

Splat!

He then turned his gaze to the lone escapee who had chosen to flee and paralyze an ally rather than running together.

Had that enemy decided to split in opposite directions instead, it would have been far more challenging to chase them.

But thanks to their betrayal, Yeongwoo now had only one target to focus on.

This left him in a position where he didn't even need to run to capture them.

"General, time to rack up some merit points. Let me give you the coordinates."

Yeongwoo pulled out a coordinate tracker from his pocket as he spoke.

In no time, the coordinates of the promotion arena appeared in his vision.

Flash!

[||-Beset-007-469-2088-13]

"Huh?"

Yeongwoo unconsciously parted his lips at a strange sense of discomfort.

The reason was none other than the identification code of this planet.

||-Beset

The planetary ID code, Beset, was strikingly shorter than any he had seen before.

'What's with this place? Why is its code so unusually short?'

The promotion evaluation was managed by the Planetary Court.

And this was the second test location, the Promotion Arena.

Thus, the owner of this planet was likely the Planetary Court, or in other words, the intergalactic government.

'Could it be because it's a government-owned planet?'

A short identification code could mean it was assigned early in the planetary classification process.

This implied that the planet was either relatively close to the center of the universe or—

'It could mean it's an ancient planet.'

Whatever the case, it was clear that this planet was no ordinary one.

Which raised the question—how could external bombardment occur here?

'Does that mean the Planetary Court authorized it? That planetary bombardment weapons can be used within the Promotion Arena?'

Given that this was a venue where representatives of various planets showcased their accumulated might, it made sense for all firepower to be permitted.

"Beset, 007, 469, 2088, 13!"

When Yeongwoo recited the coordinates of the fleeing enemy, Toma's laser cannon fired down from the sky without delay.

Boom!

'You're getting quicker at inputting coordinates.'

Yeongwoo smiled with satisfaction, noticing how much faster the General had become at reacting.

And in the meantime—

Crash!

The last survivor of Unit 002, who had been fleeing desperately, was annihilated.

「Team 002, annihilated.」

At that moment, the central-western section of the Promotion Arena was nearly obliterated.

[45/50]

With five units now eliminated, an announcement was made.

Amana and her team descended to the ground just in time.

-That's monstrous.

Her gaze lingered in the direction where the laser had just torn through the sky.

She couldn't fathom that this insane Evil Karma Collector had even managed to deploy planetary bombardment weapons.

-Does you have any more ultimate moves up your sleeve? It'd be nice to know before I get shocked again.

When Amana asked this, Yeongwoo blinked briefly.

The only thing that came to mind immediately was a friend he could summon with a whistle, but then, another thought struck him.

"Don't talk down to me."

-...What?

"Even our Crown Prince uses honorifics with me. Who do you think you are to speak so rudely?"

Swish!

As Yeongwoo brandished his ultimate weapon, Bastard, Amana bristled, clicking her beak in frustration.

-What's wrong with you all of a sudden? Are you insane?

"The truly insane one is you, daring to disrespect a villain with an Evil Karma Count of two hundred million. Do you want me to send an eulogy I've written about you to the good folks of Sutral?"

-You...!

Amana tried to retort but shut her beak.

If nothing else, she didn't want the lunatic's eulogy delivered to her home planet.

"You guys are so good-hearted that I end up doing all the dirty work, and yet instead of giving me a penny, you talk down to me? Isn't that basically asking to be killed on the spot?"

As the characteristic madness flickered in Yeongwoo's eyes, Amana finally took a step back.

-C-calm down. I think I may have made a mistake...

Amana broke into a cold sweat.

After all, as he'd just seen, surviving this promotion arena would be impossible without this villain from Earth.

"Yes, let's get along well."

With those words, Yeongwoo picked up his severed left arm and reattached it to his torso, causing everyone present to freeze in place.

Squeak.



They had just witnessed his neatly severed arm seamlessly rejoin his shoulder in an instant.

-Y-Yeongwoo...?

-Your arm just...

No one, except Yeongwoo, had ever considered the possibility of fighting a teammate, yet they couldn't help but be stunned.

Yeongwoo's display of recovery was nothing short of astonishing.

"Hm."

As he checked his left arm, now moving bit by bit, Yeongwoo turned his gaze to the still-hidden leaderboard hovering in midair.

"We need to move quickly. Everyone around here probably saw us exchanging fire with Team 002."

-What does that have to do with us needing to hurry...?

Elemental Immunity Golem Taru asked, seemingly clueless.

Yeongwoo's gaze shifted to the world map projected prominently in the arena's air.

"By now, everyone in the central-west should be fleeing to somewhere far from us."

-And?

"And we need to chase them down and kill them, of course."

With an unchanging expression, Yeongwoo spoke of "killing" as if it were mundane.

The three benevolent allies, on the other hand, looked burdened despite just escaping the jaws of death.

-Do we really need to go out of our way to hunt them down and kill them?

-Exactly.

"If you let them go, they'll come back stronger, you know..."

Yeongwoo sighed and rubbed his forehead.

“The examiners surely know there’s a big power gap among participants. So they must have scattered something across the promotion arena to offset it.”

And in Yeongwoo’s mind, that “something” was the elements marked on the world map—beast-shaped icons likely representing monsters, as well as shield and shop icons.

Just now—

“Ah!”

He noticed one of the monster icons near the central-west disappearing.

That meant at least one team had been stationed there until moments ago.

‘Huh, so the world map updates in real time.’

This meant they could avoid pointless wandering if they watched the map closely.

“Amana, can you take us to that location as quickly as possible?”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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Yeongwoo pointed to the area above where the monster icon had vanished.

There was still an unknown shield icon there, and Yeongwoo believed it was the next destination of the team that had just dealt with the monster.

-That shield? We can reach it within three minutes.

“That’s plenty. Let’s go right now.”

At Yeongwoo’s command, Amana nodded and once again enveloped the team in wind rings, lifting them high into the sky.

\* \* \*

At the same time, far above the promotion arena, the examination headquarters was abuzz as dozens of planetary examiners stared at a massive screen.

“Rankings will be revealed in one minute.”

In less than ten seconds, the power and scores of the second trial's participants would be displayed.

Normally, the first leaderboard during the second trial was just a preliminary indicator of early trends. But today was different.

- I heard Team 9 placed a bet?
- On what?
- Who knows?
- Aren't they just insane?

The examiners murmured.

A team had dared to challenge the "salary negotiation" system.

For planetary examiners, salary negotiations weren't with their employer, such as the Planetary Management Bureau or the Planetary Court.

The only way to increase their salary was to correctly predict which team would place first on the initial leaderboard of the second trial's promotion arena.

If successful, their salary would double.

If they failed, half of it would be slashed.

The peculiar purpose of this negotiation system was somewhat noble: encouraging examiners to spot and back promising candidates.

- When was the last time this happened?
- Feels like eight rounds ago.
- Did Team 9 have any basis for their bet? Where have they been recently?

Predicting the final victor was one thing, but guessing the first leaderboard leader—a position influenced by momentum and luck—was near impossible.

As a result, many examiners saw the salary negotiation system as a malicious government trap to reduce payroll costs.

Yet today, Team 9 unexpectedly declared their intention to negotiate, drawing every other examiner team to the headquarters.

「10 seconds until rankings are revealed.」

A notice flashed on the massive screen, and the large steel doors at the back of the hall swung open, revealing Team 9.

■ Hah! Have you all come to witness history in the making?

The team's senior examiner, Gern, clad in a heavy metal mask and a flowing cape, strode boldly through the crowd.

This was none other than the examiner who had accepted a bribe from Yeongwoo just the day before.

■ What's this about, you lunatics?

■ Why would you risk a salary negotiation?

■ Who did you bet on?

As the other examiners bombarded them with questions, a gaunt examiner to Gern's right let out a cackling laugh.

■ Heheh, today, we ascend to a higher plane.

Then, a massive floating water orb to Gern's left rolled its eyes.

■ We saw something incredible... on Earth.

At this, the others blinked in confusion.

■ Earth?

■ Wait, Earth as in...

■ The home of Dogo...

Finally, the screen displayed:

「Rankings revealed.」

The headquarters rumbled, the screen glowing brightly.

Down below, the promotion arena's leaderboard was simultaneously transmitted.

■ Hah.

Gern trembled as he slightly lifted the mask covering his face to check the screen.

He then lowered it again, murmuring softly.

■ We'll have no choice but to offer a wedding gift to that lunatic.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 365: The Ultimate Evil of Promotion (1)

Supersonic Descent.

While Team 023 was swiftly flying northward, beyond the sky, Evaluation Team 9 was basking in endless applause.

And soon, the reason for this applause descended upon the Promotion Hall.

BOOOOOM!

In the form of a massive pillar of light.

-What the—

Amana, leading her team through the skies, looked up, and her pupils were instantly filled with a blazing yellow glow.

Unfortunately, the ominous pillar of light was descending directly onto Team 023.

-Watch out—danger!

Mistaking the sudden burst of light for an attack, Amana swiftly maneuvered to evade.

The other three team members, tethered to her by a ring of wind, were thrown sideways with her abrupt movement.

-Ahhh!

-What's happening?!

Aldo and Taru screamed in panic.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo fixed his gaze on the yellow pillar of light that had just engulfed the space they'd occupied a moment earlier.

'What is that? Doesn't seem like an attack.'

Yeongwoo, a veteran of countless planetary bombardments, couldn't mistake destructive energy.

But no matter how he looked at it, the pillar of light before him didn't seem lethal.

"Amana, wait a moment."

At Yeongwoo's request, Amana, who had been about to retreat quickly, hesitated.

-Why? We should get out of here—

"That's not an attack."

-What did you say?

By this point, Yeongwoo had already freed himself from the wind ring and was descending to the ground.

Thud!

As if on cue, the yellow pillar of light began to shrink, leaving behind a golden chest on the ground.

'I knew it—something's there.'

Yeongwoo's eyes gleamed as Amana and the other two team members hurried down to the ground after noticing the chest.

-What the—

-There's a chest?

-So it wasn't an attack after all?

And just then—

FLASH!

From the sky above the Promotion Hall, golden waves erupted, filling the heavens.

It resembled golden rain, and Yeongwoo tilted his head to gaze at the sky.

The other three team members did the same.

“Looks like they’re making an announcement. Didn’t they mention releasing the rankings earlier?”

As Yeongwoo murmured, a colossal system message materialized in mid-air.

「First Ranking Release」

-What?!

-How did you know that, Yeongwoo?

-It’s true!

The three team members looked at Yeongwoo in suspicion, but he maintained a calm expression as he observed the message in the sky.

“It’s big enough for everyone in the Promotion Hall to see. That pillar of light earlier and this message—it’s clearly a notice everyone has to see.”

In a place like the Promotion Hall, the most likely candidate for such a grand announcement would be the rankings.

Revealing the rankings early would give an idea of the leading competitors’ strength and tendencies, allowing latecomers to strategize on whom to target or avoid.

BOOM!

With a deafening roar that shook the heavens, the ranking chart appeared.

SWOOOSH!

「Real-Time Score Rank #1: Team 023」

Following this, profile photos of Team 023 members appeared in the sky, as if taken without their knowledge.

-Huh?

-What?

-Why are our faces up there?

Yeongwoo's profile was at the forefront of Team 023. Clad in his Vesedel armor, it was clearly a recent photo.

"Don't they have privacy laws in space? And when did they even take this?"

The profiles of Team 023 displayed proper portraits showing them from the chest up, their faces blown up to enormous proportions for all to see.

It was practically a wanted poster disguised as a ranking board.

The rankings then continued with the second to fifth teams:

| Rank #2: Team 004

| Rank #3: Team 029

| Rank #4: Team 006

| Rank #5: Team 049

However, no profiles or photos were shown for these teams.

-What?! Why aren't their faces shown?

-This isn't fair.

-re they really only showing our faces?

As expected, the three team members grumbled, staring at their still-floating profiles with dissatisfaction.

They weren't naïve enough to endure unfair treatment without complaint.

But for someone as deeply steeped in villainy as Yeongwoo, his perspective was entirely different.

"Why is this unfair? This is actually a good thing."

-What?

-Excuse me?

-What do you mean by that?



“Didn’t we deliberately come to a place with the most teams to make ourselves prime targets?”

Of course, this wasn’t a strategy the other team members had agreed to.

“Now everyone knows who’s ranked first and what we look like. Those with ambition will be laser-focused on finding us.”

This time, the team members managed to piece it together themselves.

-No way.

-They’ll target us to take first place...?

-That’s insane.

“That’s the burden of being villains, folks.”

Yeongwoo grinned wickedly as he glanced at his team.

Just then, another boom resounded through the sky.

BOOM!

This time, it was the Power Rankings.

「Real-Time Power Rank #1: Team 023」

-What?!

-Power rank #1?!

-We’re first in both rankings?

The profiles of Team 023 disappeared from the sky as they took first place in the power rankings as well.

FLASH!

A video played in the skies, showing why Team 023 had been selected as the top-ranked team in power.

—These losers were all trash.

‘No, these crazy bastards.’

Yeongwoo immediately recognized his own voice and blinked in disbelief.

The footage showed him from just minutes ago in the central-western Promotion Hall, confronting their first opponents.

BOOM!

Earth's guardian, Jeong Yeongwoo07, was annihilating Team 011 with his overwhelming strength, wielding his weapon, Bastard.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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'If they're going to show that, won't it scare off the challengers? Who would want to ruin their plans by coming after us?'

Yeongwoo, slightly dumbfounded, watched his own display of power as he utterly destroyed Team 011.

It was certainly compelling evidence for ranking them first in power, but for potential challengers watching the same footage, their motivation to engage would likely plummet.

—Poima, I swear I'll avenge you!

—You despicable bastard!

The scene then switched to the desperate final stand of Count Katissan, the toad and the last survivor of Unit 011.

It replayed until, like his comrades, his body was split in two, and the footage ended.

Flash!

Next, a highlight reel appeared, like ending credits, showing the rankings of power from second to fifth place.

| Power Rank 2: 004

| Power Rank 3: 050

| Power Rank 4: 042

| Power Rank 5: 033

'Huh?'

But something seemed odd.

'Except for the second place, the scores and power rankings don't align at all.'

Aside from Unit 004, which ranked second in both score and power, the other top spots in the two rankings were held by entirely different units.

And what this suggested was...

'There's something going on. The scoring system isn't just based on elimination rankings.'

This wasn't entirely unexpected, given the numerous icons visible on the world map.

But the fact that the top spots, aside from the overwhelming first place and the still-mysterious second place, were distributed across various units indicated something unusual.

It implied that it was possible to achieve high scores without engaging in combat or demonstrating high combat power.

'What kind of bastards are raking in rewards without spilling a drop of blood?'

As Yeongwoo glared with a fierce intensity, Aldo, the second prince of the Shelbir royal family, looked at him with concern.

-Yeongwoo, is something the matter? Is there a problem?

Yeongwoo quickly changed his expression to one of brightness and replied as if nothing had happened.

"Oh, Prince, it's nothing. Any problem can be solved, right?"

He then glanced down at the unopened golden box and added:

"You all come from the world of good karma, but I hail from the world of evil karma. So I've never truly experienced anything like the 'benevolence' of the universe."

-Oh...

-Is that so?

-That's unfortunate.

What nonsense was this man about to spew again?

The three virtuous participants looked at Yeongwoo nervously.

"That's why I believe there's no such thing as 'benevolence' in this trial. Just look at how they've mixed people from the worlds of good karma and evil karma."

...What?

-What do you mean by that exactly?

-No benevolence? I don't quite understand.

Still inexperienced in the ways of the world of evil karma, the three virtuous participants tilted their heads in confusion.

Yeongwoo placed a hand on the golden box and spoke seriously.

"Why do you think this box has been placed here? Isn't it a reward for being ranked first in both score and power?"

-Well...

-Since you've ranked first in both categories, they must be giving you extra points.

-It must be some sort of ranking reward.

That was the logical assumption of the virtuous participants.

But Yeongwoo's opinion—or rather, his hope—was a bit different.

"If it were a simple reward, boxes would have been distributed to all top-ranking units. But this one was given only to us."

He was confident of this fact because the leaderboard and profile displays had appeared at the same location as the box's landing point.

Then Amana, growing impatient, asked Yeongwoo:

-So, what kind of reward do you think it is? Are you planning to use it to kill more participants? Just hurry up and open it so we can see what it is.

"Shall I?"

Without hesitation, Yeongwoo swung his mythic cursed sword.

Slash!

Right at the golden box's lock.

Clang!

The lock fell to the ground, split in two by the sword, and the box's lid flew open, emitting a radiant golden light.

-Oh...

-What is this?

-Wow.

The virtuous participants' eyes glimmered with gold as they gazed at the holy-looking light.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo reached into the box.

Swoosh.

From inside, he pulled out a small orb radiating a mysterious light.

"What the hell is this?"

Yeongwoo, who had been expecting a specialized weapon or tracker for the hunt, furrowed his brows at the unexpected item.

A system message then appeared in midair.

「Unit 023, ranked first overall, has obtained the special reward 'Game Maker'!」

"Game Maker?"

An ominous name.

The instructions for the "Game Maker" began to appear above the orb in Yeongwoo's hand.

[1] Discuss with your unit to determine the order of turns.

[2] Each member may input one primary rule in turn.

[3] Once a rule is input, it cannot be invalidated by subsequent members.

[4] When all members have input their rules, strike the device to confirm the rules.

[5] The confirmed rules will replace the existing rules of this trial, and previously earned points will be preserved.

“What?”

Yeongwoo’s eyes widened after reading the instructions.

Amana, who had been reading alongside him, raised her hand and shouted:

-From now on, no more killing! We can set the rules now!

“...Damn it.”

Virtue versus vice.

A one-against-three unfair battle.

Foreseeing the potential chaos, Yeongwoo closed his eyes tightly and muttered through gritted teeth:

“Please, don’t make crazy suggestions like banning all killing. Let’s pick something else, I beg you.”

Hearing this, Aldo cautiously raised his hand.

-Then... how about the unit that shakes the most hands wins?

[TL/N: These guys are kinda pissing me off 🤡.]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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Chapter 366: The Ultimate Evil of Promotion (2)

‘Damn it... Should I just kill these idiots?’

Yeongwoo glared sharply at the three virtuous aliens who were happily babbling absurd rules among themselves.

Honestly, if he wanted to win this trial, it would be much easier to send those three to heaven right now and proceed alone.

After all, didn’t he acquire the ridiculous ability to set the trial rules as he pleased?

‘I could send them all off in a single strike without any pain.’

But...

-How about we make the team that shakes the most hands the winner? Sounds like a great idea, doesn’t it?

-Right? I heard from Yeongwoo that on Earth, this symbolizes peace.

-Oh... such profound meaning.

Hearing his teammates earnestly spout such nonsense instantly cooled the murderous intent brewing inside him.

‘Idiots.’

Even Yeongwoo, before being a villain, was an Earthling, a human.

Earth, at least in theory, was a planet that revered benevolence and righteousness—human virtues, after all.

So even Yeongwoo, who had set foot on the path of villainy early on, had at least nominally espoused the principle of “cooperation.”

‘Cooperation...!’

For some reason, Yeongwoo’s steely heart grew warm.

Although he had accumulated nearly 200 million evil karma, there was still a trace of cooperation in his chest.

Of course, his belief that true cooperation in this harsh universe required immense wealth and power hadn’t wavered a bit.

And the first stepping stone toward that goal was this ascension trial.

'I must win, no matter what. There's no alternative.'

Yeongwoo clenched his fists.

However, the scenario of brutally killing the three virtuous aliens and embarking on a solo mission didn't sit well with him.

Not because of his human conscience, but because it was simply too predictable and uninteresting.

It felt like facing the same dilemma he had when he first encountered the choice of Karma Monopoly or the Golden Ratio path.

Besides...

'Everything I do here will be permanently recorded in the Karma Board. I can't leave behind a legacy of bullying these simpletons.'

Imagine if the Chairman were present in this situation.

Would the Chairman attack those who couldn't even fight back?

That would be unbecoming of their stature.

'...Hmm. Though it's hard to imagine. Knowing the Chairman, they'd probably start by punching the examiners.'

Either way, there was no denying he had encountered his greatest challenge since the Reset.

Killing them felt wrong, but sparing them would only allow them to enforce absurd rules that would hinder him.

"Are you done spouting nonsense, everyone?"

At last, Yeongwoo forcefully slammed a bastion into the ground and spoke in a domineering tone, silencing the noisy room instantly.

-Uh...

-I thought we agreed on shaking hands the most...

"Shut up. Nothing's been decided yet."

Whether it was fortunate or not, to finalize the new rules for this trial, they had to follow the "Game Maker" procedure.



[Rule-Setting Procedure]

[1] Discuss with your unit to determine the order of turns.

[2] Each member may input one primary rule in turn.

[3] Once a rule is input, it cannot be invalidated by subsequent members.

[4] When all members have input their rules, strike the device to confirm the rules.

[5] The confirmed rules will replace the existing rules of this trial, and previously earned points will be preserved.

‘So first, we need to officially decide the order.’

Each of the four team members could create one major rule, leading to a total of four new foundational principles.

Because of rule [3], rules set by earlier members couldn’t be nullified, making the first input position the most powerful.

‘Then I have no choice but to be the first to input a rule that gives me overwhelming control.’

For instance, he could input a rule stating that points could only be earned through killing.

This would preserve the existing points, allowing him to maintain his first-place position.

Just as Yeongwoo was about to seize the first position by grabbing the bastion again—

Swoosh.

-Ah, no! Yeongwoo!

Amazingly, Aldo stepped forward and blocked Yeongwoo and the bastion with his hand.

“What?”

Yeongwoo’s eyes flared with brief murderous intent, but fortunately, Aldo’s status as a valuable guest saved his head from being severed.

“...Your Highness, you may not block my weapon. This is your last warning.”

Yeongwoo warned as he easily pushed aside the bulky Aldo.

Thud.

Aldo fell backward and cried out pitifully.

-Are you going to threaten us again? I know you're aiming for the first spot!

"...!"

Yeongwoo was momentarily stunned.

-You plan to input a wicked rule we can't resist, don't you?

'This idiot isn't a complete fool after all.'

Yeongwoo was inwardly impressed and withdrew his hand from the bastion.

Swoosh.

He then gazed down at Aldo, who had landed on his backside.

"So, what do you want?"

-No.

"What?"

-You can't be the first, Yeongwoo.

Aldo twisted his head awkwardly while standing his ground against the ultimate villain.

Meanwhile, Amana and Taru quietly took their places behind Aldo, signaling their support.

A rebellion of the virtuous.

"...These weaklings."

Yeongwoo couldn't help but laugh incredulously.

If he wanted, he could kill everyone here in an instant.

"Do you really think you have a choice?"

Yeongwoo's words hung heavy in the air, but Aldo shook his tightly wound head left and right.

-Ah... No! We know we can't stop you!

"What?"

-But we can at least try.

"Try what?"

Yeongwoo furrowed his brow in confusion, and Aldo gazed vaguely into the distance.

-You're strong and clever, Yeongwoo, so you'll probably come up with an incredible rule. But if that happens, the weaker teams or those who prefer peaceful competition will all perish.

"That's obvious."

Yeongwoo sighed, as if this was a trivial matter, but Aldo suddenly tightened his resolve.

-It's not obvious!

"...What?"

-No one agreed to these new rules of the trial! Stripping everyone's options with a sudden rule change is unfair!

In other words, these virtuous aliens were not only thinking of themselves but also the potential other good or weak contestants scattered throughout the trial.

-We're the only ones who can propose something to you. Even if it's just once... we must try. If we don't, there will be no hope left in this trial.

"Don't talk about hope. The universe doesn't work that way."

Yeongwoo found their words ridiculous.

But so did Aldo and the two virtuous aliens.

-We are part of this universe too, Yeongwoo!

"...Damn it."

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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It was both true and untrue.

If Yeongwoo swung his bastion now, they would no longer exist in the universe.

“Honestly, with just one attack, I could...”

Before Yeongwoo could finish, Aldo spoke as if reading his thoughts.

-We’d vanish, and so would countless planetary guardians in this trial. That would be the outcome of the karma we’ve built. And you, Yeongwoo, would add another burden of karma to your shoulders.

“.....”

The karma that would arise the moment Yeongwoo wielded his blade of death at this very juncture.

Yeongwoo himself was well aware that it would be evil karma.

And Aldo, in his long-winded way, was explaining that if they erased good people through the logic of power, one day, only beings of evil karma would remain in this universe.

“Hey, no, seriously, why is it that so-called ‘virtuous beings’ are always so weak? If you guys had been stronger in the first place, none of this would’ve happened, right?”

As Yeongwoo voiced the doubts that had been vaguely forming in his mind, Aldo immediately responded.

-Evil beings aren’t strong, and good beings aren’t weak. A strong being who makes virtuous choices becomes a truly powerful bearer of good karma.

These words came from none other than the second prince of Doatel, a planet known as a sanctuary in the universe.

Having never done a single virtuous deed in his life, Yeongwoo couldn’t find a rebuttal.

“Well, but...”

Didn’t you have to be evil first, in order to become strong?

At least, that was the law of the universe Yeongwoo had learned.

And indeed, even Yeongwoo himself hadn’t done anything virtuous...

‘Ah.’

As he unconsciously rewound his past, Yeongwoo’s eyes suddenly opened wide.

Just once.

Perhaps there had been one act he could call virtuous.

Like the golden box visible in the distance, hadn’t he once painted the sky gold himself?

Instead of monopolizing three million karma, he distributed thirty thousand.

The Golden Ratio Act.

-Good and evil are not absolutely divided. Though Yeongwoo-nim carries as much as two hundred million points of evil karma, the evil karma of our team has ultimately converged to zero. We still exist within balance. And now, we, in this balance, have reached the point of establishing new rules for this Promotion Grounds.

Aldo, with his non-existent eyes, gazed at Yeongwoo’s blade of death.

In truth, the balance had been maintained simply because Yeongwoo hadn’t slaughtered his teammates as soon as he arrived at the Hall.

After all, hadn’t he decided to go through this test with them?

And finally, the balance of Team 023 faced a genuine trial.

If Yeongwoo slew the three virtuous beings here and set his own rules, the scales would undoubtedly tip.

Under extreme rules, countless planetary guardians would die, and in the process, the vast good karma would vanish forever from the universe.

-Good karma brings forth good rewards and maintains the balance of the universe. But if the bearer disappears before the reward arrives, that reward, too, will never be recorded in the ledger.

“But I’m a man in the violence business. A literal violence dealer. Isn’t it maintaining balance for me to wield violence, as long as dreamers like you exist?”

As Yeongwoo said this and turned his gaze toward the still-bright “Game Maker,” Aldo stood up, extending his right hand before Yeongwoo.

-I request a powerful handshake, Jeong Yeongwoo-nim from Earth.

“.....!”

-Please grant me the first turn.

Unfamiliar with Earth's culture, Aldo seemed to think that requesting a strong handshake also allowed one to make a strong request.

Yeongwoo alternated his gaze between Aldo and his blade of death.

“Why on earth should I bother dealing with people like you? If you just gathered all the virtuous beings together, wouldn't they have died off on their own?”

Of course, if that had happened, the universe would have long become a monster-infested hell, and there would be no officials to maintain even minimal order, nor would there be systems like the Golden Ratio Reset.

Ultimately, the existence of a certain level of balance had paradoxically given rise to beings like Yeongwoo.

“What happens if I decide to spare you and those other so-called virtuous beings who may or may not be in this Promotion Grounds?”

Aldo alternated his gaze between the two virtuous beings on either side and replied.

-Honestly, I don't know!

“What?”

-That is something only the records can...

“Ugh, shut up. If that's the nonsense you're going to spout, then zip it, Your Highness.”

Yeongwoo let out a deep sigh.

“This endless talk of the ledger, seriously convenient.”

With that, he pulled out his blade of death embedded in the ground.

Clang!

Seeing this, the three virtuous beings gathered together flinched, leaning their upper bodies back with surprised expressions.

It seemed inevitable that the crimson-black sword would soon slash toward them.

And indeed, Yeongwoo himself...

“You’ve got to be kidding me!”

Whish!

He swung his blade of death toward his teammates, stopping just before the blade could touch them.

Ssst.

“Your Highness.”

-...Yes? Yes?

“If I give you the first turn, what rule will you establish?”

-Well, uh...

Aldo broke into a cold sweat.

Then he mumbled something as nonsensical as before.

-The team that performs the most handshakes in the Promotion Grounds...

“No.”

“...?”

“How about this: if you take down the current first-place team, you claim first place?”

-...Huh?

“Then, of course, the evil ones will come after us, right? On the other hand, if your claim that many virtuous beings are in this Hall is true, they won’t come to kill us.”

-But those who come after us will...

“Well, they’re obviously evil, so wouldn’t it be better if they died? For the balance of the universe, no less? I’ve already got 200 million points of evil karma under my belt.”

-Uh, hmm...

At Yeongwoo’s rather extreme proposition, Aldo couldn’t find words, so Amana cautiously raised her hand.

-Then what about the rankings from second to fifth place? Don’t forget that up to fifth place gets to be promoted.

“Oh, right.”

Yeongwoo nodded as if he had just remembered.

“Then, Amana, you add that rule.”

-...Me?

“Yes, you include it during your turn. Rank second to fifth based on the number of handshakes.”

Then he pointed at Taru.

“Taru, you build a paradise for the defeated.”

-What do you mean by that?

“Set aside a corner of the Hall where those unwilling to fight can gather and shake hands until they’re bored. But anyone who enters won’t qualify for the rankings.”

In other words, a kind of neutral zone.

-Well... that’s not a bad idea.

Taru, seemingly the most mild-tempered of the group, nodded.

“Alright, done? Then let’s begin.”

As Yeongwoo gestured for Aldo to activate the Game Maker with his glowing blade, Amana asked a sharp question.

-Wait.

“What now?”

-What about you?

“Me?”

-One rule per teammate. That means you’ll get to establish a rule too, right? What exactly are you planning to do by letting us go first?

Indeed, as the last in turn, Yeongwoo could come up with an ingenious strategy to outwit everyone.

But what came out of Yeongwoo’s mouth was an unexpected proper noun.



“Dogo.”

-...What?

“I want everyone in the Promotion Grounds to chant Dogo.”

[Translator - Night]

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[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 367: The Ultimate Evil of Promotion (3)

-Do... Go?

Amana tilted her head, opening her beak in curiosity.

Yeongwoo nodded in response.

"Yes, Dogo."

-What is Dogo?

"It is the name of my benefactor as well as the company sponsoring me."

Jeong Yeongwoo, No. 07 from Earth.

Noticing that this villain's tone had suddenly become uncharacteristically polite, Amana felt her feathers bristle with unease.

Something so awe-inspiring that even this scoundrel couldn't help but show reverence—it terrified her to think such a thing existed in this universe.

-You have... a sponsor?

Much like Yeongwoo, Amana herself represented a lower-tier planet just beginning to brush against the vastness of the cosmos.

The universe, for her as well, was still a realm of the unknown.

-But why make everyone shout that sponsor's name?

Yeongwoo took a deep breath, then spoke in a transcendent tone he hadn't used in some time.

"「Dogo」 is a business. As Dogo's promotional model, it is my duty to make the brand's name shine and spread it far and wide."

Dogo.

A name that referred to both a galactic weapons manufacturer and a member of the royal Vesedel lineage who had founded the enterprise.

And the way Yeongwoo pronounced 「Dogo」 just now carried all these connotations at once.

-My... my goodness.

The owlbear from the sacred planetary patrol clacked her beak rapidly in shock.

To her, the existence of 「Dogo」 representing the pinnacle of violent enterprise, was unimaginable.

-Ah... Is this truly real?

-Un... Unbelievable.

Reading the sinister weight behind Yeongwoo's utterance of 「Dogo」 both Aldo and Taru shuddered uncontrollably.

For beings who had lived only in worlds of light before stepping into the promotion grounds, this alternate universe—fraught with threats, extortion, assaults on officials, and arms dealing—was a nightmare beyond their wildest imagination.

And now, they realized for the first time that such a world had always existed on the other side of the cosmos.

"Do you understand now why I try to resolve everything with power?"

Yeongwoo, hailing from the dark side of the universe, swung Bastard menacingly as he shouted, causing Amana to gape in terror, her beak trembling.

-Y-you... really have a Karma Debt of 200 million...!

"200 million? That's nothing, you fools! In the universe I come from—no, in the universe we live in—you can't even qualify for anything noteworthy with just 200 million!"

Of course, this only applied to mid-tier villains at best.

After all, Yeongwoo was already the supreme evil among representatives of lower-tier planets.

"Now, hurry up and propose the new rules."

Yeongwoo gestured alternately between Aldo and the game-maker with Bastard, prompting the poor second prince of the Shelbir Kingdom to furrow his brow.

-Apologies, but what did you say earlier...? Something about defeating the top team?

"If you eliminate the current top-ranked team, you'll take their spot as number one."

-...Ah.

"That way, we won't have to feel guilty about dealing with anyone who comes for us."

Aldo was about to raise the issue of the Karma Debt this might incur but quickly closed his mouth instead.

Then, following Yeongwoo's instructions, he placed his hand on the surface of the game-maker.

Tap.

With a flash of mysterious light, the spinning game-maker shone brightly and displayed a system message visible to all.

「The first participant is attempting to create the first rule. Do all team members agree?」

It seemed to be a confirmation protocol.

If even one team member disagreed, the rule wouldn't proceed.

‘So unnecessarily systematic.’

「Do all team members agree?」

The game-maker repeated the question as silence lingered.

Yeongwoo, Amana, and Taru responded in succession.

"Yes."

-I agree.

-I agree as well!

Immediately, the game-maker spun faster, creating a large holographic box—a text field they had seen several times before.

Entering a rule here would establish the first new regulation for this advancement round.

"Let's do it."

Yeongwoo tilted Bastard, urging Aldo to proceed.

Aldo, still frowning deeply, placed both hands on the game-maker.

-Make it so you can only become number one by defeating the current top-ranked team.

Aldo finally voiced the first rule.

Soon, a loud signal blared from the game-maker.

Beeeeep!

「The first rule of this advancement round has been successfully created.」

[To achieve first place in the advancement round, you must defeat the current top-ranked team.]

"Wow, it refines the input nicely,"

Yeongwoo remarked with satisfaction, glancing at Amana, who suddenly looked even more tense.

-My turn?

Amana cautiously approached the game-maker and placed her arms on it.

Tuk.

As before, the process of seeking consent from the team began.

Once everyone voiced their agreement, another text box appeared.

Fwoosh!

"I... I..."

Overwhelmed with nervousness, Amana hesitated, prompting Yeongwoo to assist her.

"Teams ranked second to fifth will be assigned based on the number of handshakes exchanged with other teams."

-Oh.

Yeongwoo added a clarification.

"A handshake doesn't have to involve the right hand. Any physical contact made with the body part typically used to hold a primary weapon counts, as long as the two parties separate without fighting."

This was a consideration for the diverse species in the cosmos, some of which might not even have arms or legs.

-Ah... I see.

Understanding Yeongwoo's explanation, Amana clicked her beak a few times and then entered the second rule for the advancement round.

「The second rule of the promotion match has been newly entered.」

[For those ranked 2nd to 5th in the promotion match, rankings will be determined by the total number of "handshakes" executed.]

\*Handshake: A gesture involving physical contact and greeting the opponent, followed by parting ways without engaging in combat.

"That's... surprisingly considerate."

Well, considering the promotion grounds were filled with all kinds of different species, it made sense to have a clear definition of "handshake" to avoid misunderstandings.

This new rule increased the likelihood that ranks 2 through 5 would depend less on combat strength and more on how effectively one could win over the favor of others.

Since everyone would now know that the number of handshakes directly influenced rankings, it wasn't likely that people would randomly handshake with just anyone.

Those with unapproachable appearances or intimidating auras were at a clear disadvantage.

'But won't there be cases where people just buy handshakes with money? They could use IOUs or something.'

Yeongwoo, whose thoughts were steeped in deviousness, was already entertaining unethical schemes.

If he had been aiming for a spot in the top 5, he would undoubtedly have pursued such tactics.

On the other hand...

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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-So, the rankings will really be decided by handshakes now.

-And with the added condition of parting ways without combat... That's a relief.

-At least some of the planets with significant good karma may succeed in this promotion match.

The other three proponents of good karma seemed relieved, pleased that such a rule had been implemented.

'These guys are ridiculously optimistic. The universe really is vast if people like them are still alive.'

Yeongwoo shook his head in disbelief, then motioned toward Taru, the last of the good-karma proponents.

"Alright, Taru, it's your turn."

According to Yeongwoo's description, the rule Taru was about to make was essentially a haven for losers.

The rule was to establish a "surrender zone."

"This is the Midwest right now, so those who intend to fight us would naturally gather here. What's the opposite direction?"

When Yeongwoo asked this, Taru blinked a few times before answering.

-The east... perhaps?

"Correct. The east is likely the opposite direction. So, let's tell anyone who wants to surrender to head there."

At Yeongwoo's suggestion, Taru scratched his head before stepping up to the game maker.

-Uh... Please designate the far eastern end of the promotion grounds as a place where people can surrender.

The game maker rephrased Taru's request and presented it as follows:

「The third rule of the promotion match has been newly entered.」

[A designated safe zone has been established in the eastern part of the promotion grounds. Entering this zone means forfeiting the chance to rank and guarantees immunity from attacks by other teams.]

“Hm, that's reasonable enough.”

Now, the western part of the promotion grounds would become a battlefield for the “real contenders,” while the eastern part would be crowded with those surrendering or seeking handshakes.

For those still vying for a rank, they would have no choice but to pursue the teams heading east to desperately request handshakes.

‘It's obvious, so obvious.’

Ironically, the peaceful eastern zone could become more chaotic than the war-torn western zone.

‘In any case... whether they beg for handshakes or buy them with money, only planets with that level of determination deserve to advance.’

For Yeongwoo, it was crucial to maintain his position as 1st place, and this arrangement suited him well.

He could protect his top spot while pacifying the good-karma proponents and avoiding excessive bad karma.

“Well then, it's finally my turn.”

When Yeongwoo stepped forward, the three good-karma proponents instinctively tensed and retreated slightly.

“The fact that so many planetary guardians have survived this promotion match is entirely thanks to the mercy of the universal weapon brand, Dogo.”

As Yeongwoo spoke, the Dogo emblem on his upper right arm lit up brightly.

“From this day forward, those who didn’t know Dogo will come to know its great name, and those who did will give thanks for its miraculous mercy.”

He then placed his hand on the game maker.

Thump!

“When the new rule is declared, every participant must shout ‘Dogo’ at the top of their lungs. For those who lack a voice, mimic the emblem with their bodies.”

Then Yeongwoo added an ominous clause.

“Anyone who fails to chant ‘Dogo’ within 30 seconds of the new rule’s declaration will die immediately.”

[PR/N: Actually insane wtf?? 🐼]

-What?

-What did you say?

-Immediate death...?

The three good-karma proponents were visibly horrified.

Of course, it was uncertain whether the game maker would actually implement such a condition.

But since it was a key rule of the game, there had to be an undeniable reason to enforce it.

“Better than turning the promotion grounds into a living hell. Isn’t it easier to shout ‘Dogo’ and survive?”

As Yeongwoo removed his hand from the game maker, the rule generator began spinning rapidly in mid-air.

Whiiiiirrr!

Finally, it produced the rule.

「The final rule of the promotion match has been newly entered.」

[Within 30 seconds of the new rule’s announcement, any participant who does not fervently worship ‘Dogo’ will die immediately.]



“Hah, this thing’s even harsher than me.”

Even Yeongwoo, infamous for his ruthlessness, was impressed by the term “fervently worship,” which hadn’t crossed his mind.

“Well, no objections, right? Let’s proceed as is.”

When Yeongwoo tapped the game maker twice to confirm the rule, it shot into the sky, erupting in a massive explosion visible to all in the promotion grounds.

Boom!

As if signifying the collapse of the existing order.

Rumble...!

The ground of the entire promotion grounds quaked, capturing everyone’s attention, while a giant system message appeared in the sky.

「The previous rules have been replaced by new ones set by Team 023, the current overall 1st place.」

Surprisingly, instead of starting from Rule 1, the system began revealing the rules in reverse order, starting with the final Rule 4.

「Regretfully, from this moment onward, anyone who does not fervently worship ‘Dogo’ within 30 seconds will die immediately.」

[TL/N: HAAAAHA REGRETFULLY HAAHAHAHA.]

“What? Regretfully? That wasn’t part of my wording.”

As Yeongwoo frowned and muttered, a holographic Dogo emblem accompanied by a countdown appeared in everyone’s field of view.

Flash!

「30」

“...Huh?”

「29」

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 368: The Ultimate Evil of Promotion (4)

「28」

‘What? These bastards are even putting a timer on me, who's already aligned with Dogo?’

While Yeongwoo widened his eyes in disbelief, chaos had already erupted on the other side.

-Do, Dogo?

-Dogo...!

-Dogo!!!

The three aliens of Team 023 were reaching toward the sky, repeatedly shouting "Dogo" at the top of their lungs.

Like the other participants, the aliens didn't want to return to their home planet as lifeless corpses.

Thus, they screamed "Dogo" until their throats were sore.

「24」

...

「23」

But the fatal countdown timer showed no signs of stopping.

-Huh?

-W-We definitely did it, right?

-Dogo! Dogo...!

The three aliens' faces turned pale with fear.

Meanwhile...

"D-Dogo!"

Yeongwoo, like the other participants, watched the unrelenting countdown timer with growing anxiety.

「18」

"What the hell is going on here?"

No matter how desperately they shouted, the timer didn't stop.

According to the rules, the timer hitting zero meant death.

「Unfortunately, anyone who does not worship 'Dogo' with utmost desperation within 30 seconds will die instantly.」

"D-Dogo! Chairman...!"

Even Yeongwoo, who was supposedly endorsed by Dogo, looked up at the sky in panic.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, the three aliens shouted as if they were about to burst into tears.

-Dogo! Dogo!

-Dogo! Save us!

-Dogo! Please!

The arena descended into utter pandemonium.

This wasn't limited to just this section; every team in the promotion match was likely experiencing the same chaos.

"Hey, you crazy bastard! Who gave you permission to change the rules like this?"

Yeongwoo cursed as the timer dropped to 13 seconds.

「13」

The final rule Yeongwoo had submitted to the game maker was to "shout Dogo as loud as you can."

But the game maker had gone beyond that, twisting the rule into something catastrophic.

「Anyone who does not worship ‘Dogo’ with utmost desperation will die instantly.」

Desperately worship Dogo.

What exactly did the system mean by "utmost desperation"?

“ 「Dogo!」 This promotion match! With the mercy of the great ‘Dogo’...!”

Yeongwoo tried once again, screaming with all his might in an almost transcendent tone, but the timer before him remained unmoved.

「10」

Now just 10 seconds.

「9」

The countdown continued without mercy.

‘Damn it. I fell into my own trap!’

What on earth did he have to do to satisfy the condition of "utmost desperation"?

‘Are you saying what I’ve been doing isn’t desperate enough? How could I possibly be more desperate than this?’

As Yeongwoo struggled to comprehend, his gaze landed on the three aliens who were clinging to each other.

-Dogo...!

-Dogo!

-Lord Dogo! Can’t you hear us?

The sight of them wailing and almost weeping was both absurd and pitiable.

At this point, one might assume their behavior qualified as "utmost desperation."

Yet, even in their vision, the fatal timer showed no sign of disappearing, and soon it ticked down to the final five seconds.

「5」

-Aah!

-Are we really doomed here...?

「4」

With only 4 seconds remaining, the aliens rushed to Yeongwoo.

-Y-Yeongwoo!

-Isn't there something else we can do?

-No matter how hard we try, it's not working!

Now genuinely desperate, they turned to him for answers, fearing their impending demise.

「3」

But at that moment, Yeongwoo...

“ 「DOOGOOOOOOO!!!」 ...!”

He screamed "Dogo" with every ounce of strength he had, leaving no room to respond to the aliens.

After all, the idea that someone like him—Dogo's official sponsor—might fail to worship properly and die was utterly unacceptable.

Yet...

「2」

The timer didn't stop, finally reaching its last digit.

「1」

“What?”

A reality too unbelievable to accept.

For the first time, everyone, including Yeongwoo, looked genuinely terrified.

-D-Dogo...

Prince Aldo, the second son of the Shelbir royal family, muttered "Dogo" one last time.

And then...

「-」

The timer expired and vanished before everyone's eyes.

“.....!”

Gasp.

-T-The timer...!

-Wait, what happens now?

-Was death truly the outcome?

As everyone braced for the worst, squeezing their eyes shut, only Yeongwoo kept his eyes open, glaring at the sky.

Something felt off.

‘Those bastards, don’t tell me...’

The game maker’s announcement had been clear: failing to desperately worship Dogo within 30 seconds would result in death.

But nowhere did it state that succeeding in worshiping would stop the timer.

In other words...

‘Are they seriously making us scream Dogo for the full 30 seconds?’

As Yeongwoo’s jaw dropped in disbelief, a large system message flashed in the air, glowing a menacing red.

「Team 018, eliminated.」

-What?

-Gasp.

-E-Eliminated? That wasn't even a battle, was it?

Taru pointed at the elimination message with his massive finger.

As he said, it was unlikely the elimination was due to combat.

Just moments ago, all teams had been too preoccupied with worshipping Dogo.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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This meant their deaths were for another reason entirely.

'So they're really killing people! Who were the idiots who refused to worship Dogo?'

Of course, the fools who defied the rules were already dead, their faces unidentifiable.

「Team 046, eliminated.」

Another team was wiped out.

-H-Huh?

-They're dropping like flies!

-Are they being dealt with in order?

Amana's words rang true; the system seemed to be systematically eliminating participants.

Which meant that if anyone in Team 023 had performed subpar worship, they might be next.

「Team 008, eliminated.」

Yet another team vanished in an instant.

-Ah...

-Are we next? Is it going to be our turn soon?

As Taru looked at Yeongwoo with a fearful expression, he scratched his chin.

“Whether it's your turn or not really depends on you, doesn't it?”

-...?

-What do you mean?

“Ask yourself this: have you worshipped the System with such desperation that you could stand proud before it?”

And in that moment—

Thunk!

With a loud signal, another team was eliminated.

「Team 024, annihilated.」

“...!”

Team 024.

Being just one number apart from their own, even Yeongwoo couldn't help but flinch.

‘008, 018, 024, 046... Four teams eliminated.’

Why did they perish?

Was it because they didn't take the new rules seriously?

Or perhaps they worshipped under duress but lacked true desperation?

‘Whatever the case, it's clear their entire teams slacked off.’

One more intriguing detail was that none of the annihilated teams had been on the leaderboard.

In other words, every team listed on the leaderboard had clearly screamed their devotion with everything they had.

‘People with more to lose always fight harder.’

That was why Yeongwoo himself had been wailing like a madman earlier.

And it had paid off.

Soon, a message appeared, announcing the end of the "purge."



Flash!

「Participants who refused to abide by the new rules have been eliminated.」

-Oh... Does that mean we made it?

-Looks like it.

-For sure... we gave it everything we had.

The three followers of virtue heaved sighs of relief.

Then, the next rule for the promotion match, newly set by Team 023, was revealed.

「From now on, a designated area in the eastern part of the promotion field will be marked as a safe zone.」

「Entering this area means you cannot re-enter the leaderboard, but you will also be safe from attacks by other teams.」

A green circle appeared on the eastern edge of the world map displayed in the sky.

Swoosh!

“That must be the safe zone,”

Yeongwoo said, pointing at the map with Bastard in hand.

At the same time, countless numbers began to appear on the map.

-Huh?

-Wait, is that...?

Even the three followers of virtue could immediately recognize what it was.

They were none other than the real-time locations of the surviving teams.

With the rules of the game shifting dramatically, the positions of all teams had now been revealed.

And the most obvious reason for this was, of course—

[023]

Team 023 was highlighted in bright yellow in the central-western part of the map, clearly marked as the creators of the new rules and the ultimate boss to beat for anyone aiming for first place.

“They’re outright broadcasting our location.”

Yeongwoo scrunched his nose and muttered, prompting Amana, who was studying the map, to add a comment.

-But every team’s location is visible, so it’s fair enough.

Indeed, Team 023 could see where other teams were heading—whether they were retreating to the safe zone or hesitating.

Among them, one stood out.

[004]

Stationary not far from the central-western area was Team 004.

‘004? Those guys? Second in power, second in score.’

By all measurable metrics, they were the strongest team in the promotion match apart from Team 023.

Knowing this, they were likely pausing to strategize.

Then came the announcement of a peculiar rule.

「The rankings from second to fifth place in the promotion match will now be determined by the total number of 'handshakes' executed.」

\*Handshake: The act of making physical contact with another participant as a greeting, then parting ways without engaging in combat.

At this, the teams moving toward the safe zone froze in place on the world map.

The unexpected rule had thrown everyone into confusion.

But Team 023 had one more trick up their sleeve.

「The final rule has been activated! The first place in the promotion match can only be achieved by eliminating the current top team.」

And an additional message followed, unprompted:

「The ultimate victor will receive an incredibly powerful exclusive benefit. Aim for the throne to restore your planet's glory.」

‘I figured as much.’

Having explored countless dungeons and claimed hidden rewards, this didn't surprise Yeongwoo.

But for the other participants, it seemed to be a significant motivator.

Why?

-Hey, Yeongwoo!

As soon as the final rule was announced, Aldo pointed at the world map.

“What, is Team 004 charging straight at us?”

Such a scenario was already within Yeongwoo's expectations.

He turned to the world map Aldo indicated with a calm expression.

Slide.

Then—

“...What?”

Numbers scattered across the map were converging in one direction.

Specifically, they were moving toward the central-western area, where Team 023 was located.

“What the...?”

Yeongwoo blinked, double-checking the map.

This time, it was unmistakable.

“Are these bastards for real?”

Nearly every team in the promotion field was now heading toward the throne.

“These morons! I said handshakes, and they're doubling down on bad hands.”

Realizing the inevitable bloodshed ahead, Yeongwoo closed his eyes.

Behind him, the three followers of virtue could do nothing but squeeze their eyes shut as well.

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 369: The Ultimate Evil of Promotion (5)

-Y-Yeongwoo, what happens now?

Aldo, staring at the world map, let out a frightened voice.

In response, Yeongwoo calmly aimed at the world map floating in the air with his weapon, Bastard.

Dozens of teams, including the powerful contender Team 004, were closing in fast.

What would happen next?

"Well, what else? We'll just have to follow the rules."

According to the new rule, the only way to claim the top spot in the promotion battle was to defeat the current first-ranked team.

From the perspective of the current top-ranked team, as long as they weren't defeated by another team, they could retain their position.

"Challenging and fighting is perfectly legal. We all agree on that, right?"

Yeongwoo asked, his eyes gleaming fiercely.

The three virtuous aliens hesitantly nodded, looking visibly uncomfortable.

Given the situation, they couldn't very well forbid counterattacks against this madman.

-But not everyone coming this way is here to fight,

Amana said, trying to deny the grim reality.

It wasn't a baseless claim.

"What do you mean? If they're not here to fight, why are they coming?"

-...Handshake.

"Excuse me?"

-Ranks two through five are determined by the number of handshakes, aren't they?

As Amana spoke, she looked down at her right hand.

-With the new top-ranked rule, many teams started moving toward the central west. Naturally, other teams aiming for the rankings have no choice but to head in this direction too.

In other words, Amana speculated that many of the teams visible on the map were here to find handshake partners, not to fight for the top spot.

-There might not be as many teams gunning for first place as you think.

"Hmm. That could make sense."

Yeongwoo stroked his chin as he listened to Amana's reasoning.

It was plausible.

It didn't seem reasonable that all those teams would aim solely for first place.

"Well, whatever the case, we can just ask them directly."

Yeongwoo nodded and turned his gaze to the "challengers" closing in on the world map.

Forty-one teams remained in the promotion arena, with nine already eliminated.

Excluding the current first-ranked Team 023, there were forty teams left.

'About five teams seem to be heading toward the withdrawal zone...'

The remaining thirty-five teams were either converging on the central west or still deliberating, showing no clear movements.

The teams that weren't moving yet were likely observing the situation to decide their next course of action.

One thing was certain:

‘There are definitely plenty of teams thinking about jumping into the first-place battle. Maybe I haven’t shown enough of my strength yet?’

Yeongwoo felt a pang of disappointment, believing his earlier display of mercy had been underappreciated.

After all, he had hoped to take a break from accumulating bad karma, but here they were, flocking to him of their own accord.

‘At this point, accumulating bad karma seems inevitable for me.’

Swish.

Yeongwoo turned to the three virtuous aliens.

"Looks like we'll have a few corpses to clean up soon. Could you prepare some eulogies?"

-Eulogies?

"For those guys. When they die, we'll wrap up their bodies and send them off with eulogies. I need you to write them."

Since Yeongwoo would handle the violence and killing, the other three wouldn't have much else to do.

"Understood? When there are bodies, you'll write the eulogies."

With Yeongwoo's one-sided request, the three reluctantly nodded.

-Alright.

...Someone has to write them, after all.

-Fine. Better we do it than anyone else...

Thus, the division of labor within Team 023 was settled.

Yeongwoo got up, dusted himself off, and began scanning the surroundings, noting down coordinates in advance.

After all, he might need to use bombardments again.

'If there are multiple teams with planetary bombardment weapons, it'll be chaos. I should probably strike first, just in case.'

While Yeongwoo pondered various scenarios and surveyed the central west, he noticed silhouettes emerging from the northern horizon.

"Oh?"

Finally, the first visitors since the announcement of the new rule.

As Yeongwoo pointed north with wide eyes, the three virtuous aliens followed his gaze.

And then:

-Oh no...

-They're heading this way.

-Good grief...

They preemptively offered condolences for the unnamed opponents heading toward the worst possible outcome.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo:

Ssshhh!

He unsheathed Bastard, preparing for battle, and began walking north at a leisurely pace.

'Which team is that?'

Glancing at the world map, Yeongwoo saw the marker for "Team 042" closest to his current position.

'Team 042.'

They were ranked fourth in power.

Unlike the others, it was clear this team intended to participate in the battle for the top spot.

'This will be a good opportunity to gain some interstellar combat experience.'

When else would he get to fight such a diverse range of extraterrestrial opponents?

While this battle might cost many planets their representatives, Yeongwoo's perspective on such losses remained unchanged:

'If they die in the promotion battle, they weren't cut out for planetary promotion anyway. Better to die early and let someone else take over.'

The newly implemented rules even allowed contestants to avoid both battles and competition entirely.

They could simply move to the eastern end and wait out the timer to survive.

But the fact that so many teams chose to head west to challenge the first-ranked team was a clear measure of their judgment—or lack thereof.

'Of course, it also shows their courage and skills. But if they end up dying to me, it means their skills weren't sufficient.'

As Yeongwoo silently mused and stared north, Aldo, watching the world map, shouted urgently:

-Hey, Yeongwoo! Team 042 is right ahead!

On the map, the markers for Teams 042 and 023 overlapped almost completely.

Of course, in the actual terrain, there was still a distance of about 300 to 400 meters between them.

"Yes, I know. I was just about to—"

As Yeongwoo shrugged his shoulders and gestured not to worry—

Whooooosh!

"...Huh?"

A massive void opened up beneath his feet, a pitch-black hole appearing suddenly.

"Ah...!"

The moment Yeongwoo instinctively recognized it as the power of the Void, a giant hand emerged from the hole, enveloping him.

-Huh?

-Hey, Yeongwoo?



-What's going on? An ambush?

Before the three allies could react, the hand grabbed Yeongwoo and dragged him into the hole.

In that instant, Yeongwoo found himself thinking:

'Who the hell are these bastards?'

He was trapped in a zone imbued with the Void's peculiar, time-stopping aura, cursing under his breath.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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This was clearly a remote abduction.

It had to be someone skilled in using Void power, making a preemptive strike.

And soon—

Fwoosh!

After a brief moment of gray obscuring his vision, Yeongwoo's surroundings lit up again.

His body was raised back to ground level.

".....!"

It was then that Yeongwoo saw the four aliens surrounding him.

-Haha, welcome.

-Are you the leader of Team 023?

-Whoa, your energy levels are off the charts.

-You're smaller than I expected.

The ones who had used the Void to abduct Yeongwoo were none other than Team 042.

[Team 042]

A dark blue mechanical humanoid, a towering beastman with an eagle's head, a lizard covered in blue scales, and a humanoid alien with pupil-less eyes.

The last one, in particular, caught Yeongwoo's attention.

Despite its pale skin, its hands were pitch black.

At a glance, Yeongwoo knew this one was the abduction's executor.

The distinct, unsettling sensation of the Void emanated continuously from its hands.

-Sharp, aren't you?

Sensing Yeongwoo's gaze, the "Black Hands" alien blinked its pure white eyes.

Yeongwoo couldn't help but ask:

"What's the point of coming after me here? Are you really after the number one spot?"

The eagle-headed beastman, who had been aiming a long spear at Yeongwoo, moved its beak threateningly.

-Of course. There are incredible perks for ranking first in the promotion matches. Why wouldn't we aim for the throne?

"But if you challenge the number one and lose, you'll die, won't you? Wouldn't it be safer to aim for just the top five?"

Though Yeongwoo kindly offered them a chance to reconsider, Team 042 only laughed.

-Amusing fellow.

-If we don't lose, that's all that matters.

-That's cowardly logic.

After all, they had the ability to abduct someone from hundreds of meters away in an instant.

There was no way such individuals would give up the throne with its promised extraordinary rewards.

Then the dark blue mechanical humanoid spoke.

-And why did you create such ridiculous rules in the first place?

It referred to the rule that one could only claim the top spot by defeating the current number one.

Without that rule, Team 023 wouldn't have become everyone's target.

Yeongwoo's response?

"Damn it, I didn't expect every dog and stray to come after me. I was just trying to minimize collateral damage."

-What?

-You bastard.

-How arrogant!

Infuriated by his response, Team 042's eagle-headed beastman gripped its spear tighter.

Crack.

-Collateral damage? We're no strangers to committing atrocities ourselves. Let's see how well-versed you are in evil!

With that, the eagle-headed beastman swung its spear to strike Yeongwoo's neck.

But Yeongwoo, who had been warned by his precognitive instincts, raised Aratubank to block it.

Clang!

In the same motion, he lunged forward and drove Bastard through the beastman's chest.

Thwack!

And with that, another planet's future darkened.

"So, you lot are familiar with atrocities? Then wouldn't taking you down count as a good deed?"

As Yeongwoo withdrew his blade with a wicked smile, the remaining members of Team 042 stepped back, sensing something was wrong.

-What... what was that?

-That sword! It's not normal!

-Regroup! We have to attack together to have a chance!

While Team 042 reeled from the shock of their comrade's sudden demise, a deafening explosion erupted in the distance behind Yeongwoo.

Boom!

"...What the?"

When Yeongwoo turned, he saw a blazing red pillar of fire rising from the spot where he had left his three allies.

Another team had ambushed them while Yeongwoo was occupied with Team 042.

"You've got to be kidding me."

He had expected such chaos, but not in such rapid succession.

And more importantly—

"Wait."

Wasn't Prince Aldo, who would be arriving with a massive dowry tomorrow, in that very spot?

'Those idiots, if they face a real opponent, they'll be useless.'

With this realization, Yeongwoo hurled his Aratubank, knocking the Void-user backward.

Thud!

-Gah!

Yeongwoo leapt onto the alien's chest with blinding speed and drove his dagger into its blackened hands.

Thwack!

"You can use that power again, right?"

-W-What?

"Send me back over there."

-I-I can't. I don't have a way to send you back.

"You bastard."

Yeongwoo adjusted his command without hesitation.

"Then bring them here instead."

...What?

"Everyone over there. Bring them here. I'll handle the rest."

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Chapter 370: The Ultimate Evil of Promotion (6)

-What... What did you say? You want me to bring all those guys fighting over there?

"Yes, that's exactly what I'm talking about."

With these words, Yeongwoo twisted the sword embedded in his opponent's hand, eliciting a distorted scream.

-Gaaaah! W-Wait!

The opponent glanced southward with wide, pale eyes—toward the battlefield where pillars of flame were erupting.

-There are more of them than I expected. Can you handle it?

"Just call them. I'll deal with the aftermath,"

Yeongwoo said, baring his teeth and pretending to twist the sword again.

The "Black Hand" frantically nodded.

-F-Fine! I'll do it.

The man's pure white pupils turned jet black, and he pressed his other hand—the one not pierced by the sword—against the ground.

CRACK!

Dark energy spread from his palm, corrupting the floor beneath them.

'Oh... so this is the power of the Void.'

It was the first time since meeting the First Prince Dogo in a dungeon that he had encountered someone wielding the Void.

His cosmic perspective was broadening.

'The universe really is vast. Each race has its own specialized abilities.'

From planet Sutral, Amana could create wind for flight and high-speed movement.

From Pigot, Taru were innately immune to elemental damage.

Then what unique ability did humans from Earth possess?

-Raaaah!

The "Black Hand" roared, pulling his hand from the ground.

At the same time, the earth beneath Yeongwoo and Squad 042 turned pitch black.

WHOOOSH!

"...!"

The entire area was being transformed into a summoning site.

Suddenly—

THUD!

The ground rippled, and twelve aliens erupted simultaneously from beneath.

"Prince! Prince Aldo!"

Yeongwoo shouted, trying to locate Aldo.

In response, Aldo's desperate voice came from one side.

-Y-Yeongwoo! Save me!

"Damn it!"

Yeongwoo turned to see two aliens entangled with Aldo.

One was Squad 029.

One was a ratman clad in a full-body robe wielding a sword, and the other was an elf with jade-colored skin and pointed ears.

Yeongwoo immediately threw his sword toward the elf and charged at Aldo.

"Get off! That's my guest!"

WHAM!

The elf, struck by the sword in his waist, rolled to the ground.

Meanwhile, the ratman, who had been attacking Aldo with the sword, sensed Yeongwoo's deadly aura and turned.

-What the—?

And then—

SMASH!

Yeongwoo's fist came crashing down, shattering the ratman's skull.

CRACK!

Fueled by rage, Yeongwoo delivered a devastating punch with all his might.

"Prince, are you okay?"

Yeongwoo asked, still seething as he glanced at Aldo.

Aldo trembled, clutching his abdomen, where fluid seeped from his armor.

-I-It hurts a bit, but I'm fine!

"Did you get stabbed?!"

Alarmed, Yeongwoo inspected Aldo's armor and found a small puncture near his abdomen—proof that the ratman's sword had penetrated it twice.

"What kind of armor can't even block a sword?!"

Yeongwoo scowled, exasperated.

Aldo hastily pointed behind him.

-T-That's not important right now. Look, Amana!

"...?"

There was no need to turn around.

-Raaah!

With a piercing scream, Amana unleashed a powerful gust of wind from behind them.

WHOOOSH!

The resulting whirlwind was strong enough to knock everyone off balance.

Moments later, Amana soared high into the air.

Having struggled on the ground, she had fled to the skies for safety.

'At least she knows how to protect herself.'

Yeongwoo decided to leave Amana in the air and turned his attention to the last squad member, Taru.

Then he saw it.

BAM! BAM!

Taru from Planet Pigot was curled up and being beaten.

-P-Please! You should run while you can! It'll be better for you!

Taru shouted at his attackers, urging them to flee.

Retrieving his sword, Yeongwoo called out Taru's name, causing him to widen his eyes in shock.

"Taru!"



-Eek!

Taru shrieked, shoving his attackers away as he yelled.

-R-Run! Yeongwoo will kill you all!

But it was already too late.

SWHOOSH!

The “Yeongwoo” in question charged at them, sword in hand.

“If you beat me, you’ll instantly take first place!”

Yeongwoo shouted.

His words drew the attention of every squad in the area.

Then, with a dramatic swing, his sword cleaved through the air.

SPLURT!

The heads of the two aliens assaulting Taru were severed in an instant.

THUD!

Their heads hit the ground one after another, and Taru clamped his hands over his mouth, screaming.

-Ahhhhh!

Right before his eyes, an irreversible act of malice unfolded.

And from this moment onward, the challengers scattered across the arena began fleeing all at once.

-W-We can’t take them on.

-...Run!

Though they had boldly come to claim the top spot, seeing their opponent’s true strength firsthand made them realize their judgment had been wrong.

But weren’t they all already within Yeongwoo’s range?

“If you were going to run away, you shouldn’t have come in the first place!”

As Yeongwoo's merciless voice echoed and he began dealing with the fleeing opponents one by one, Amana, floating in midair, clicked her beak together in fright.

-S-Stop it! There's no need to kill those who are running away!

At this, Yeongwoo, who was about to drive his blade into the back of a fallen alien, hesitated.

"Why?"

-...Huh?

"They came here with the intent to kill us. Isn't it only right to make them take responsibility for their choice by killing them...?"

When Yeongwoo asked with a serious expression, Amana looked utterly bewildered.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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-B-But they're no longer trying to kill us, are they?

"That's only because they realized we're much stronger than they expected. If we were weaker, they wouldn't be running; they'd be killing us to the bitter end."

-Even so, slaughtering those who no longer wish to fight... If they've given up their intent to kill, isn't that enough?

"...Ha."

After listening to Amana's words, Yeongwoo realized he would never be able to live as a virtuous man.

"Don't you even understand the concept of reaping what you sow?"

-...?

"You all understand karma, don't you? These people came here with the intent to kill us, sowing the seeds of evil karma, and they're simply reaping the consequences now."

Though Yeongwoo kindly broke it down for her, Amana still shook his head.

-That's the logic of the wicked. Even if someone commits evil, responding with good deeds can eventually lead them to do good as well. Acts of kindness are like planting seeds of goodwill.

"Oh, come on. That's ridiculous."

-If you kill them now, they'll remain evil forever. There will be no chance for their lives to change. But if you spare them... that act of kindness could become a seed that bears good fruit someday.

"Not 'someday.' More like 'maybe.'"

-Huh?

"If I spare them, there's no guarantee they'll turn over a new leaf. More likely, they'll commit more evil deeds."

-W-What do you mean...?

-It's called cause and effect! If you spare someone evil, evil will come back to you! Even in movies, the villain you thought was dead always comes back in the sequel!

...Movies?

"So I choose to sever their cycle of evil karma right here, right now!"

-N-No!

As Amana cried out, and Yeongwoo's sword was about to plunge downward, Aldo suddenly let out an unprecedented yell.

-Yeongwoo! Sir!

"What?"

When Yeongwoo turned his head, he saw Aldo crouched on the ground, twisting in pain as a liquid trickled from his waist.

-Then what about you, Sir Yeongwoo?

"What about me?"

-Aren't you... a massive accumulation of evil karma yourself?

"...What?"

Aldo's words, surprisingly, were not incorrect.

After all, wasn't he someone who likely had over 200 million points of evil karma by now?

-Then, by your own logic... are you not a being who will only bring more misfortune to the world if allowed to live?

"...?"

-The things you just said... they apply to you as well! Why do you view yourself as nothing but a wretched being?

"....."

Yeongwoo felt as though he'd been struck on the back of the head.

Aldo was right: the logic he had used against these perpetrators of evil applied equally to himself.

A being without potential for redemption, who would only bring more harm if left alive.

Was that really who Jeong Yeongwoo was?

"I-I..."

-Everyone is generous to themselves! That's normal, and it's how it should be! But to do that, you must also be generous to others!

Aldo groaned and rose to his feet.

His broad shadow loomed over Yeongwoo and everyone else in the arena.

-Kindness isn't some grandiose thing. Just treat others the way you'd want to be treated. Sir Yeongwoo, by helping us, you've already done a good deed. That means you're not someone who only commits evil. So please...

Aldo extended a hand, pointing at the opponent lying beneath Yeongwoo's feet.

-Let him go and perform your second act of kindness. Just as you've proven yourself, give others a chance to prove themselves too.

"...Prince."

Yeongwoo would be lying if he said he wasn't moved, even a little.

Of course, part of it was because the opponent might be a potential benefactor at his wedding, but he couldn't completely dismiss Aldo's argument.

So.

"Fine. You're all lucky today. The prince has shown you mercy. Get out of here. You have five seconds."

He withdrew his sword and released the opponent he'd pinned down with his foot.

Then.

-Y-You'll regret this!

-R-Run!

-Move! Get out of here!

The person Yeongwoo had been holding, along with the rest of Squad 042, scrambled to escape.

They knew this was their first and last chance.

"....."

As Yeongwoo watched the retreating figures grow smaller in the distance, Aldo cautiously approached him.

-How does it feel to do a good deed? Surely it feels good, doesn't it?

At this, Yeongwoo shot Aldo a glare, his face already filled with irritation.

"Feel good? What nonsense...!"

And then, out of nowhere, words appeared before him, causing him to fall silent.

Fwoosh!

For the first time in a long while, his achievement window lit up.

[Achievement Unlocked: Cold but Warm]

| Achievement Grade: Universe

| Achievement Rank: #841

「Created over 10 million points of goodwill while possessing over 200 million points of evil karma.」

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

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