

## **Level 4 Human in a Ruined World #Chapter 411 - Read Level 4 Human in a Ruined World Chapter 411**

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 411: Collection (3)

“Y-Yeongwoo...! It’s good to see you!”

—Our son!

Jeonggu and Jiseon awkwardly embraced Yeongwoo.

Then, as Kobu had instructed, they recited the words of blessing.

“We’re truly happy that you were born...”

—...Me too.

At that, Yeongwoo’s brow immediately furrowed.

“I don’t feel any sincerity at all.”

Moreover, the Prestige Achievement didn’t budge in the slightest.

[Prestige: Restoration of Roots]

|Complete the following three missions. (2/3)

=Obtain a mother and father.

=Reunite your parents.

=Be blessed by your complete parents.

Receiving an empty blessing wouldn’t fulfill the achievement’s conditions.

“This won’t do. Whatever you say, it has to be sincere. Otherwise, I’ll have no choice but to pick up my sword again.”

As Yeongwoo, still in their embrace, gripped Bastard tighter, Jeonggu made a horrified expression and spoke.

“You brat, every time you open your mouth, it’s nothing but talk of rebellion. How do you expect us to bless you?”

Even so, he didn’t let go of Yeongwoo, who was still half-held in his arms.

“But... they say the bond between parent and child is a sacred one.”

“...?”

“I still vividly remember you showing up out of nowhere and pointing a sword at me. And yet, here we are, embracing each other... I suppose that means it really is a sacred bond.”

Jiseon, still wearing her helmet, looked visibly flustered.

She was surprised that Jeonggu was actually putting serious thought into this.

“For decades, I lived alone. But now that the world has fallen apart, suddenly I have a son and a wife.”

Swish.

Jeonggu looked up at the sky.

“Maybe this is the world telling me to reconsider the sins of my past. In the end, you needed a father, and your mother needed a husband to settle her past burdens.”

“...!”

He had struck at the heart of the matter.

In a way, Jeonggu and Jiseon were both paying for the sins they had committed decades ago.

“You, my son who came to find me in this ruined world... If you had never survived, I would have lived my whole life without even knowing you existed. You did well to survive, even without us.”

Suddenly, Jeonggu’s entire body began to glow gold.

Like a ghost ascending to the afterlife.

Swoosh!

“Huh?”

—W-What the hell, you bastard?

Both Yeongwoo and Jiseon were startled, but deep down, they already understood what was happening.

Jeonggu had done it first.

He had completed the task of becoming a true parent and blessing his child.

“But now that you have parents, you can live much better. Even if it’s late, I bless you—your birth and your future.”

“Oh... Father.”

Yeongwoo looked at Jeonggu with astonished eyes for the first time, and the golden light that had enveloped Jeonggu began to transfer to him.

Shaaah!

Now, it was time for the mother, Jiseon, to do her part.

Glance.

Yeongwoo silently turned to look at her.

Feeling immense pressure, Jiseon leaned back slightly and shook her head.

—No way, what the hell? We’ve only known each other for two days!

“Father wasn’t around for long either.”

—Still, how can someone become a parent overnight? I already regret having married that bastard!

Zap!

Jiseon pointed at Jeonggu with a blue-glowing finger.

Yeongwoo grabbed her hand and spoke.

“But Mother, you’ve known about me your entire life.”

—What...?

Jiseon was suddenly glad she was wearing a mask.

She knew her pupils had just shaken violently.

“No one else might have known, but you did. You knew that I existed in this world.”

“.....

“So, you had way more time than Father. You had time to prepare for a moment like this, just in case it ever came.”

—Th-That’s...

She couldn’t argue against it.

Because the truth was, Jiseon had thought about the possibility of meeting her son again.

For decades.

But she had never imagined it would happen like this.

“I’m not asking you to undo the past. And I don’t expect to suddenly have a ‘real’ mother overnight. But you can bless me, can’t you?”

Of course, there was a condition.

It had to be a genuine blessing.

And for Jiseon, that might have been the hardest thing to do.

—...A blessing. Of course, I will. Because you are my son.

As expected, her tone was still incredibly awkward.

Then, something happened that no one in the room had anticipated.

∴ Apologize first. Isn’t that what you should do?

A nonchalant voice suddenly came from the Aratubank in Jiseon’s hand.

“Huh?”

“B-Brother?”

—What?

The voice belonged to none other than Yeongwoo's other 'family'—his second uncle, Song Jungho.

∴ You abandoned your son, yet he still came looking for you and calls you his mother. Even if his reasons are dark... isn't that something to be sorry and grateful for?

The thunder dragon within the coffin had just spoken the most human words in the entire room.

And for Jiseon, who had always thought of her second brother as nothing more than a delinquent, it was another shock.

—W-What the hell are you saying, you crazy bastard?

Flustered, Jiseon swung her hand as if shaking off an insect, hurling the Aratubank to the ground.

Thud!

At that moment, Song Jungho collapsed onto the ground, muttering.

∴ How the hell did things turn out like this? The karma of the Jinhyeon family must be extraordinary.

-.....

Of course, Jiseon was well aware of the depth of her own karma.

Jeong Yeongwoo 07.

Once upon a time, this person had been a pure child.

But being an orphan must have played a significant role in him growing up as a demon holding Bastard.

—I'm sorry... for abandoning you. And for leaving you to grow up like this.

Jiseon tried her best to be sincere, but Yeongwoo immediately cut her off.

"What nonsense are you talking about, Mother?"

—...Huh?

"I'm about to become Earth's monopolist, and I have tens of billions in cash. How could I have grown up any better than this?"

—That... does it really work that way?

"I grew up just fine. But to break through the ceiling, I need a family. So stop talking nonsense and just give me your blessing."

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

As Yeongwoo pointed his finger toward the sky, a surge of blue-hot anger rose in Jiseon's chest.

—This crazy thug only cares about money.

And then, surprisingly, Jiseon's entire body glowed gold.

Swaaaaaah!

Finally, Jiseon's true feelings were activated.

—Looking at you, I can tell you won't get beaten up wherever you go. But you're far from being a decent person, you brat! Got it?

A mother's blessing—not to get beaten even in space and to maintain his humanity.

Did that sentiment truly reach the universe?

Along with Jiseon's enraged breathing, the radiant light surrounding her transferred to Yeongwoo.

Piiiiing!

"Hrk...!"

Yeongwoo let out a groan as if he had been burned.

In reality, his insides were becoming unbearably hot.

"Kuaaaaah!"

His body twisted uncontrollably.

"What, what's wrong, Yeongwoo?!"

—Why is this brat acting like this?

The two newlyweds, who had just finished their wedding ceremony, stomped their feet in panic.

"Hey, Kobu! What's happening here?"

Jeonggu turned to Kobu, who was still at the venue, and asked urgently.

Kobu folded his arms and stepped back slowly.

-It seems the legacy of the noble house has chosen its head.

"The head...?"

As soon as Jeonggu muttered those words, golden lightning bolts shot out of Yeongwoo's eyes, nose, and mouth.

"Ugh, uaaaah!"

Startled, Jeonggu reflexively ducked, and Jiseon quickly picked up the Aratubank she had thrown to the ground.

And in that moment—

Click!

Kobu, Tobu, and Chobu all knelt on one knee in unison, bowing in reverence.

They had sensed it—the birth of a new family was imminent.

And indeed—

"Krragh!"

With Yeongwoo's outcry, the lightning bursting from his body shot up into the sky.

Kwooooooosh!

A density of energy that seemed impossible to come from a mere human body.

And within that energy, Yeongwoo saw a single line of text.

「You have fulfilled the final condition for Restoration of Roots.」

‘Oh...!’

At last, he had completed the first achievement necessary for founding a family.

Piiiiing!

A clear notification sound rang out, and the achievement details appeared.

[Achievement Unlocked: Restoration of Roots]

| Achievement Rank: Universe

| Completion Rank: #???

「Complete the three designated missions with your newly acquired parents.」

Then, all at once, the lightning surging from Yeongwoo's body came to a halt.

Swaaah!

The searing heat that had threatened to burn his body subsided as well.

「With Restoration of Roots complete, the process of family establishment will now commence.」

"Ah... finally, it's happening."

Yeongwoo let out a voice filled with awe.

Jiseon, who had been staring at him blankly, quickly asked,

—What? Does this mean you can really establish a family now?

"Yes, I've received the guidance at least..."

As Yeongwoo spoke and reached up to stroke his chin, a system message appeared before him.

「Please designate the family head.」

| Jeong Yeongwoo 07 : Suitability 93%

| Kim Jeonggu 11 : Suitability 64%

| Song Jiseon : Suitability 86%

‘Oh, wow. Mom's suitability is way higher than I expected.’

Maybe it was because she used to be the head of a conglomerate.



‘But she won’t live as long as I will... For the long-term prosperity of the family, I have to be the head.’

Besides, his suitability was the highest—after all, he was the one who had planned this family from the start.

So, without much hesitation, Yeongwoo selected himself as the family head.

Tap!

Immediately, another question popped up.

「Please name your family.」

"....."

Instinctively, he glanced at his mother.

But the answer had been decided long ago.

"Renaissance."

「The entered family name is ‘Renaissance.’ Would you like to confirm?」

‘Yes.’

As soon as Yeongwoo nodded in his mind, the foundational data of the family was displayed.

| Family Name : Renaissance

| Family Head : Jeong Yeongwoo 07

| Initial Capital : 37,034,062,780

| Registered Address : |||| - Earth - Dogo Special City, Seoul

「Is the above information correct?」

‘So far, so good.’

Yeongwoo nodded once again.

Then, all the information vanished from his vision at once.

And for the first time, a message appeared that truly unsettled him.

「What will Renaissance do in the universe?」

‘...What?’

「Please select the most relevant option.」

[1] Smuggling

[2] Kidnapping

[3] Robbery & Assault

[4] Loan Sharking

[5] Illegal Contracting

‘Wait, why are these the only choices? Aren’t there any other options?’

Yeongwoo protested.

But instead of new choices, the system merely repeated its previous prompt.

「Please select the most relevant option.」

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 412: Collection (4)

‘Seriously? I have to choose from these?’

Yeongwoo's jaw dropped.

All the suggested options were practically criminal activities.

[1] Smuggling

[2] Kidnapping

[3] Robbery & Assault

[4] Loan Sharking

[5] Illegal Contracting

‘Didn’t they say balance is important in the universe? Don’t they need a virtuous family too?’

Well, even if they weren’t creating a virtuous family, was there really a need to establish yet another criminal one?

‘...Is this because of me?’

Of course, since the head of the family was a notorious wrongdoer, it might have made sense that the system was simply recommending a fitting profession.

But still, having not a single decent option among them was...

‘Wasn’t it the court that gave me the balance quest in the first place? Shouldn’t the Family Court be on the same page?’

Yeongwoo had every reason to feel wronged.

After all, every official task assigned to him was related to “rehabilitation.”

[Planetary Court] “Balanced Fate”

<Mission> Reunite with the following three individuals: (0/3)

-Aldo, the second prince of Doatel

-Amana, the guardian of Sacred Sutral

-Taru, the last hope of Pigot

<Special> Must use a family-owned spaceship.

<Reward> Adjustment of karma score guaranteed by the Planetary Court.

The Planetary Court had issued this quest after witnessing Yeongwoo’s absurd path to promotion, and the new achievements followed the same logic.

[Burning Ice]

| Ensure that your total points of evil karma do not exceed twice your points of good karma.

'How the hell am I supposed to live a balanced life while smuggling, kidnapping, and robbing people?'

His head throbbed.

As Yeongwoo instinctively pressed his fingers against his forehead, Jiseon, who had been watching him, tilted her head.

—What now? Aren't you setting up the family?

"Yeah."

—...?

Jiseon, as always, felt an ominous sense of foreboding from her son's response.

—So what's the problem?

"Smuggling, kidnapping, robbery and assault, loan sharking, illegal contracting."

—...Huh?

"Those are the five choices. We have to pick one to make a living in space."

—What are you even saying? Why would we have to live like that?

"If we want to register our family, we have to choose one first."

At that, Song Jungho, who had been silent for a while inside his shield, let out a despairing cry.

∴ This... this bastard, he just wrote down everything he wanted to do, didn't he?

".....!"

A surprisingly plausible theory.

—I mean, Jeongho being stuck in there is basically kidnapping, and robbery and assault are part of your daily life, aren't they?

Jiseon's statement only added credibility to Jeongho's accusation.

To make matters worse, Jeonggu also found himself agreeing with the two Songs.

"Honestly... you've already done loan sharking too. During the ceremony and even before that...."

"What the fuck."

Yeongwoo couldn't even hide his shock.

Because it wasn't a lie—he couldn't refute it.

—Come to think of it, you're right.

∴ So, really, haven't you already dabbled in smuggling and illegal contracting somewhere?

The three of them cornered Yeongwoo in an instant.

Faced with this, the would-be family head, Jeong Yeongwoo, chose his usual method of persuasion.

"Shut the hell up, all of you!"

Schlaaash!

Threats, of course.

Summoning Bastard, he pointed the crimson edge at his mother and father in turn.

"This is a test!"

—What kind of nonsense is that?

"All three of us were candidates for head of the family, right? So why am I the only one seeing this registration prompt?"

—And the reason is...?

"It's a trap to create division! They're testing our level of trust before the family is officially established!"

Of course, this was nothing more than Yeongwoo's speculation.

In reality, this whole conversation was unfolding because of his own karma.

—But the fact remains that you've done kidnapping, robbery, assault, and loan sharking, right?

"That's true, but...!"

Yeongwoo's sword wavered.

"For some reason, I got this notification telling me to choose something!"

Even for Yeongwoo, deciphering the true intentions of the Family Court was impossible.

Besides, he had at least wanted to discuss this with his family, considering it a "family matter."

"So should I just pick whatever I want? Really? You're all fine with me deciding how we make a living?"

"....."

—This lunatic, what the hell is he talking about?

∴ So... what we choose now is basically our family business?

As soon as Yeongwoo pushed back hard, the other three hesitated, stepping back.

If this really determined their future livelihood, it was not a decision to be taken lightly.

"They're asking us to choose what we'll do in space... so yeah, it's basically our trade."

—So we're picking a business type.

"What's the least bad option? If what we choose now becomes our main occupation?"

Yeongwoo scratched the ruined guest seating with his sword.

Scrrrrch!

He wrote down the five choices he saw.

—None of these are easy choices.

Jiseon sighed as she looked at the options.

Then, she raised her finger and pointed to option 5, illegal contracting.

—We can't pick that one.

"Why not?"

—It literally says 'illegal.' If these are truly business types, the moment we choose that, we'll be fugitives for life, constantly hunted by the courts and governments.

"...Oh."

That made sense.

Everyone present had already witnessed the power of the Space Court firsthand.

It was best not to pick a fight with them outright.

"But isn't that the same for kidnapping and assault?"

This time, it was Jeonggu who raised the question.

To him, illegal contracting, kidnapping, and assault all sounded equally insane.

But Jiseon shook her head.

—Kidnapping? Not necessarily a big problem.

"Excuse me...?"

—If we kidnap a fugitive, is that illegal? If we hand them over to the authorities, isn't that a public service?

"Uh, well..."

—Depending on who we kidnap and who we beat up, our work can be either legal or illegal. In other words...

Tsk, tsk.

Jiseon tapped her temple with her index finger.

—We need to pick a job with room for interpretation.

"That makes sense...."

Yeongwoo nodded at his mother's argument.

"Hah, well, we still don't know exactly what we can do out there in space."

A low-class planet on the outskirts of the universe: Earth.

The only cosmic asset it possessed was approximately 30 billion in capital and a wannabe villain named Jeong Yeongwoo07.

What could this planet possibly accomplish in space?

“Well, one thing is certain. Even if we establish ‘Renaissance,’ it won’t have a significant influence, right? It’s not like we’re overwhelmingly powerful, either.”

—That’s true.

“Then for now, wouldn’t it be best to choose an industry with broad applicability? Something we can do in any situation.”

—And what would that be?

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

“Robbery and assault.”

—That’s just what you normally do.

“Call it a calling, please.”

At that moment, Song Jungho, imprisoned in Aratubank, shouted in exasperation.

∴ You crazy bastard, the problem is that you’re thinking of making that your family business!

“Well, what can we do? This is the only option available.”

Then Yeongwoo reached out toward the text floating in front of him.

“So, we’re inevitably going with robbery and assault?”

Thus, the new family ‘Renaissance’ would engage in robbery and assault in space.

If they carefully chose the time, place, and targets, it might just be a sustainable family business.

“Technically, it’s robbery, but depending on how we do it, we could become righteous outlaws. Let’s go with this.”

As soon as Yeongwoo selected option 3—Robbery and Assault—his vision was filled with a brilliant light.

Paaaaaat!

「The primary business of the new family, Renaissance, has been set to Robbery and Assault.」



‘As expected, it was asking about the family’s main industry.’

Then, as his vision returned to normal, a dazzling beam of light shot up from Yeongwoo into the sky.

Piiiiing!

「The first family on this planet has been established!」

‘Oh!’

「Information about the family ‘Renaissance’ has been transmitted to the Family Court and ||||-Earth.」

‘Huh?’

Just moments ago, Yeongwoo had been excited, but now his eyes widened in shock.

“You’re telling me Earth has just been informed that its first-ever family is a gang of robbers?”

—What? That doesn’t sound like news they’ll be happy about.

Jiseon instinctively looked up at the sky, then quickly corrected himself and looked down at the ground instead.

—So what happens now?

Right on cue, another system message appeared in Yeongwoo’s field of vision.

Paaaat!

「You have drawn the attention of the planet.」

‘What?’

「In three hours, you will have a meeting with the Council.」

The Council.

The system message simply referred to it as ‘the Council,’ without any further explanation.

But Yeongwoo already knew.

It was that Council—the one that had announced the end of the world on the first day of the Reset.

“In three hours, I have a meeting with the Council.”

Yeongwoo muttered to himself, and Jiseon immediately reacted.

—The Council? You mean that Council?

Since she had also undergone the mutation selection process after being listed as a candidate for extinction, Jiseon still remembered the Reset’s initial announcement.

“Yes, I think it’s the same one. This probably means we’ve finally become something important on this planetary scale.”

A nail sticking out of the bag.

After all, from both Earth’s and the Council’s perspectives, it was impossible to ignore Jeong Yeongwoo any longer.

They had left him alone, and as a result, a 3rd- or 4th-tier being had visited the planet, and ultimately, he had established its first-ever family as a criminal gang.

—Wait, but why isn’t Earth handling the meeting directly? Why is the Council involved?

“I have no idea.”

∴ Maybe they decided you’re too dangerous for Earth to deal with directly. So they let the Council handle it instead.

Song Jungho was once again showing remarkable insight.

Hearing this, Yeongwoo picked up the Aratubank card from the ground and spoke.

“I think my uncle would make a fine strategist for our family.”

At that moment, a fist-sized shimmering space appeared above the Aratubank card.

“...Huh?”

Turning his head, Yeongwoo saw that the same thing had appeared above everyone else’s heads as well.

“Wait, this is...?”

Just as Yeongwoo was about to voice his suspicion, an entirely new type of interface appeared before him.

「-Song Jungho」

| Relationship: Blood Relative

| Type: ||||I-Earth's Reset Remnant

‘Whoa.’

It was none other than relationship information.

Specifically, a kind of status window that indicated individuals who could be accepted as members of the family.

「Would you like to accept ‘-Song Jungho’ as a member of Renaissance?」

The family's emblem had not been decided yet, so a temporary symbol was being used.

‘Huh? So I'm the only one officially registered in the family so far?’

And the authority to register new members belonged solely to the head of the family—Jeong Yeongwoo07.

“.....!”

Realizing this, Yeongwoo quickly turned his gaze toward Kobu, Tobu, and Chobu in the distance.

Unlike blood relatives, they didn't have separate relationship windows, but the temporary family symbol was hovering above their heads.

‘So I can accept people into the family even if they're not blood relatives.’

This was likely the equivalent of vassals.

That meant the first vassal of the soon-to-be prestigious Renaissance family would be...

‘Yechan? No, the first vassal should be someone more universal—someone cosmic!’

Yeongwoo blinked.

Then, two syllables popped into his mind, and he called out loudly.

“Kubu! Kubu!”

As if he had been waiting, Kubu opened his eyes and stepped forward.

Srrrrk.

—Yeongwoo.

“Kubu! I’ve finally established my family!”

—Congratulations. I understand it is the first family on this planet.

“As expected, you’re well-informed. Then do you also know why I’ve called for you?”

—That is...

Kubu hesitated.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo was already staring at the temporary symbol floating above Kubu’s head.

“Please become the first vassal of Renaissance. Right now, we may be just a frontier family, but one day, we will become a noble house. Would you consider investing in the future?”

Kubu blinked rapidly—something he rarely did.

He seemed deep in thought.

Then, after thoroughly looking Yeongwoo up and down, he spoke in a formal tone.

—How much is the salary?

“Oh! So it’s not free?”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 413: Collection (5)

A vassal’s salary.

It was something he had never considered before, but now he understood.

‘Right, vassals must receive a salary too.’

Moreover, Kubu was someone with a rather deep connection to him.

The fact that he had explicitly requested his salary meant it was an extremely important matter.

‘Well... vassals need money from their lord to survive.’

Yeongwoo stared at Kubu for a moment.

Then, he carefully opened his mouth.

“Um... salary...”

The first-ever salary negotiation of the Renaissance was about to take place.

Seeing this, Jiseon quickly intervened.

—Kubu, you’re a tax accountant, right?

—My main profession is as a trade broker, but I also handle taxation.

Strictly speaking, he was managing Yeongwoo’s taxes under Dogo’s pressure.

—So, you’re primarily a trade broker?

—That’s correct."

Hearing Kubu’s response, Jiseon crossed her arms.

—Then, can we determine the median income of trade brokers and tax accountants?  
It’d be good if we could see them separately.

—I’ll prepare the data.

With that, Kubu’s eyes flipped upward, and in the meantime, Yeongwoo asked his mother,

“Median income? To set a benchmark?”

—Of course. You need to know the market rate before naming a price. You’re carrying too much cash right now—it’s dangerous.

She was implying that he might end up paying an unnecessarily high salary due to his large cash reserves.

—I don't know how much you want to keep this guy, but once you see the median income, you'll have a clearer idea.

Median income.

It refers to the middle value in an income distribution.

For example, if they were to check the median income of tax accountants, they would line up all the tax accountants in the universe by income and pick the one in the exact middle.

Unlike the 'average,' which considers all data points, the median was a useful reference in situations without any baseline.

And finally—

—The data has arrived.

Kubu's pupils returned to normal as he revealed the median incomes.

—I'll state them based on weekly earnings on Earth.

Then, he rolled his eyes once before continuing.

—The median income of a trade broker is 40 million Karma per week.

"40 million? Per week?"

—Yes.

"Huh."

At the beginning of the reset, Yeongwoo would have considered that a huge sum.

But now, it seemed absurdly low.

After all, they were talking about the median income on a universal scale.

'Well, their earnings are based on transaction fees alone. Earning 40 million per week might actually be impressive.'

Also, he couldn't ignore how much the median could differ from the average.

Some high-level brokers in major leagues could be making billions every week.

‘But Kubu came all the way to Earth to find deals—he must be a small-scale broker. His initial rank was Grade 9, too.’

Meeting Yeongwoo had undoubtedly catapulted Kubu onto the path of success.

Thanks to that, he even secured a connection with the corporate giant Dogo.

—What about tax accountants?

Jiseon asked next.

Kubu blinked rapidly.

—The median income of a tax accountant is 70 million Karma per week.

—Tax accountants are high-value professionals in space too, huh?

It made sense.

The demand for tax services in space likely started with individuals earning hundreds of millions in short periods.

In contrast, trade brokers dealt with goods in the tens or hundreds of thousands.

Naturally, tax accountants would earn more.

“Even in space, life isn’t easy, huh?”

Yeongwoo sighed, and Kubu blinked again.

—It’s not.

“But...”

—.....?

“The moment you met me, your future changed.”

—.....!

Kubu’s eyes widened at Yeongwoo’s words.

And then, Yeongwoo made his first salary offer.

“Kubu! I’ll buy your loyalty for 150 million Karma per week!”

Thud!

Yeongwoo slammed his palm onto the ground.

150 million per week.

Almost four times the median income of a trade broker.

What? 150 million?

As expected, Jiseon was shocked and gaped in disbelief.

Even Jeonggu cautiously voiced his concern.

“W-Weekly pay, Yeongwoo. And there might be more than one vassal.”

If things went south, they could end up bankrupt just from vassal salaries.

—Knowing this world, there’s probably some ridiculous law ensuring vassals get paid too. If you keep throwing money around like this, you’ll be in trouble.

Jiseon gave him a very realistic warning.

She was, after all, a former businesswoman.

But Yeongwoo had his own reasons for offering such a salary.

“Kubu has been with me since the beginning of the reset. He’s practically a fated companion the universe brought me.”

And that wasn’t all.

Yeongwoo genuinely liked the way Kubu worked.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

The fact that Kubu had taken on tax duties because Yeongwoo needed it, and more importantly—

‘This wedding hall itself was Kubu’s doing. I said I needed an execution-themed wedding venue, and he connected me with a prison design firm.’

His methods might have been unusual, but his problem-solving skills were above average.



On top of that, they had built a meaningful bond.

So why wouldn't he pay him four times the median income?

"Ultimately, loyalty to a company comes from salary, right? If you're underpaid, you'll always be thinking about switching jobs and won't work as hard."

Then, Kubu quickly supported Yeongwoo's words.

—That is absolutely correct. Especially for a retainer, since they only serve the family they belong to, salary is of utmost importance.

On the other hand, Jiseon shook her head.

—Right now, you have plenty of capital, so it's easy for you to open your wallet. But once things get tighter, your perspective will change completely.

"That's why I have to do my best to avoid going under. I'm laying a solid foundation for that reason. Mr. Kubu will be handling our general administration and taxation."

—...Fine. But think carefully. Once you set wages, you can either freeze or increase them—you can never lower them.

A piece of advice from an experienced veteran: don't recklessly hand out high salaries before the family's scale is firmly established.

—And wages are a fixed expense. The moment you take that guy in as a retainer, you'll be paying out 150 million karma every week, just for him breathing.

To Jiseon, her newly appointed family head son looked like a novice entrepreneur who had just received a sizable investment.

Of course, she could partially agree that key figures should be properly compensated.

"I won't be recklessly increasing the number of retainers. Besides Mr. Kubu, the only other candidate for now is Yechan."

Currently, the Renaissance family's capital stood at approximately 37 billion won.

Even after paying taxes on tonight's gift money, they would have more than 25 billion left.

Based on Yeongwoo's calculations, a fixed weekly expense of 200 to 300 million would be entirely manageable.

"Mr. Kubu, do you have any objections to your salary?"

When Yeongwoo asked for confirmation, Kubu blinked his large eyes.

—I will devote my life to this work.

"Great. From this moment on, you are a member of Renaissance."

As Yeongwoo made his offer, the mark above Kubu's head shone brightly.

Paah!

[You have recruited Kubu, the Guardian of Daro, as a retainer of Renaissance.]

The first retainer of Renaissance—the first-ever family on Earth, which also happened to be a bandit group.

Then, a new system message appeared in Yeongwoo's vision.

[The first retainer has been registered in the 'Renaissance' family.]

[The mandatory position of 'Administrator' is currently vacant. Would you like to assign one?]

'Position?'

As Yeongwoo wondered about it, a list of positions was immediately displayed.

[Administrator] - Mandatory

[Grants full access to all administrative duties within the family. Provides rapid diagnostics of the family's status and suggests operational strategies.

'Ah. No wonder it's mandatory.'

For now, the family had just been established, so there wasn't much work to do.

But once they started interstellar activities, administrative tasks would surely pile up.

Since their main business revolved around robbery and assault, they would inevitably face numerous lawsuits and legal issues.

Besides, the administrator's duties were essentially what Kubu had been handling all along.

"Mr. Kubu, I'm appointing you as the Administrator. Please make sure to earn your salary."

As Yeongwoo assigned him the role, a small silver halo appeared above Kubu's head.

Paaah!

‘Ah, so that’s the Administrator's insignia?’

It seemed that Kubu had gained access to the family system, as his eyes flickered rapidly.

—Our primary operations... are registered as robbery and assault?

"Yes... well. That’s how it turned out."

Yeongwoo scratched the back of his head as Kubu continued.

—Just now, the family court has approved the registration of 'Renaissance' as an official family.

"Oh, really?"

That was quite a surprise.

They had submitted their application listing robbery and assault as their main activities—and it still got approved?

—Yes. As a result, multiple families that registered nearby planets as their territories have been notified of Renaissance’s establishment.

In simpler terms, the neighbors had just been informed that a bandit group had moved in next door.

"...We have neighboring families? If so, they won’t be too thrilled about this news, will they?"

—I agree.

"....."

—Therefore, to prevent any unfortunate incidents, I recommend strengthening the family’s combat power.

Strengthening combat power.

Just hearing those words somehow felt exhilarating.

"Our combat power is displayed in our public profile?"

—That is correct. The estimated combat levels of the family head and its members, as well as the number of mythic-class artifacts owned, are publicly available.

"Then we'll be listed as having two mythic-class artifacts."

Yeongwoo glanced between Bastard and Aratubank.

Yet, despite having two mythic artifacts, Kubu was still suggesting an increase in combat power.

That meant Yeongwoo, the current strongest member of the family, was relatively weak compared to the neighboring families.

Which wasn't exactly reassuring, considering they were living openly as a 'bandit group.'

'Well, in this brutal universe, villains need overwhelming strength to survive.'

Swoosh.

Yeongwoo's gaze shifted to his available resources.

Available Karma: 36,951,619,405

Available Defense Funds: 82,443,375

Now, the time had finally come.

A moment when he would transcend his previous limits and become something far greater.

"Everyone, step back. I don't know how strong I'll become, and it terrifies me. Who knows? Maybe I'll be able to kill small creatures just by looking at them, like Mara."

—Are you calling us small creatures?

Jiseon's irritated voice shot back, but Yeongwoo didn't respond.

Instead, he pulled a Karma coin from his pocket and brought it to his lips.

"I will now become a cosmic being. Goodbye, human life."

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 414: Cosmic (1)

Click.

As soon as Yeongwoo placed the coin in his mouth, dotted lines formed along the outline of his body.

He had entered a sort of modification mode.

「Character Settings」

| Appearance |

| Stats |

With his considerable wealth, he could have significantly increased his height, but Yeongwoo's focus was already on his stats.

‘I’ve already passed the height threshold, so the cost-effectiveness isn’t great. It’s better to raise my stats instead.’

Height differences were quite significant in battles between Earthlings, but in space, that wasn’t the case—Yeongwoo knew this well.

In a place where all kinds of species were mixed, some opponents could be dozens of meters tall.

Besides...

‘Even Chairman Dogo isn’t particularly tall for a spacefarer. And yet, he still goes around beating up government officials.’

In space, strength and status mattered far more than height.

And soon...

‘I’ll gain power beyond Earth’s limits...!’

As Yeongwoo internally shouted this, he selected ‘Stats,’ causing a detailed display of his current attributes to appear before his eyes.

『Character: Jeong Yeongwoo07』

[Strength] 35,800 (19+35,781)

[Endurance] 25,448 (21+25,427)

[Durability] 26,598 (13+26,585)

[Senses] 33,600 (24+33,576)

‘Hmm...’

His current cash holdings were about 37 billion.

However, the amount he could actually use was closer to 26 billion.

This was because he had to pay taxes on the wedding gift money tonight.

‘Still, I can’t just burn through all 26 billion. Like Mom said, I need to keep some for family expenses and upgrading the city level.’

So how much should he invest in his stats to make a wise decision?

‘Let’s start with 10 billion.’

Converting 10 billion in cash into stats meant a whopping 10 million stat points.

Considering that his total stats had just exceeded 100,000...

‘...Am I gonna die from this? From becoming too strong all of a sudden?’

For a mere human like Yeongwoo, it was an unfathomable realm.

A total stat value reaching 10 million.

‘Well, the Chairman can split a spaceship in half with just a sword, so I guess this makes sense?’

Since he was still new to the cosmic world, Yeongwoo could only speculate.

But soon, the secret behind the strength of the upper echelon would be revealed.

‘Let’s do this.’

Determined to push his physical capabilities to their limit today, Yeongwoo began pouring his entire 10 billion karma into his stats. The dotted lines around his body flared red.

Swoosh!

No wonder—the stats were increasing by 30,000 to 40,000 per second.

—What the hell?

“Yeongwoo, are you okay?”

Sensing something unusual, his parents, Jiseon and Jeonggu, tried to approach him, but ‘Administrator’ Kubu quickly blinked.

—The family head is swiftly burning through the wedding gift money. It would be best not to interfere right now.

Just as Kubu said, Yeongwoo was essentially setting fire to the fortune acquired from his parents’ wedding gifts.

With his stats rising by over 30,000 per second, he was consuming approximately 120 million karma every second.

Fwoosh!

—That bastard... he’s not spending all our wedding gift money, is he?

If Yeongwoo was a newcomer to space, then Jiseon was a newcomer to motherhood.

The idea that seeing your child eat is enough to make a mother feel full didn’t apply to her in the slightest.

—Hey, you brat! Do you even remember how much that guy’s weekly salary is?!

Pop!

The moment Jiseon pointed at Kubu in frustration, Yeongwoo’s stat-burning suddenly stopped.

Fwoosh!

—Huh?

“Y-Yeongwoo?”

As his parents flinched, Yeongwoo turned to look at them, his pupils now shimmering gold.

“...I can’t raise them any further.”

-What? What do you mean?

“My stats. They won’t go past one million.”

True to his words, Yeongwoo’s stats had stopped precisely at one million per attribute.

『Character: Jeong Yeongwoo07』

[Strength] 1,000,000

[Endurance] 1,000,000

[Durability] 1,000,000

[Senses] 1,000,000

Additionally, the extra fields that used to display his innate stats had disappeared.

As if Yeongwoo’s ‘human phase’ had truly come to an end.

‘What... What is this? Is there a stat ceiling? Or is it a limit to the human body?’

As he looked down at his body in bewilderment, a delayed wave of ‘pressure’ suddenly crashed down on him.

Crunch!

“...Kuh!”

The side effects of his extreme stat increase manifested as a massive mental and physical strain.

“Khaaaaah!”

Even his berserker talisman couldn’t suppress this overwhelming force.

Golden flames burst from his eyes, nose, mouth, and ears.

Crackle!

—Holy shit?!

“Y-Yeongwoo! Your nose is...!”

As their son spewed flames like a shattered brazier, Jiseon and Jeonggu were too shocked to approach or retreat—they could only stomp their feet anxiously.



“Ku-Kubu! What the hell is going on?!”

Terrified, Jeonggu turned to Kubu for answers, but the administrator simply blinked again.

—It appears that the family head is on the verge of transcending his innate existence.

There wasn't a hint of hesitation in Kubu's voice.

After all, Jeong Yeongwoo<sup>07</sup> was now the master of the household Kubu served.

So the brief pain he was experiencing as he transcended his human limits was merely a rite of passage that any loyal retainer should accept.

“Kkeeeugh!”

Of course, Yeongwoo himself had an entirely different perspective.

“A-Are you kidding me...?! Is there no way to stop this?!”

The unbearable pain—no, an immense, inescapable fear—was suffocating him.

Then, suddenly...

“Hik!”

His eyes landed on the Aratubank lying on the ground.

At the moment his body began to collapse under the pain, he had unknowingly dropped his shield.

“...!”

The first thing that came to Yeongwoo's mind was Aratubank's defensive properties.

#### 【Immunity】

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

#### 【Shared Pain】

| The Redfoot ancestors will bear half of your pain. Your pain will be significantly reduced, and emotional suffering such as guilt and sorrow will also be alleviated.

Gathering the last of his strength, Yeongwoo clung to Aratubank, causing the spirit inside—Song Jungho—to recoil in shock.

∴ What the hell is this brat doing?!

But Yeongwoo had no room to process the other's bewildered voice.

"Haa...!"

The moment he hugged Aratubank, the pain miraculously halved.

'Whoa, as expected of a myth.....!'

Even so, the mental pressure remained immense.

It felt as if some transcendent force was trying to suppress the presence of a newly ascended powerhouse.

An overwhelming pressure, something that made the very idea of resistance seem impossible, was crushing Yeongwoo's entire consciousness.

Then—

Sssssssh.....

The flames erupting from his body subsided, and at the same time, the unknown oppressive force weakened.

"Are you... are you insane? I almost died just now."

As Yeongwoo finally managed to catch his breath, Jiseon spoke up again, picking up where she had left off earlier.

—Did you just say the stat limit is 1,000,000?

"Yes. Even if you have money, you can't raise it above 1,000,000. No, to be precise, the stat-increasing function itself is disabled."

Yeongwoo had never thought that his stats could rise infinitely, but he hadn't expected a hard limit to be imposed either.

—Wait, so does that mean the chairman and the executives all have their stats capped at 1,000,000?

Jiseon's sharp question.

But Yeongwoo had no knowledge to answer that.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

“I don’t know. The cap might be different for each race, or maybe...”

Yeongwoo trailed off, then immediately pulled out Bastard and stabbed it into his own thigh.

Squelch!

—What the hell, you lunatic.

His thigh was effortlessly pierced, and blood began gushing out.

Yeongwoo quickly checked his stat screen.

To his surprise—

『Character: Jeong Yeongwoo07』

[Strength] 1,250,000

[Endurance] 1,000,000

[Durability] 1,000,000

[Senses] 1,000,000

Thanks to the effect of the jewel Masochism, his Strength had increased exactly by 25%.

‘As expected.’

Even though his stats had hit the cap, external boosts still applied.

“We can surpass the stat limit using equipment effects.”

—What? So, in the end, it’s all about equipment?

“Hm.”

An equipment battle.

That made sense, but it didn't fully explain the overwhelming strength of the top-tier beings.

'So just having good gear would make me as strong as the chairman or Mara? That doesn't quite add up.'

Of course, if someone was covered in dozens of mythical-grade items, it might be possible, but that was practically unfeasible.

Moreover, since the stat cap was 1,000,000, Yeongwoo now had a whopping 6 billion still left unspent.

"I ended up with a lot of leftover money."

—Oh? Then why don't you hand that money over to us—

Before Jiseon could finish her sentence, Yeongwoo's eyes suddenly turned bright blue.

Flash!

—Oh, come on, what now?

Jiseon instinctively took two steps back.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo was too absorbed in the strange text appearing in his vision.

「You have reached the 'End.'」

'...The end?'

He had a vague idea of what it meant.

It likely signified that he had reached the absolute peak of growth possible through conventional means on Earth.

'Then what's next? Don't tell me I'm stuck at the bottom just because I'm from Earth?'

The universe was a place of karma and opportunity.

Having dared to summon third-class beings for a ritual, Yeongwoo had no choice but to believe that.

No matter how much of a backwater planet he came from, he was certain that with the right lineage, he could establish a family and survive in the universe.

That's why he had founded Renaissance today.

‘Didn’t they say I have a meeting with the board later? I better show them something impressive.’

As Yeongwoo stared at the word End, the text in his vision vanished—only for golden waves to suddenly flood his sight.

「Prestige Level has now been unlocked!」

“What?”

Prestige.

It was a familiar term.

In the universe, prestige was the measure of one's existential power.

It was the reason beings like Mara could suppress lesser creatures with just a glance.

‘But there’s a level system for prestige?’

As Yeongwoo blinked, golden letters slowly engraved themselves at the center of his vision.

Flash!

[Prestige Level: 0]

Then, the golden waves swirling around the edges of his vision all surged upwards at once.

Sssssshhhhh!

‘W-What is this?’

Before he could react, the number 0—his current Prestige Level—began to glow red.

「Assessing initial Prestige Level.」

“.....?”

「+1 for surviving a Reset.」

‘What the—’

「+1 for dungeon breakthroughs.」

「+33 for possessing a Myth.」

‘Huh?’

Just having a Myth had instantly added 33 points to his Prestige Level.

It seemed each accomplishment had its own weight, almost like earning experience points for a character level-up.

And then—

「+0.1 for encountering a 4th-class being.」

「+0.2 for battling a 4th-class being.」

「+2 for encountering a 3rd-class being.」

「+0.1 for possessing 10 billion Karma.」

The Prestige Level gain began to slow down noticeably.

‘So, the higher the level, the more experience it requires.’

「+0.5 for being a Family Head.」

Even Family Head carried significant weight.

And finally—

「Prestige Level has been finalized at 37!」

With that, Yeongwoo’s “placement test” was complete.

[Prestige Level: 37]

|90/100

Required Karma per point: 130 million

Prestige Level 37, with 90% of the requirement filled for the next level.

He didn’t know exactly what kind of position this gave him in the universe, but one thing was certain.

「Lesser beings detected nearby. Caution is advised when using Prestige.」

What he had joked about earlier—killing people with just a glance—had now become his reality.

‘W-Wait, is “lesser being” an official term?’

A chill ran down his spine.

The term “lesser being,” which high-ranking entities used so casually, wasn’t just arrogance born from strength.

From their perspective, the beings around them truly were lesser creatures.

And now, based on his Prestige Level of 37...

—What’s with this guy? Why does he look like that?

“Yeongwoo, are you okay? You don’t look so good...”

Jiseon and Jeonggu, sensing something was off, felt an inexplicable chill as they observed Yeongwoo.

Then, Yeongwoo’s lips curled into a grin.

“Haha, you lesser beings!”

—...What?

“What are you waiting for? Bring me my eyes and my spear at once!”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 415: Cosmic (2)

—.....?

“...Huh?”

At Yeongwoo’s remark calling them “lesser beings,” the atmosphere in the hall instantly froze.

And then—

—What the hell is this crazy bastard saying?

Sssssh!

Jiseon exhaled a cold, blue breath in anger.

However, unlike his wife, Jeonggu, who lacked courage, was already feeling the "presence" of his son.

“This... this brat... something is off...”

Looking at Yeongwoo in front of him gave him the same feeling as encountering a wild beast deep in the mountains.

In fact, considering the sheer pressure emanating from him, it was hardly surprising that the word "insignificant" had come out of his mouth.

“What the hell... did you do?”

As Jeonggu asked with a cold sweat dripping down his face, Kubu interjected before Yeongwoo could respond.

—Lord! Proper etiquette toward the ‘Roots’ must be observed!

At that moment, Yeongwoo, who had just been exuding arrogance, suddenly had a more human expression.

“Oh, is that so?”

—The Renaissance family was founded through ‘Root Restoration,’ meaning the family’s prestige and the status of its Roots are interdependent.

In simple terms, if Jiseon and Jeonggu, who were the fundamental pillars of the family, were not properly treated, the strength of the family itself would weaken.

‘How complicated.’

Yeongwoo scratched his chin.

It wasn’t an unreasonable concept.

Hadn’t Lemu once said it?



There were multiple ways to establish a prestigious family beyond just accumulating great achievements.

And right on cue, Kubu elaborated on the matter.

—The methods to sustain and strengthen a family vary depending on how it was founded.

“What? Then how does it work for us?”

As Yeongwoo asked, Kubu rolled his eyes around.

—Root Doctrine.

“What now?”

—Although you, Lord Yeongwoo, are the head of the Renaissance family, its birth was due to the reunion of the Roots.

“.....”

That was an ominous prelude.

And sure enough, Kubu followed up with a dreadful statement.

—Therefore, the authority to dissolve the family also lies with the two Roots...

“What? Dissolution?”

As Yeongwoo flared up, an intangible wave of energy burst forth from him.

Whooosh!

—.....!

Jiseon’s eyes widened as she realized her hair was momentarily lifted into the air.

And Jeonggu, who had already recognized that his son had truly become a "monster," discreetly shifted his body behind his wife.

Meanwhile, the administrative officer Kubu continued his explanation unfazed.

—It is an unavoidable aspect of the family’s structure. If the two Roots reach an agreement, they can dissolve the family.

It was, in fact, a logical conclusion.

After all, wasn't a family fundamentally a community built upon its members?

Thus, if the two founding members of the family decided to cease being a family, the family itself would naturally cease to exist.

"Then... what about divorce? Or death?"

—This crazy bastard...

Jiseon placed her hand on the greatsword at her waist but soon let go.

She instinctively understood.

Her son's martial prowess was no longer just at the level of being the strongest swordsman in the Korean Peninsula.

Besides, she was also curious about what would happen to the family in the event of divorce or death.

—In the case of divorce, it depends on the terms of the agreement, but generally, the family splits into two.

Immediately, Jiseon asked again.

—A division of lineage? Then what about the family's power? Things like prestige and capital?

—The family's prestige and capital are also divided, based on the divorce agreement.

A high probability that the family's strength would be split in half.

Then Kubu blinked rapidly.

—In the case of death, the remaining Root's prestige is partially transferred to the family head, but the overall family prestige is downgraded.

"Oh... So for the sake of the family, death is a better option than divorce."

Unless it was a strategic division of lineage through divorce, that was the case.

"Hm."

Yeongwoo smirked wickedly.

Then he gestured toward the two "Roots."

“Mother, Father. Please bring me my eyes and spear.”

—.....!

Jiseon was about to glow blue all over again, but Yeongwoo’s next words made her pause.

“I’ll give you 1 billion per person.”

—What?

“One... one billion?”

Jeonggu, who had been hiding behind Jiseon, peeked his head out.

“Yes. As Kubu said, it’s true that the two of you were instrumental in founding the family, and since the status of the Roots is directly tied to the family’s strength... Think of it as a wedding gift.”

A total of 2 billion.

It was a huge sum, but considering it was the cost of preventing the loss of the family’s foundational members, it wasn’t too expensive.

Besides, it wasn’t a sunk cost; the money would essentially be absorbed into Jiseon and Jeonggu’s combat abilities.

“It’s a lump-sum Root fee.”

—You brat, if you’re going to give us money, just say so nicely.

As Jiseon shook her head in exasperation, Jeonggu was already retrieving Yeongwoo’s eyes and spear from the hammer-wielding attendants.

His old habit of tossing weapons to his son in dungeons hadn’t disappeared.

“Yeongwoo! Here, I got them!”

Tap tap!

As Jeonggu actually handed over the equipment, Yeongwoo’s gaze shifted to his current cash holdings.

“Huh, but how do I even send such a large sum? We’re not merchants, so we don’t have a payment system, right?”

Although he had created a family, he hadn't yet developed the ability to generate an internal currency—like those black company cards.

—Transactions within the family can be conducted via direct cash transfers, without additional processing.

“...Oh?”

A question flashed through Yeongwoo's mind.

“Then what about transactions outside the family? If we don't have the ability to process currency, does that mean we have to hand over billions entirely in coins?”

—If the transaction partner does not have remote collection abilities, then yes.

“That's complicated. Then when can we acquire the processing ability, Administrator?”

Yeongwoo's question made Kubu blink.

—Since your family has just been established, there are still some ongoing administrative procedures.

Then, Kubu looked up at the sky.

—Once the Family Court evaluates the scale, influence, and primary industry of our Renaissance, certain functions you desire will be granted.

In simple terms, it meant they had to wait until the Family Court finished its work.

“Is there any way to speed that up? Why does this damn universe love ranking systems so much?”

—There is a way...

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

“Huh? What is it?”

—You can induce a faster judgment from the Family Court by interacting with other families.

“Interaction...?”

It was a rather vague term.

—Yes. The tendencies and outcomes of interactions with other families can influence the ranking assignment.

“What? So basically, if a family is violent, they’ll start beating up other families on sight and get a high violence score, while weaker families will get counterattacked and lose points?”

At Yeongwoo’s summary, Kubu paused for a moment and blinked again.

—Yes. It is somewhat similar to what you said, but for example, families belonging to the benevolence category...

“No, well, we’re not a benevolence-type family anyway. I get the point.”

Of course, that didn’t mean they were as ruthless as Mara’s faction either.

Due to his previous "karma," he couldn’t afford to accumulate too much evil karma.

[Burning Ice]

[Ensure that the total amount of evil karma does not exceed twice the amount of good karma you possess.

‘Hmm, interaction with other families, huh...’

If they had a ship, they could visit the planets of Aldo and the three fools, but that wasn’t an option at the moment.

“Then, for now, we’ll just have to wait for our neighbors to come to us.”

More precisely, it would be the neighbors who would be alarmed upon hearing that a band of outlaws had moved in next door.

—If you’re waiting for contact with other families... then yes.

For some reason, Kubu sounded worried.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo motioned for his father to hand something over.

“Give me that.”

Jeonggu hesitantly stepped forward, holding the clan leader’s new eyeball and spear.

“This really looks like an eyeball... Are you sure it’s okay?”

As Jeonggu handed over the two items, Yeongwoo’s pupils dilated instantly.

“Oh...”

A gasp, almost like a groan of admiration.

Yeongwoo was shocked solely because of the tooltip of the “Ominous Eye.”

「Ominous Eye」 – Void Eyeball

【Insight ability increased by 50%.】

【Sensory stats increased by 40%.】

【Ashen Gaze】

【Ashen Gaze】

|You can see through the void.

‘A 40% increase in sensory stats? Why didn’t I realize how incredible this was before?’

He had thought the option was good before, but now that his total stats had reached 4 million, his perspective had completely changed.

Only after reaching the "end" did he truly gain the eyes to see the value of equipment.

‘Right now, my sensory stat is 1 million, so if I increase it by 40%...’

Just like the strength boost he had seen earlier due to blood loss, the increase would be directly reflected, raising his sensory stat to a staggering 1.4 million.

‘Is this how President Toma and the Chairman boosted their combat power too?’

His heart pounded with excitement.

As Yeongwoo picked up the ominous eyeball, he felt a slimy texture and a sharp, acrid energy creeping up his fingers.

Shhhhhh...

However, unlike when he had replaced his heart or spine, no message appeared saying surgery was required.

‘Why?’

Yeongwoo tilted his head.

'Is it something I have to consume, like the mutation disguise? No, it's an eyeball, so that wouldn't make sense.'

Then how was he supposed to use it?

“.....”

After a moment of thought, Yeongwoo raised the eyeball to his face and directly pressed it into his right eye.

Squelch!

At first, he felt his eye socket tighten, then the “Ominous Eye” turned semi-gaseous and wrapped around his own eyeball.

—Ugh, shit.

Seeing his son's bold approach to inserting a new eye, Jiseon let out a disgusted noise.

Jeonggu also took a step back, reaffirming why Yeongwoo was truly the head of the family.

“You're one crazy bastard.”

Fwooooosh!

As soon as Yeongwoo equipped the Void Eyeball, a gray mist swirled violently around his body.

Flash!

『Character: Jeong Yeongwoo 07』

[Strength] 1,000,000

[Endurance] 1,000,000

[Durability] 1,000,000

[Perception] 1,400,000

At that moment, his display showed that his perception had skyrocketed to 1.4 million, but something even more important caught his attention.

「Your existence attribute has been updated to include 'Void.'」

‘What the hell?’

Holding his still uncomfortable right eye, Yeongwoo widened his left eye.

Then, a new message appeared before him.

「Existence attribute update: +0.3」

「Prestige Level has increased to 38!」

「You no longer have to show 'courtesy' in battles against Prestige Level 40 opponents.」

“Courtesy? What does that mean? That I can challenge higher-ups now?”

As Yeongwoo frowned and muttered to himself, Kubu closed his eyes as if resigning himself to reality.

—Yes.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 416: Cosmic (3)

Courtesy.

The dictionary definition is “to treat someone with politeness and respect.”

Then what does courtesy mean in battle?

‘Well... maybe not using cowardly tricks? Introducing yourself properly before fighting?’

If this were Earth, those might be the first things that came to mind when thinking about combat etiquette.

But this was practically space now.

“Kubu.”

—Yes, Lord.



“What exactly is the ‘courtesy’ observed in battle?”

Specifically, what was it that Yeongwoo no longer needed to observe when fighting an opponent with a Prestige Level of 40?

Kubu blinked before answering.

—Courtesy is part of the cosmic order.

“Order...?”

—That’s correct. When facing an opponent to whom one must show courtesy, it becomes impossible to use one’s full power.

Yeongwoo’s expression twisted immediately.

“...What are you saying? In a fight, the weaker side has to hold back instead?”

—Not so much the weaker side... rather, the lesser side.

“...!”

Hearing Kubu’s explanation, Yeongwoo felt his scalp tingle.

From the start, the concepts of space were completely different from common sense on Earth.

‘Well, raising your Prestige Level requires not just money, but also an impressive track record.’

Surviving resets, clearing dungeons, discovering third-rank beings, possessing myths—

These were all accomplishments that made up Yeongwoo’s Prestige Level 38.

In other words, a high Prestige Level signified numerous extraordinary achievements.

‘So they consider someone with a lower Prestige Level to be ‘lesser’ in comparison.’

In space, nobility wasn’t about birth but about how much one had accomplished and experienced.

That was why royal families, whose power was built upon myths, were universally respected.

“No, but still—how does it make sense that in a life-or-death battle, the ‘lesser’ side has to deliberately hold back?”

Yeongwoo asked with some frustration. Kubu blinked again before replying.

—Courtesy is one of the fundamental systems of cosmic order. That means it is enforced.

“Put it in simpler terms.”

—Even if a lesser being attacks with full power, their attack cannot fully reach their opponent.

“Ah.”

Now Yeongwoo understood clearly.

“Fuck. So if your level is lower, you get nerfed in fights.”

This universe was a strict hierarchy.

To maintain that order, a system was in place preventing lesser beings from easily harming the noble ones.

“Wait, does that mean...”

A sudden realization flashed through Yeongwoo’s mind.

“Even Lemu would be affected when fighting our Chairman, right?”

—That... we cannot be sure of.

“...Seems likely, though? The Chairman is from a royal family, and their rank is vastly different. Their Prestige Level must be much higher...”

What kind of fights had Lemu been through?

Of course, as the major shareholders had said, Lemu owned a crude business empire, meaning he had enormous financial resources.

So his Prestige Level might actually be comparable to the Chairman’s.

「You are now exempt from ‘courtesy’ when fighting against opponents with Prestige Level 40.」

‘Judging from my case, it looks like a two-level gap removes the courtesy penalty...’

Then the previous fight between the Chairman and Lemu—was it a battle with courtesy, or was it an unrestricted duel?

‘A lesser being like me has no way of knowing.’

Yeongwoo shook his head.

『That wretched Lemu is a fourth-rank existence. He will never achieve any great deeds and will remain where he is until he perishes.』

The Chairman said things like this all the time, so it was hard to imagine he would lose to a lesser being just because of a temporary level difference.

But that was a matter for the beings of the heavens.

For Yeongwoo, the most important thing now was—

‘I finally have lesser beings beneath me!’

Until now, he had been nothing more than a pawn, pushed around by bigger players.

But now, he had truly become a cosmic existence.

His Prestige had finally broken through its natural limits and reached the cosmos, allowing him to look down upon those beneath him.

The only problem was... the ones beneath him were his own family roots.

“Well, for now, I just need to keep building up my Prestige Level and prepare for the future.”

As Yeongwoo said this, Jiseon interrupted.

—Prepare for the future...? What are you planning now?

“What else? Have you forgotten our main business?”

Robbery and assault.

In this vast universe, how much power would one need to live as a space bandit?

With that in mind, it was impossible not to be curious about the Chairman’s Prestige Level.

“I’m at 38 now... so what kind of level would a big shot like the Chairman have?”

[Prestige Level: 38]

|20/100

- Karma required per achievement point: 250 million

To raise his Prestige Level by just one point, Yeongwoo needed 250 million Karma.

So how much more would he need to go from Level 39 to 40?

There was no need to think too hard to predict the answer—

Even at the early 40s, it would become nearly impossible to grow just by spending money.

‘Just as the Chairman said, if you don’t accomplish great deeds, you’ll remain where you are until you vanish.’

The structure of the cosmic hierarchy was finally starting to make sense.

“Kubu.”

—Yes, Lord.

“Has there ever been a case where someone succeeded in an uprising while still observing courtesy?”

Since Kubu could now access the family system, Yeongwoo wondered if he might also have access to historical records.

But the response was—

—That... I cannot say.

“Ah, of course. There’s no way to know everything happening in this vast universe.”

Yeongwoo answered his own question, and Kubu blinked in agreement.

“Well then.”

Taking a deep breath, Yeongwoo reached for Jeonggu’s arm and transferred the promised 1 billion Karma.

Fwoosh!

“Huh?”

Jeonggu’s jaw dropped as he saw the amount displayed before him.

“Th-thanks. How’s your eye now?”

“It’s much better than before.”

Yeongwoo’s right pupil now had a faint ashen glow—it had successfully adapted.

“Mother, you come too.”

Yeongwoo beckoned his second lesser being, Song Jiseon.

But Jiseon shook her head and instead gestured for Yeongwoo to come to her.

—You may have become a great person, but you couldn’t have built this family without us. So you should come here.

“.....”

As expected, his mother was not easy to deal with.

Yeongwoo thought for a moment, then nodded and stepped forward.

“I don’t have time to argue.”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Clank, clank.

With each step, a strange ripple spread through the air.

Jiseon ignored it and simply extended her arm toward him.

Swoosh.

Yeongwoo took her arm and transferred 1 billion Karma.

Fwoosh!

And at that moment—

—H-huh?!

Jiseon let out an unusually startled sound and stumbled backward.

“What... what was that?”

Startled, Yeongwoo withdrew his hand and asked. Jiseon, equally flustered, responded in a shaky voice.

—A... A status window just appeared.

"What? You mean you've never had a status menu before?"

Well, that made sense.

Jiseon was a mutant from the beginning, and her combat power had been automatically adjusted according to the reset date.

However, after receiving Karma from Yeongwoo and gaining her first property, she was granted some of the rights of an Earth resident.

"If you invest 4 billion into your stats, you can unlock the Prestige Level."

—4 billion? That means we're still short 3 billion.

"Wait for the next root tax payout."

Yeongwoo, who said this so nonchalantly, still had about 20 billion in cash even after taxes.

But there was too much that needed to be done with that money.

First, the city needed to be developed, and now that a noble house had been established, preparations for a fleet had to begin.

‘A planetary ship would cost far more than a regular one. Honestly, 20 billion probably won’t even come close.’

Yeongwoo scratched his forehead.

Of course, with the board meeting happening soon, he would get a better estimate once he spoke with them.

Would Earth even approve the ship's construction?

How much capital would be required?

"But Yeongwoo, when are you going to take this thing? It's honestly terrifying to hold onto."

"...?"

Hearing Jeonggu's words, Yeongwoo turned his head—only to find a gleaming white spear thrust toward him.

"Oh."

It was none other than the legendary spear, Lightning Rod, a gift from Lemu, the company president, for the wedding.

"Hand it over."

As Yeongwoo took the spear from Jeonggu's hands, a dazzling tooltip filled his vision.

Flash!

「Lightning Rod」 - Legendary Spear

【Lightning Fire】

| Doubles the lightning damage you possess.

【Lightning Rod】

| When hit by lightning damage, attack power increases by 15%.

【Lemu's Seal】

| Every time you pronounce 'Lemu,' you receive a thrilling jolt of lightning damage and gain favor with machines.

"...That's insane."

Yeongwoo had almost forgotten about this spear's absurd effects.

Now it made sense why Jeonggu had been afraid to even hold it.

'Damn, I can't even say the boss's name casually anymore.'

Still, in a critical battle, there would come a time when he had to say Lemu's name.

【Lightning Rod】

| When hit by lightning damage, attack power increases by 15%.

Unless he was fighting a Thunder Dragon, the only way to activate this effect would be to trigger Lemu's Seal or inflict damage on himself.

But he wasn't sure if self-inflicted damage would even register with the spear's effect.

Zap.

Gripping the long handle of Lightning Rod, he felt white lightning crawling up the back of his hand.

Crackle!

—Uh... that weapon looks kind of dangerous.

Feeling an inexplicable sense of unease, Jiseon instinctively stepped back.

And, of course, she was right to be cautious.

Swoosh!

Without warning, Yeongwoo reversed his grip on the spear and stabbed his own calf with the tip.

Thud!

—You crazy bastard!

Jiseon snapped as poisonous blood gushed from Yeongwoo's wound.

".....!"

But Yeongwoo wasn't even paying attention to his bleeding leg.

'It worked!'

A lightning-shaped icon appeared in the corner of his vision, confirming that Lightning Rod's attack boost had activated.

'At least I won't have to shout Lemu's name in every fight now. Haha, sorry, Boss. Your trick wasn't deep enough.'

Yeongwoo smirked with a sense of triumph.

But still, wouldn't it be a waste to never trigger Lemu's Seal even once?

He was too curious.

What exactly does "a jolt of lightning damage" feel like?



One day, this reckless curiosity is going to kill me.

Even as he thought that, his mouth was already opening.

"...Le, mu?"

At that moment, as if it had been waiting for him, a white flash surged, sending an electric shock through his body.

Zap!

"Ah, ughhh!"

A "pleasantly" shocking jolt.

It was just the right amount of electricity—not too much, not too little—sending a tingle across his entire body.

Yeongwoo shuddered involuntarily, letting out an embarrassing groan.

'What the hell did that bastard give me?!'

Fwoosh!

Above his head, a square emblem with Lemu's logo appeared.

That had to be Lemu's Seal.

"....."

Still trembling from the lingering electricity, Yeongwoo lifted his head.

Whirrrrr...

He heard it—the sound of the mechanical wreaths outside the wedding hall coming to life.

"Oh, shit."

He bolted outside.

Boom!

Just as he expected, power had been restored across the border districts of Gwangjin-gu.

Yeongwoo's activation of Lemu's Seal had inadvertently reactivated Lemu's mechanical wreaths.

"What the hell..."

Beep...

The machines soon powered down again, but one thing was certain—Lemu's Seal had more layers than the tooltip suggested.

【Lemu's Seal】

| Every time you pronounce 'Lemu,' you receive a thrilling jolt of lightning damage and gain favor with machines.

The tooltip only mentioned "gaining favor" with machines, but it was clearly more complex than that.

'What exactly does 'favor' mean?'

As Yeongwoo silently pondered the question only Lemu could answer, a new notification appeared in his vision.

「Meeting with the Board will commence in 2 hours and 30 minutes.」

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 417: Cosmic (4)

Meeting with the Council.

Only 2 hours and 30 minutes remained.

"There's supposed to be a meeting with the Council soon. Where is it happening?"

Yeongwoo asked Kubu, but no clear answer came.

—Th-That is...

"Well, this is your first time as a family administrator too, Kubu."

Although Kubu's knowledge might surpass Yeongwoo's, he was still a newly appointed administrator.

There was no way he would have prior information about such a large-scale event as a planetary council meeting.

"Hmm."

As Yeongwoo gazed absently at the sky, lost in thought, Jiseon interjected.

—Since the family's founding site is Seoul, wouldn't it be held in Seoul?

"Really?"

—What's the purpose of this meeting? It's to figure out what kind of people we are, right? And to set some guidelines.

It was a plausible argument.

After all, Renaissance was the first noble house of Earth.

From the perspective of both Earth and the Council, they were an entity that couldn't be ignored.

—If I were representing Earth on the Council, I would come here directly. These people appeared under the banner of a bandit gang, so wouldn't you want to check out how they've set up shop?

Kubu cautiously added,

—That reasoning makes sense. Since today's ceremony was something both Earth and the Council would have been aware of, it's highly likely they would want to inspect the site themselves.

"Oh, so there's a chance the meeting will take place right here in Gwangjin District?"

Yeongwoo turned to look at the ceremony hall.

Despite the devastation inside caused by the tribute breakthrough, the exterior still retained its imposing grandeur.

"If the Council really does come directly to Metal Seoul, we should start developing the city right now."

—...Why? To make it look a little more prosperous?

"No, because we might end up fighting with the Council."

—.....?

"There's no guarantee that the Council's interests align with ours."

Yeongwoo was already picturing the scenario in his head—

Activating the Annihilator, surrounding those Council bastards.

—Wait, are you seriously considering fighting them? The planetary council is like... a landlord's representative, right? And we're the tenants.

Jiseon pointed at the ground as she spoke.

But from Yeongwoo's perspective—he who would essentially be representing Earth's people before the Council—it was a completely different matter.

"Why do you say we're tenants?"

—What?

"Mother, we are natives. Without us, Earth is alone."

—W-What are you talking about?

Jiseon, as well as Jeonggu and Kubu, widened their eyes at this completely new perspective.

"What can Earth even do by itself, without its residents? Even the planetary rank evaluation was conducted because of me, its inhabitant."

—...That's true, but...

"Earth is nothing more than a low-tier backwater planet. There's no need for us, the insignificant, to act as if we're mere tenants. If anything, they should be the ones coming to greet us."

Yeongwoo's expression was deadly serious.

Seeing that he was ready to grab the Council by the collar, Jiseon hurriedly tried to calm him down.

—So... you're saying it's wise to maintain good relations.

"Yes. And the key to getting close is power!"

—What?

While Jiseon stared at him in shock, Yeongwoo had already opened the urban development interface.

Paaaah!

[Dogo Special City: Metal Seoul]

|Level: 3

|Location: Earth

|Mayor: Jeong Yeongwoo-07

|Objective: Social Status Advancement

Metal Seoul's current level was 3.

With this, it had gained territorial defense rights, meaning lower-tier merchants could no longer enter without approval.

Additionally, the city had been equipped with anti-air cannons and self-destruct explosives.

And the next phase?

[Dual Structure]

|You are no longer restricted in facility and device construction choices.

However, exceeding previous limitations will increase costs.

The next step was expanding the existing infrastructure through dual structuring.

[Due to Dual Structure, 'Victory Monument' and 'Annihilation Mode' expansion is now possible.]

"If I build another Victory Monument, will it contribute to city level advancement?"

Yeongwoo asked.

Kubu blinked before replying.

—All structures within the city contribute to level progression.

"So, even if it's useless, it's still beneficial to build."

Yeongwoo made this remark because the designated site for the second Victory Monument was none other than Jongmyo (Royal Shrine).

[Victory Monument]

| Register the legendary enemies who met their end before the city's name and gain Glory Points.

The enemies recorded in the monument had to be at least legendary-class foes.

Like Kim Jong-un, for example.

'Will there be another legendary-class mutant like him in the future?'

Kim Jong-un had been significantly buffed because he had appeared alongside two of his predecessors.

Finding another legendary-class enemy in the upcoming reset period would be difficult.

'So, what's the price?'

Yeongwoo checked the construction cost for the second Victory Monument.

[Victory Monument]

| Register the legendary enemies who met their end before the city's name and gain Glory Points.

| Once the city's Glory reaches a certain level, bonus points will be awarded during planetary status reviews.

\*Options:

\*Sacrificial Altar: Install

\*Jongmyo: Not Installed (320 million Karma)

'320 million...'

Considering this was an urban-scale upgrade, the price wasn't outrageous.

Plus, he was currently holding a lot of cash.

'Earning money is hard, but spending it is easy.'

Eventually, Yeongwoo approved the construction of Jongmyo's Victory Monument and moved on to the main course—Annihilation Mode.

Paaah!

[Annihilation Mode]

|When the city is in danger, emergency facilities will be activated to eliminate threats.

Can be activated only once per day.

Options:

\*Four Great Gates: Active

\*Namsan: Inactive (850 million Karma)

"Damn, that's expensive."

850 million Karma.

He had expected city defenses to be pricey, but this was even more than expected.

A low-tier city would never be able to afford this kind of upgrade.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

But Yeongwoo had made a fortune by hosting that insane wedding.

‘No matter how I look at it, the Council should be the ones bowing to me.’

Yeongwoo scratched his chin.

[Namsan]

|Annihilator count reduced to 1 but enhanced anti-ship interception.

Spending 850 million Karma on Namsan would deploy a single but highly specialized Annihilator for anti-ship defense.

In other words, it would be effective against large-scale invasions like the previous Mara mutant attack over Seoul.

‘If we ever build a planetary battleship, the city itself would become part of the ship... In the long run, this investment makes sense.’

Moreover, he needed to construct something to level up the city further.

"This really isn't easy..."

After letting out a brief remark, Yeongwoo immediately approved the additional facilities.

Flash!

A total of 1.17 billion drained from his balance, and the sky turned a deep blue.

Flaaaash!

— Dogo Special City Mayor Jeong Yeongwoo07 has approved the construction of [Victory Monument] at the key location ‘Jongmyo’.

— Dogo Special City Mayor Jeong Yeongwoo07 has approved the activation of [Annihilation Readiness] at the key location ‘Namsan’.

—What... what the hell?

"Huh?"

Jiseon and Jeongu looked up, eyes wide in shock.

Then, beams of blue light shot down onto Jongmyo and Namsan.

Chuaaaak!

A piercing sound, reminiscent of jet propulsion, rang sharply through the air.

And then—

Paaaaang!

A crisp, resonant impact echoed as the entirety of Metal Seoul flashed brightly.

「Metal Seoul’s level has risen to ‘4!’」

"As expected!"

Confirming that the city level had jumped in one go, Yeongwoo clenched his fist.

Kubu, too, seemed to be processing the new information, its eyes darting rapidly.



— A level 4 city... has considerable privileges.

"Oh, really?"

— For starters, a level 4 city qualifies as a planetary capital.

"What?"

Planetary capital.

Hadn't Dogo long ago issued a quest to designate a planetary capital?

That's why he had chosen Seoul for the role.

But so far, Metal Seoul had only been the capital of the Korean Peninsula, not the entire planet.

"Having the qualifications to be a planetary capital just means the conditions are met, right?"

— Correct. To officially become the planetary capital, you need the unanimous approval of the planet's shareholders and the planet's own recognition.

Approval from planetary shareholders.

And the planet's own recognition.

"Well, those are things I'd have to deal with anyway while building the planetary fleet."

No problem there.

"What about the other privileges?"

At Yeongwoo's question, Kubu blinked as it glanced around.

— If you construct a Grand Assembly Hall, you'll be able to summon planetary shareholders and shareholder candidates.

"Ohhh."

Now that was a function befitting a planetary capital candidate.

As the leading city on the planet, he could now issue summons to the later-stage contenders.

"Then... could I just summon them all and execute them?"

— .....

Kubu hesitated to answer.

But it didn't say no, which meant it was technically possible.

"I'm kidding. If I rack up too much karma debt here, it'll be a headache for me too."

However, if violence was possible in the Grand Assembly Hall, then persuasion would be as well.

"I absolutely have to build the Assembly Hall."

As Yeongwoo fiddled with the commemorative coin in his hand, Kubu spoke hesitantly.

— The Grand Assembly Hall is a level 4 facility.

"And?"

— That means the construction cost is exorbitant.

Exorbitant...

For Kubu to use such language, the price had to be ridiculous.

"...How much are we talking about?"

Yeongwoo tilted his head, and Kubu's eyes flashed as it pulled up the Assembly Hall's construction menu.

Flash!

[Grand Assembly Hall]

| Convene the influential figures of the planet for meetings. Planetary shareholders and candidates can be forcibly summoned.

\*Base construction cost: 3 billion Karma

"Three billion?"

He couldn't help but exclaim at the absurd scale.

And since it was labeled as a "base construction cost," that meant it could be upgraded like the 'Broadcast Screen.'

"Isn't 3 billion a bit much?"

— Should I put the construction on hold for now?

Kubu's response came almost as if it had been expecting this reaction.

Yeongwoo hesitated for a moment.

"Should I just let this go? No... The chance to summon all the shareholder candidates won't come around often."

Planetary shareholder candidates.

These were the powerful figures currently paying massive taxes.

If they managed to stay in power as key taxpayers, they would eventually claim their share when planetary rights were distributed.

Thus, if Jeong Yeongwoo<sup>07</sup> wanted to monopolize Earth's planetary rights, he had to either kill all the candidates or ensure they were no longer eligible.

"No longer eligible... Make them ineligible?"

As he pondered the idea, Yeongwoo's eyes suddenly widened.

Then he turned to Kubu and issued a command.

"Build the Grand Assembly Hall."

— Are you sure? The construction cost is...

In response, Yeongwoo put away the commemorative coin he had been holding and instead pulled out a crimson coin worth 1,000 Karma.

"It's fine. The ones forcibly summoned to the Assembly Hall will split the cost among themselves."

This time, Jiseon tilted her head and asked,

—Are you extorting them again? Aren't those people going to be planetary shareholders in the future? Unless you're planning to kill them, wouldn't it be better to stay on their good side?

But Yeongwoo was already shaking his head.

"No. The moment they're summoned, they'll no longer be shareholder candidates."

—Why not?

"In this world, taxable income is calculated after deducting essential living expenses."

—...So?

"So if I threaten them into splitting the construction cost of the Assembly Hall, that money will be considered an essential expense."

In other words, their taxable income would shrink.

Enough that they would no longer qualify as shareholder candidates.

—Wait, are you serious? Even money taken through threats counts as an expense?

Jiseon turned to Kubu, who had once been a broker and tax specialist.

Kubu slowly closed its eyes.

Srrrk.

— Surprisingly... it is possible.

—What?

— First, because Earth is currently undergoing a reset. And second...

Kubu's eyes rolled toward Jeong Yeongwoo07.

— It's due to the Lord's karma score.

—What about that bastard's karma score?

— Legally speaking, the Lord's threats would be deemed credible enough to constitute a genuine fear of death.

—...What.

In other words, Jeong Yeongwoo07's cosmic reputation was that bad.

"Mother, this is karma working in my favor. See?"

Feeling triumphant after Kubu's explanation, Yeongwoo drew his saber.

Schwaaaak!

Then, pointing its tip skyward, he declared:

"Today, I will turn all the high earners into beggars!"

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 418: Cosmic (5)

Turning high-income earners into beggars.

In fact, this was quite a humane measure.

'If we're not going to eliminate them from the pool of equity holders by making them beggars, the only other option is to actually kill them.'

And surely, being a beggar was better than dying.

In any case, monopolizing planetary equity was absolutely necessary.

Not only was negotiation authority with Earth essential for constructing a planetary ship, but if opposition arose during future global decision-making, it would be a major hassle.

"Let's build the grand assembly hall right now. We still have some time before the board meeting, don't we?"

—Understood.

Kubu blinked and reopened the construction menu.

Flash!

[Grand Assembly Hall]

| Gathers the planet's key figures to hold meetings. Planetary equity holders and candidates can be forcibly summoned.

\*Base construction cost: 3 billion Karma

—The construction cost of 3 billion Karma will be paid in the name of the Family Head.

Then, a rectangular holographic window appeared in front of Yeongwoo.

“Oh... You want me to sign this?”

—Yes, Family Head.

It seemed that because this was such a massive expenditure, the Family Head’s signature was required.

“Can I sign however I want?”

—Of course.

Kubu blinked twice, as if waiting.

At this, Yeongwoo looked at the sword in his hand—Bastard.

Then—

Whoosh!

He swung Bastard at an incredible speed, slashing diagonally through the holographic window.

Szzzzt!

—.....!

—Huh?

“...Whoa. What just happened?”

Kubu, Jiseon, and Junggu all reacted in shock.

None of them had been able to see Yeongwoo’s movement just now.

But the man himself didn’t care about their astonishment at all.

‘I... I did it!’

At that moment, all that mattered to him was that he had used his sword tip to sign—just like a true chairman would.

Sizzle!

Since Bastard radiated dark crimson energy, Yeongwoo's 'signature' glowed a fiery red, as if burned into the air with molten metal.

"...Is this good enough?"

The novice Family Head, Yeongwoo<sup>07</sup>, stared at his signature, uncertain.

Kubu retrieved the holographic window, rolling his eyes.

—Yes, it has been approved.

Then, just like before, the sky turned an eerie shade of blue.

Flash!

—Where would you like to construct the grand assembly hall?

A map of Seoul appeared, along with a highly detailed visual representation of the hall's immense size.

"It's way bigger than I expected."

On the map, the grand assembly hall was depicted as a massive domed structure, roughly the size of a World Cup stadium.

That explained why there were no recommended construction sites—it was too large to fit just anywhere.

'In that case... wouldn't it be best to overlay it onto an existing stadium site?'

Yeongwoo considered this for a moment before changing his mind.

"Kubu—no, Administrator. Can the grand assembly hall be used to invite other families as well?"

The default tooltip stated that only the planet's key figures could be summoned, but he wondered if the facility could be upgraded for more functionality.

And, as expected—

—The grand assembly hall can indeed be enhanced through expansions. And among the available upgrades...

Kubu's eyes flicked upward.

—There is an option to summon or call members of other families within the Family's sphere of influence.

'Within the Family's sphere of influence...'

For some reason, that phrase was quite appealing.

"So in theory, I could one day seat all the other Family Heads in the grand assembly hall, right?"

—Theoretically, yes.

"Then let's build the grand assembly hall in Gwangjin District. There's plenty of open space there."

At this, Jiseon spoke up.

—What? Are you planning to make Gwangjin the center of Seoul?

She was questioning why such a crucial diplomatic facility would be built in that area.

But Yeongwoo's answer completely shattered her expectations.

"Nope. I'm putting all the undesirable facilities in Gwangjin."

—...Huh?

"If violence is possible inside the grand assembly hall, that means others can fight back, right?"

—Well, yeah.

"Then imagine a bunch of alien family leaders gathering there and beating each other up. How dangerous do you think that would be?"

—...What the hell?

"Diplomacy is all about demonstrating the power gap effectively to convince others, isn't it?"

—.....

Jiseon's mouth hung open inside her helmet.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo stomped his right foot, clad in his Vesedel Armor, against the ground.



Boom!

“And don’t forget that there’s a massive self-destruct bomb buried beneath this place.”

—...Why?

“If we build the grand assembly hall on top of the bomb, it’ll make it that much easier to threaten the Family Heads.”

—You lunatic.

“I’m just glad you’re finally realizing that.”

At Yeongwoo’s words, he turned toward Kubu.

Taking the hint, Kubu began constructing the grand assembly hall.

Swoosh.

He closed his eyes for a moment, and then, opposite the ceremonial hall, blazing blue beams of light rained down from the sky.

Rumble!

Due to its sheer size, numerous beams pierced through the heavens as the grand assembly hall took shape.

“Excellent.”

Watching as the grand assembly hall—looking more like a colossal coliseum—rapidly formed, Yeongwoo turned his attention to the Three Hammers, who were still waiting nearby.

“Kobu.”

—Yes, sir?

“This ceremonial hall—will it remain even after you three leave?”

—Since you’ve fully paid for it... yes.

“Then can I continue using it however I like?”

—In what way, exactly...?

“For example, renting it out to someone else.”

—Ah.

Realizing what he meant, Kobu turned toward the ceremonial hall.

Then, cautiously, he spoke.

—Some of the furnishings have been damaged, but for a small additional fee, they can be fully restored.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

In other words, he could run the ceremonial hall as a business if he wanted to.

—However.

“What’s the catch?”

—The Dogo Corporation’s emblem is permanently engraved throughout the ceremonial hall. That cannot be removed.

“Oh, is that all?”

Yeongwoo scratched his cheek.

That didn’t seem like much of a drawback.

“Well, as long as I inform the renters beforehand, it shouldn’t be a big issue. I can just lower the rental fee a little.”

At that, Jeonggu looked surprised and asked,

"Are you saying you’re going to turn this wedding hall into a business?"

"Yes. Can we really survive just by robbing people? We need some kind of side business."

Besides, they had just acquired a magnificent wedding hall, complete with an execution platform.

Yeongwoo figured that somewhere in this universe, there had to be couples who would want a wedding hall like this.

"Then, if I want to commercialize the wedding hall, should I contact Kobu?"

— Yes. If you need us, just press this to summon us.

Swish.

Kobu handed over a small pentagonal metal piece.

「Hammer Caller」 - General Tool

【Not a prison, but a tool for order.】

"Thank you."

As Yeongwoo took the summoner, Kobu extended his right hand for a handshake.

— We'll be taking our leave now.

"You've worked hard."

Clank!

As Yeongwoo shook hands with Kobu, a bright light flickered from the direction of the grand hall.

「Level 4 Major Facility: Grand Assembly Hall has been completed.」

"It's time to undertake a national... no, planetary-scale project."

— May the blessings of the Order be upon you and this planet, Lord.

Kobu stepped away from Yeongwoo.

Then, he looked toward the ship docked in the open field, pressed the small device in his hand, and—

Click.

In an instant, the silhouettes of Kobu, Tobu, and Chobu became transparent and teleported right in front of the ship.

— The guests are truly all gone now.

Jiseon muttered as she watched the hammers dash into the ship like they were running for their lives.

Yeongwoo simply shrugged.

"New guests will be arriving soon."

\* \* \*

Grand Assembly Hall, Metal Seoul, Dogo Special City.

According to the facility description, the Grand Assembly Hall had the power to forcibly summon planetary stakeholders and candidates.

"Forced summoning, huh?"

Yeongwoo was curious about how exactly it worked.

The hall wasn't too far from the wedding venue, so Yeongwoo and the Renaissance crew were already standing in front of its grand entrance.

— Only the Lord can open the Grand Assembly Hall's door.

"But other people can enter if I open it, right?"

Yeongwoo turned to look at the two attendants behind him.

Kubu blinked.

— Yes. If you open the door, your companions may enter as well.

Then, Kubu turned his gaze toward the towering entrance, at least 50 meters high.

— The entrance of a Level 4 Grand Assembly Hall is nearly indestructible. According to the manual, it can also serve as an emergency shelter.

"You've been studying a lot, I see."

Yeongwoo hadn't forgotten.

This administrator was being paid a weekly salary of 150 million Karma.

"Still, I can open it with mythic-class gear, right?"

— As of now... yes. But once the city's level rises, that will no longer be possible.

"What? Not even mythic-class weapons will work?"

That was shocking.

If he flipped this logic around, it meant that on certain high-tier planets, entire cities might be filled with buildings immune to even mythic-class destruction.

"Then how do you destroy those buildings?"

— ...By repeatedly bombarding them with the main cannons of large warships...

"Oh, so that's why ships are necessary."

Yeongwoo nodded in understanding.

Kubu, however, hadn't exactly agreed with that statement.

"Anyway, how do I open the door? Do I just say 'Open' like some kind of magic spell?"

Yeongwoo half-joked as he spoke, but—

Rumble!

The massive metal doors began to slide open.

"...You've got to be kidding me."

— The Lord holds absolute authority within the family. Thus, all facilities owned by the family obey the Lord's command.

"That's amazing. But this planet isn't my property yet, right?"

As Yeongwoo stepped past the threshold of the Grand Assembly Hall, Kubu, Jiseon, and Jeonggu followed suit.

"...My god."

Jeonggu gaped in awe.

The ceiling had to be at least a few hundred meters high.

—Even if I turned into a dragon, my head wouldn't hit the ceiling.

Even Jiseon let out a whistle at the overwhelming scale of the hall.

—Damn, money really does wonders. They hold meetings in a place like this?

The Grand Assembly Hall's structure was also quite unique.

It was designed like a colosseum, with countless spectator seats encircling the outer perimeter.

Meanwhile, the center of the hall was an enormous open space—

Almost as if it were built to host battles between gigantic beings.

"Looks like meetings happen over there."

Yeongwoo pointed to a massive round stone table at the very center of the hall.

The table was roughly 10 meters in diameter and stood alone in the vast open space.

— Yes, that is where planetary stakeholders can be summoned.

Hearing Kubu's words, Yeongwoo wasted no time and headed straight for the table.

Clank. Clank.

Now that he looked closely, the floor and walls of the Grand Assembly Hall were made of dark gray stone.

The atmosphere felt rather desolate.

Meanwhile, the ceiling was covered with a semi-transparent material of unknown composition.

"What's that? Glass?"

Yeongwoo furrowed his brows as he stared up at the cloudy, blurred sky.

Kubu blinked once.

Flash!

In an instant, the ceiling became perfectly clear, as if it had vanished.

— It is a retractable ceiling. It's not actually open right now—there's just a very thin protective barrier in place.

"Can it be fully opened?"

— If the Lord wishes, yes.

However, Kubu added that doing so would expose the hall's interior to the outside climate.

"That 3 billion was well spent. In certain situations, we could even dock a warship up there, couldn't we?"

— That is correct.

"Good. But for now, keep it closed. We'll be welcoming guests soon."

At Yeongwoo's command, the Grand Assembly Hall's ceiling was instantly replaced with gray stone.

"Now it feels like we're in a dungeon..."

Jeonggu, an actual dungeon explorer, shivered slightly.

Yeongwoo grinned.

"I want our guests to feel exactly that way."

Then, he placed his hand on the massive round table.

"Alright, let's summon this planet's key figures."

— The summoning can be initiated immediately. However...

"What's the issue?"

— Since it is a forced summoning, the moment you issue the command, the targets will be pulled in instantly. Some may not be prepared.

"Oh."

In other words, someone might be in the middle of eating, or worse—using the bathroom—when they were dragged in.

"Well, that's life. Disasters always strike when you least expect them."

With that, Yeongwoo tapped the table with his index finger.

"Summon them. Even if they're in the bathroom—!"

— As you command.

Kubu blinked deeply.

Then—

Zap! Zap! Zap!

Three flashes of light appeared over the table.

The key figures had been summoned.

And for some reason—

—What the hell is that?"

Jiseon rubbed her eyes in disbelief.

One of the summoned individuals was completely naked.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 419: Sole Candidate (1)

"Wha—?!"

"Guh?!"

"What the hell?!"

The three powerful figures from Earth appeared with startled cries.

Yeongwoo immediately scanned the titles floating above their heads.

『Guardian Sword of Italy』

『Conqueror of the Great Lakes』

『Shadow of the Tundra』

‘What the hell? These bastards...’

It was no surprise, but the magnitude of their titles was far from ordinary.

The Guardian Sword of Italy was quite literally a national-level title, and the Conqueror of the Great Lakes...



‘The Great Lakes... Could it be the ones in the US?’

The Great Lakes—a group of five massive lakes located between the United States and Canada.

The problem was the number of states that bordered the lakes.

On the US side, eight states, from Minnesota to Pennsylvania, were adjacent to the Great Lakes, while in Canada, Ontario shared the border.

In other words, the Conqueror of the Great Lakes was highly likely to be an American.

‘Then what about the Shadow of the Tundra?’

As Yeongwoo pondered, the three stone chairs on the outskirts of the round table slid backward.

Drrrrk!

The three visitors, who had been floating midair, were hurled into the chairs without ceremony.

Thud!

“Argh!”

“Ugh...!”

“W-what the hell...?!”

At that moment, special markers appeared below their titles—visible only to Yeongwoo.

「For the convenience of the Master of the Arena, the aliases of the conference attendees will be displayed.」

‘Master of the Arena?’

It seemed to be a system message indicating that Yeongwoo was the host of the conference.

And then, shortly after—

Pa-pa-pat!

The visitors' titles were updated with secondary designations.

『Guardian Sword of Italy』

| Protector of Milan

『Conqueror of the Great Lakes』

| Butcher of Chicago

『Shadow of the Tundra』

| Strongest Sword of Moscow

‘Huh?’

Yeongwoo recognized two familiar titles.

He had once seen them on TV back when he was still just Gangnam’s Strongest Sword.

The Protector of Milan and the Butcher of Chicago.

Back then, they were just rising stars of the world's elite fighters.

But now, they had survived and ascended to rulers of vast territories.

Even the Strongest Sword of Moscow, previously unknown to him, was clearly no ordinary foe.

‘Whoa... so they’re all still alive!’

Yeongwoo felt an odd sense of camaraderie as he gazed at the three Earth heavyweights.

However, the three visitors, suddenly transported to an unfamiliar place, were far from calm.

“W-where the hell is this?”

“Is this... a dungeon?”

“A dungeon? But how...?”

Seeing the impossibly high ceiling, the three instinctively assumed they were in a dungeon.

After all, they couldn’t imagine such a structure existing on Earth.

Then, finally noticing each other's presence, they hastily drew their weapons.

Shing!

“W-who the hell are you?”

“That’s my line.”

“Why the hell is that guy naked?”

Mistaking the place for a dungeon, they raised their weapons at one another, filled with suspicion.

The Conqueror of the Great Lakes, for some reason, was completely naked, without so much as a weapon or armor.

“Damn it...”

Clearly flustered, the Conqueror looked around, searching for something to defend himself with.

That was when he spotted Yeongwoo, standing by the round table with Jiseon and Jeonggu behind him.

“...Huh?”

Upon seeing Jiseon—a white-haired knight towering at three meters tall—the Conqueror’s eyes widened in disbelief.

Seeing such a colossal figure left him utterly dumbfounded.

At that moment, Yeongwoo slammed his palm onto the round table.

BANG!

“Drop your weapons.”

The three Earth heavyweights turned their gazes toward Yeongwoo simultaneously.

“...What?”

“Who the hell are you to tell us what to do?”

“Mara?”

The mention of Mara made Yeongwoo's eyes flash gold.

“If any of you bastards took money from Mara, raise your hand.”

“.....?”

“W-what the hell are you talking about?”

The three, unable to follow Yeongwoo’s cryptic words, exchanged bewildered glances.

Seeing that none of them reacted, Yeongwoo relaxed his expression slightly.

“Looks like there’s no Mara lackey here.”

He then turned to the Conqueror of the Great Lakes, still awkwardly covering his lower half with a chair.

“And you... You’re a pawn of Lemu, right? That’s the only explanation...”

The moment Yeongwoo uttered Lemu in a low, irritated voice, white lightning sparked from within him, projecting a rectangular Lemu logo into the air.

Crackle!

At the same time, a jolt of electric shock coursed through Yeongwoo’s entire body.

“Ahh...!”

With a sharp gasp, his pained groan echoed through the hall.

The ambient lighting flickered violently.

Zzt!

“W-what...?”

“.....?”

Sensing that something had gone terribly wrong, the three backed away instinctively.

Drip.

Yeongwoo, breathing heavily, extended his left hand.

Flash!

“Wait. We’re not done talking yet.”

“What...?”

“What more is there to say?”

Despite the ominous aura Yeongwoo was giving off, the three remained composed.

After all, they were planetary-level powerhouses—they weren’t easily shaken.

If the situation turned dire, they were prepared to fight their way out, just as they always had.

However—

Fwip!

The moment Yeongwoo clenched his extended left hand, their composure shattered.

Whooooosh!

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

At the Master’s command, the massive ceiling suddenly became transparent.

“.....!”

“Huh?!”

“The ceiling...?”

The sight above made the three Earth powerhouses instinctively look up.

What they saw left them utterly speechless.

And then, a sight all too familiar filled their vision.

“Huh?”

“No way.”

A bluish sky, clouds identical to those of Earth, and most notably—

“T-The sun... isn’t that sunlight?”

The Guardian Sword of Italy pointed toward the shimmering light peeking through the clouds and spoke.

At this, Yeongwoo nodded first.

“That’s right.”

“.....!”

“That is the sun. You are still on Earth.”

At Yeongwoo’s words, silence briefly settled over the room.

No one could comprehend the situation.

Then, the Conqueror of the Great Lakes pointed at the interior of the grand conference hall with his bare hand and asked,

“Still on Earth? Then where the hell is this place?”

“.....”

Yeongwoo, who normally had little tolerance for informal speech, let it slide this time.

Soon, these people would be the ones paying for this conference hall.

“This is Seoul.”

“Seoul?”

The Conqueror of the Great Lakes tilted his head in confusion.

Then, the Guardian Sword of Italy blinked and cautiously asked,

“This is... Korea?”

Of course.

It had to be Ottavio’s country.

The Guardian Sword of Italy knew that Seoul was the capital of South Korea.

Though it didn’t seem like he knew it for any pleasant reason.

“Are you talking about the guys who sent someone over demanding a wedding gift?”

“Ah.”

He was most likely referring to Yechan.

‘Come to think of it, those bastards... didn’t even show up to the wedding.’

In fact, Yeongwoo was more surprised to learn that Yechan had gone as far as delivering invitations all the way to Italy.

Meanwhile, the Conqueror of the Great Lakes, seemingly hearing this for the first time, furrowed his brow and glared at Yeongwoo.

“So... you’re saying you’re Korean, and you summoned us here without permission?”

Step.

Momentarily forgetting that he was stark naked, the Conqueror of the Great Lakes took a step forward.

At that moment, Yeongwoo resumed the question he had left unfinished earlier.

“First, answer this. Are you by any chance working for Le—”

Before he could finish, Jiseon cut him off.

—Hey, you bastard, did you take money from Lemu or what?

“Lemu? What the hell is Lemu?”

The line was far too dignified to be spoken by a naked man, but the Conqueror of the Great Lakes seemed utterly serious.

And Yeongwoo, who had been puzzled by the moisture all over the man’s body from the beginning, asked,

“Then why the hell were you naked?”

“Why do you think?”

The Conqueror of the Great Lakes was about to answer confidently but hesitated briefly.

“Why? What is it?”

“I was... taking a bath.”

“...What.”

Yeongwoo's jaw dropped at the unexpected answer, while the Shadow of the Tundra commented with a touch of irritation,

"I was in the middle of a meal."

"And I... was just resting."

The last one to speak was the Guardian Sword of Italy.

In any case, all three powerhouses had been forcibly summoned, leaving them not only highly displeased but also rather bewildered.

After all, they had just learned that such a massive, alien-like structure existed on the other side of the planet.

On top of that, the man before them had summoned them without warning.

These were battle-hardened individuals, each having faced countless perils within their own domains.

But never before had they been forcibly summoned in this manner.

"...So this really isn't a dungeon? Then why did you call us here?"

Finally, the Guardian Sword of Italy addressed the real issue, gazing at Yeongwoo.

In response, Yeongwoo wore a grim expression and stared at the center of the round table.

"I received a report from the system. It told me there are three other big shots on this planet besides myself."

Thud!

Yeongwoo slammed his fist onto the table in frustration.

Jiseon and Jeonggu, noticing that he was about to make his move, quietly retreated.

"...Hey, why are they backing away?"

As expected, the Guardian Sword of Italy was the most perceptive.

Seeing the couple moving away from the scene, he narrowed his eyes with a sense of foreboding.



Meanwhile, the Shadow of the Tundra still exuded a sharp, intimidating presence, going so far as to commit the audacity of pointing his blade at Yeongwoo.

Whoosh!

“Well-known, huh? That’s a funny way to put it. Did your system also tell you why I’m so famous?”

As expected of Russia’s strongest warrior.

Yeongwoo couldn’t help but be impressed by his audacity.

Because—

「A weak creature has been detected nearby. Use of Prestige requires caution.」

To his eyes, everyone here looked like mere insects.

Yeongwoo’s Prestige level was at 38—a level the three powerhouses had yet to even partially unlock.

He knew he could kill them just by glancing at them while releasing his Prestige.

However—

“Someone once told me... that the balance of the universe must be preserved.”

“...What?”

“So, instead of just killing you, I’ll do a good deed by robbing you of 3 billion and sparing your lives.”

“.....!”

Sparing their lives.

To the three regional powerhouses, those words were the equivalent of a trigger.

That line was usually theirs to speak—not something they were meant to hear.

“You bastard... you’ve crossed the line.”

“I could wipe you out with my bare hands.”

The Shadow of the Tundra and the Conqueror of the Great Lakes both bared their teeth in fury.

Meanwhile, the Guardian Sword of Italy, having noticed Yeongwoo's body subtly shimmering, rubbed his eyes, unsure if he was imagining it.

But the strange phenomenon didn't stop.

'What is that?'

In truth, he was witnessing the faint leakage of Yeongwoo's suppressed Prestige Explosion, but his inferior perception prevented him from recognizing it.

Still, an unexplainable sense of danger constricted his entire body, prompting him to hesitantly raise his hand and ask in a polite tone,

"Th-Three billion. Why are you extorting that from us?"

Yeongwoo turned slightly and gazed at the Italian warrior.

"Because if I turn you into paupers, I can devour this planet."

"...Devour the planet...?"

"Of course, I know that mere words won't persuade people like you."

Clank.

With that, Yeongwoo placed Bastard on the round table.

To him, it was a signal that he was willing to fight them barehanded.

However, seeing him place a sword on the table, the Conqueror of the Great Lakes immediately overstepped.

Gasp!

Seeing the crimson demon sword on the table, he reached for it without hesitation.

"Ah, no!"

Jeonggu, horrified, screamed almost instinctively.

And at the same time, Yeongwoo's eyes flared with rage.

《You bastard!》

The tone of his voice was entirely different.

Jiseon also sensed her son's genuine fury and threw the three powerhouses a lifeline.

—Take all the gear too! Money alone won't be enough to get out of this alive!

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 420: Sole Candidate (2)

“What... what?”

Among those present, only the Guardian of Italy properly registered Jiseon's words.

The other two were simply too close to Yeongwoo to hear her clearly.

《How dare you!》

Yeongwoo's voice thundered with rage, laced with overwhelming force.

Without hesitation, he swung his hand like a blade, severing the wrist of Conqueror as he reached for the Bastard.

Kwaak!

To the onlookers, all they saw was a sudden flash of light.

Thus—

“.....!”

“Huh?”

For a brief moment, they stared blankly.

It wasn't until Conqueror raised his wrist and screamed in agony that they fully grasped the situation.

“Guaaahhh!”

“W-what, my hand...?”

A combat situation had erupted.

The Shadow of Tundra stared at Conqueror's severed hand lying on the round table, feeling heat rise along his neck.

Deep in his subconscious, a red warning light flickered on, but his body moved before he could fully process the fear.

Whoosh!

Instinctively, he braced himself and lunged at his opponent.

Tat-tat!

His movements, honed through countless life-or-death situations, were swift and precise.

"Be grateful it's just your hand! Get behind him!"

Even as he bellowed the order to the handless Conqueror, the Shadow of Tundra charged ahead.

Truly, a display befitting a planet's most powerful figures.

However, it was futile.

This opponent was far beyond their reach—no amount of courage or defiance could bridge the gap.

Jeong Yeongwoo<sup>07</sup> had already transcended the limits of mere mortals.

《.....》

Yeongwoo, calm and composed, merely observed his opponent's reckless charge.

Ta-at!

The moment Tundra's sword lunged forward—

Sssk.

Yeongwoo raised a single index finger and effortlessly blocked the sword's tip.

Tit!

A faint, almost laughable clink echoed.

Only then did both Tundra and Conqueror's jaws drop in disbelief.

"...Huh?"

"Th-this is impossible..."

The undeniable reality played out before their eyes—a strength they couldn't overcome, no matter how much they struggled.

《Still, your courage is commendable.》

Yeongwoo smirked wickedly as he flicked Tundra's blade aside with a mere finger.

Finally realizing the absurd gap in power, the two stumbled backward in horror.

"W-who... what the hell are you?"

Tundra, still unable to believe what he had witnessed, stared at his trembling sword.

Yeongwoo tilted his head slightly.

《Hmm. Who am I?》

Then, casually, he turned his gaze toward the empty space behind him.

《Administrator, what is my identity?》

Srrrt.

At his call, Kubu sliced through the void and reappeared.

—Jeong Yeongwoo07. Master of myth and founder of Earth's first great family—the Renaissance.

《Yes, I am the head of the Renaissance, Jeong Yeongwoo!》

With that declaration, Yeongwoo slammed his palm down onto the round table.

A surge of force exploded outward, creating a gale that swept through the chamber.

—Th-that lunatic...!

Jiseon, feeling her hair whip violently in the wind, instinctively took several steps back.

Meanwhile, Conqueror and Tundra, caught directly in the blast, were forcibly driven to their knees by the sheer weight of his presence.

《While I was building a family from nothing as an orphan, what were you lot doing?》

“W-well...”

“.....”

Learning for the first time that Yeongwoo had been an orphan, the two were at a loss for words.

As they stammered in silence, Yeongwoo continued.

《It seems I'm the only one with a proper sense of vision, so I'll claim full ownership of this planet.》

“N-no, that's—”

Tundra, attempting to protest, lifted his head slightly—only to be instantly subdued by the oppressive wave of Yeongwoo's presence.

The three planetary powers present were all accustomed to paying hefty taxes.

Thus, they were fully aware that maintaining the status of a high-tax contributor would eventually grant them planetary equity shares.

But now, they were hearing the unthinkable.

A monstrous being had suddenly appeared, claiming all of the planetary shares for himself.

“W-what are you planning to do with the entire share of the planet?”

Italy's Guardian, who had quietly distanced himself from Yeongwoo, asked cautiously.

Yeongwoo's voice softened significantly.

“That's an important question.”

He even spoke in a distinctly human tone this time.

“We are already in space.”

“S-space...?”

Confused, Italy looked up at the sky.

All he saw was the familiar blue sky of Earth.

But Yeongwoo, as always, saw beyond it.

“Space is a brutal realm of survival of the fittest. If we want to endure out there, someone needs to hold this planet’s reins.”

“B-but why you...?”

The question escaped Italy’s lips naturally, and Yeongwoo’s tone instantly hardened.

《Because I’m the only one with real space experience, you fools!》

“...Ugh!”

At his bellowing rebuke, all three planetary powers collapsed to their knees, trembling.

《Have you ever lobbied the planetary inspectors? Survived the wrath of an enraged Mara?》

Yeongwoo stabbed his finger toward the sky as he spoke.

《Compared to the cosmic titans, you are less than specks of dust. But I... I’ve at least become a mongrel pup.》

A Prestige Level 38 individual with sponsorship from the intergalactic mega-corporation Dogo—

That was more than enough to justify his candidacy as the representative of this backwater planet.

《Soon, I have an audience with this planet’s Council. I intend to appear as the sole candidate for planetary equity rights.》

In simpler terms, he wanted the three powers before him—his competitors—to vanish.

《The easiest option would be to kill you all, but I’ve grown weary of being too cruel.》

Thanks to the Apple of Virtue that Aldo had planted in his chest, he was now reluctant to commit atrocities.

[Burning Ice]

| Ensure that your total points of evil karma do not exceed twice your points of good karma.

“What... what do you plan to do with us, then?”

The trembling voice belonged to Conqueror, still kneeling with his severed wrist.

《.....》

Yeongwoo glanced down at Conqueror's severed hand, then casually picked it up from the table.

Without a word, he tossed it back to Conqueror, along with a Slime Core.

Whoosh.

「Slime Core」 - Mutation Bracelet

【Regenerative power increases dramatically.】

"This thing reattaches even split skulls. Just stick your hand back on and return it to me."

"W-what?"

Dumbfounded, Conqueror caught both his severed hand and the bracelet.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

As soon as he made contact, he felt an intense warmth surge through his entire body.

When he looked at his wrist, he saw the wound rapidly closing.

"Ah!"

Startled, Conqueror quickly pressed the severed hand against his wrist.

Squish!

To his astonishment, the severed hand began fusing with the wrist, the flesh knitting together at an alarming speed.

"Th... thank you."

He stammered, still dazed by the situation.

In the midst of his gratitude, Yeongwoo felt his earlier urge to crush the man's skull with his bare hands gradually dissipating.



"It's too early to be grateful."

"...What?"

"Three billion."

".....?"

"You three need to split three billion. That's the construction cost of this conference hall."

For the first time, the three powerful figures simultaneously screamed in disbelief.

"Three billion?"

"Why the hell should we pay that?"

"Isn't this thing built in your country?"

Dividing the cost among the three meant each of them would owe a staggering one billion.

But without sponsors or businesses backing them, how could they possibly come up with that kind of money?

Of course, that was precisely Yeongwoo's intention.

"Why should you pay? Because I need to turn you into paupers to claim dominion over this planet."

With that, Yeongwoo once again threw Bastard onto the round table.

"If you refuse to become beggars, I'll have no choice but to resort to murder. The other candidates must be erased."

".....!"

Yeongwoo's voice was human, but his words were not.

The sight of the sword on the round table—the same one that had severed Conqueror's hand—only deepened the terror in the three powerhouses' eyes.

"...Shit, why are you doing this to us?"

"Forget the ownership rights—we don't even have a billion."

“Yeah! We’re flat broke, damn it!”

As the three pleaded their case, Yeongwoo calmly unveiled the next step in his plan.

“Take out a loan. I’ll lend it to you. The daily interest rate, as a racial privilege, is only 1%.”

One billion at 1% interest meant they would owe ten million Karma in interest every single day.

“...Huh?”

“If you have to repay the principal and interest daily just to avoid dying, you’ll be forced to classify it as essential expenses. That will automatically drop you into the low-income bracket...”

Which would lead to the disqualification of their planetary ownership candidacy, leaving Jeong Yeongwoo<sup>07</sup> as the sole candidate.

“Just thinking about it makes me feel good. If you have any objections, settle it with your swords.”

Yeongwoo gestured toward the Bastard on the round table, his eyes cold.

The three powerhouses exchanged glances.

They knew—even if they attacked simultaneously—they wouldn’t stand a chance against the monster before them.

But taking out a loan for such an absurd amount?

That was equally unthinkable.

“Hmph.”

Of course, Yeongwoo, a seasoned villain, had anticipated this dilemma.

“You seem conflicted. Let me reduce your suffering a little.”

“.....!”

“From now on, the loans will be issued in order of arrival.”

“W-what?”

“What the hell are you talking about?”

The three immediately jumped to their feet in alarm, but Yeongwoo paid them no mind and delivered the next blow.

“Total sum: three billion. The first to take out a loan gets the lowest share: eight, ten, and twelve.”

The Shadow of Tundra grimaced and asked, his face twisted,

“W-why is the last one twelve?”

“Because it looks like you’ll be the one stuck paying 1.2 billion all by yourself.”

“You... Bastard...!”

As Yeongwoo conjured a loan contract into his left hand, the Conqueror of the Great Lakes lunged forward.

Swish!

However, unlike before, he didn’t aim for Yeongwoo’s body.

Snap!

Instead, he snatched the loan contract from Yeongwoo’s hand.

“I’m first!”

Having witnessed Yeongwoo’s combat prowess firsthand, he was the quickest to make the ruthless decision.

“Y-you’re serious?”

The Shadow of Tundra gawked at his companion’s lightning-fast betrayal.

But the true catastrophe was only just beginning.

“Ugh!”

The Guardian of Italy was now sprinting with all his might toward the contract.

Even paying 1 billion was better than being stuck with 1.2 billion.

“Shit! You goddamn morons!”

The Shadow of Tundra clenched his teeth and spat curses, but he, too, reached out for the contract.

Better to pay 1 billion than 1.2 billion, after all.

Swish!

However, just before his fingers could touch the contract, the Italian Guardian hurled his sword, sending the handle slamming into the Shadow's hand.

Thwack!

"Wha...?"

"Sorry!"

As the Shadow of Tundra staggered, his hand throbbing, the Guardian of Italy finally pressed his hand onto the loan contract.

Thud!

"Ha."

It was far from an ideal outcome, but at least he had managed to avoid the worst-case scenario.

Thus, the remaining 1.2 billion fell to the Russian powerhouse, just as Yeongwoo had predicted.

"Debt is cheaper than death. Don't make a regretful choice."

Yeongwoo coldly held out the contract to the final candidate.

Truthfully, he didn't want to create unnecessary hostilities on Earth, so he silently hoped the man wouldn't be foolish enough to resist.

And the Shadow of Tundra, after hesitating for a moment,

"...This is bullshit. You bastard, and you're going to own our planet?"

Grumbling through clenched teeth, he nevertheless reluctantly signed the contract.

Flash!

With that, Yeongwoo became the creditor of three billion in principal debt, allowing him to collect thirty million Karma in daily interest.

"I won't specify a repayment date. Just pay it back before you die. But to ensure your compliance, if you miss a payment, I'll personally come and kill you."

“.....”

Since they were all from the same planet, there was nowhere to run.

“How do we even pay the interest...?”

“Until I get remote collection privileges, I’ll send someone daily to collect.”

Since his family was still in its infancy, he didn’t yet have the right to automate collections.

‘Now all that’s left is to crush the Council and the rest of Earth.’

Feeling at ease, Yeongwoo glanced up at the sky.

Then, the Guardian of Italy cautiously asked,

“Th-then... are you letting us go now?”

Yeongwoo’s eyes turned toward the man, his expression calm.

“Take off your clothes.”

“...What?”

“You need to leave behind your gear as promised.”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]