

S vs Rebirth 1001

Chapter 1001 Relieving The City (5)

"Laufey... you..." Qiel widened her eyes in shock, not believing what had just happened. Did Laufey just betray her?

Her entire life flashed before her eyes. She was the one corrupting Laufey into joining the Supreme Devil Organization.

She thought that this was a good accomplishment. In fact, he even stole one of the true inheritances. It was the record of the training journey of a Spirit Transcendence Expert.

He used that book as a gift to join the Supreme Devil Organization. And during that time, Alexander managed to break through to Spirit Transcendence. The other three experts also improved by leaps and bounds.

But when she thought about it, was it truly a gift?

At the last moment, Laufey actually asked a lot of things as if he were trying to pry for more information.

That was right. Laufey knew about her plan with Josephine, their current plan, the situation with the royal family... he knew everything.

And if they joined hands with Josephine, the Supreme Devil Organization would definitely become much stronger. Even if the Greenwood Kingdom and the Zaecuria Kingdom got involved, they wouldn't be able to harm them that much.

That was why Qiel had to be eliminated.

Fifteen years. Laufey had fooled them for a whole fifteen years.

When she thought about it, she noticed that the clues were there. After the execution of Luke and Leysha, they confirmed that they were real.

However, what if they were fake? There was one way to fake their execution. They simply used a body double and provided proof. And that proof was none other than blood, yes, the same ability that Laufey controlled.

What if Laufey had been working with them from the start? What if he used his ability to create fake blood?

It was indeed possible. Then, there was something she didn't understand. Laufey had been trying to harm Noel Ardagan the whole time. It looked genuine. Even the other Devil Inspectors who had worked with him confirmed that Laufey was genuine.

But they had been suffering one loss after another. It was to the point that they had been sending their forces to Noel just to get eliminated.

In this war, Laufey was in charge of gathering their forces.

He had a lot of time, but the only thing he managed to gather was one hundred thousand demons with more than twenty Superior Demons.

It was an amazing number, but if he tried even harder, getting a hundred and fifty thousand shouldn't be a problem. The course of the war should also change.

What if Laufey was doing everything for the Supreme Devil Organization while speculating on Noel's power? What if he did it only at the limit that he believed Noel could withstand?

When all that appeared in her mind, she realized that Laufey had never been on their side. That hatred was genuine, but he might be brainwashing himself so that it looked genuine.

And with her death, Laufey would return alone to the Supreme Devil Organization as the only witness to the war.

Even with Josephine joining the organization and Alexander taking the helm, Laufey would still become a mole. He might become the biggest reason for the organization's failure.

However, Qiel never thought that Laufey was a very intelligent person. But there was one person smart enough to orchestrate the whole thing. She couldn't help but utter his name in her last moment.

"Luke... Ardagan... well... played." Qiel fell to her knees. When Laufey pulled out the sword, her body hit the ground. Laufey didn't even spare her corpse as he controlled all the blood to completely destroy her body so that she didn't have any chance of getting healed or resurrected.

When looking at her gruesome corpse, Laufey couldn't help but recall the memory of the past.

...

Twenty years ago.

"Brother." Laufey looked at Luke with a grim expression. "The Supreme Devil Organization approached me."

"What?" Luke widened his eyes in shock.

"Don't worry, Brother. I am going to reject them and fight them if they appear again." Laufey waved his hand, assuring Luke.

However, Luke looked down as if he were worried about this problem. It wasn't that he was worried about Laufey betraying him, he was just concerned about whether rejecting them was a good thing or not.

"Brother?" Laufey tilted his head in confusion.

Luke took a deep breath. "The Supreme Devil Organization was created by the royal family."

"Wha—" Laufey rose from his seat, but Luke gestured to him to stay silent as this topic was taboo.

"Their purpose is to control the kingdom as the villain. This way, the royal family can eliminate anyone they want."

"But don't they have the Inquisitors and Arbiters to do that?"

"If they are ghosts, the Supreme Devil Organization is like the vengeful spirit. While their purpose is good, they are a double-edged sword."

"Why is that so?"

"With their current growth rate, they will become a force that is capable of destroying the kingdom itself."

"Are you sure?" Laufey was stunned.

"Yes. This is why they have to be exterminated. Unfortunately, the moment we point our swords at them, the royal family will act." Luke let out a long sigh. "At the moment, they are similar to those of a bandit group. So, the other nobles don't bother to look at them as enemies."

"Then..." Laufey looked worried that the Ardagan family would be destroyed if they acted rashly.

"That's why I am thinking about helping their growth."

"Helping their growth?" Laufey dropped his jaw. "Why are you helping the enemies?"

Luke let out a long sigh. "With their current growth rate, I believe that they will become a nuisance in another one or two decades. However, with a long game like this, the royal family can do a lot of things to brand them."

"If they succeed, we might have no chance of destroying them. That's why if I let them progress much faster, their growth will become uncontrollable. Even if they have a connection, the royal family can't stop the nobles from looking at them as an eyesore.

"In other words, the Supreme Devil Organization has no choice but to become a terrorist organization, meaning that even the Demon Banner Army and the Tower Association have to take action against them."

Laufey gasped. "Are you thinking I can actually make them stronger?"

"..." Luke clenched his fists but couldn't say anything.

"If that's the case, I will do it. As long as I can help the family, I am prepared to do anything."

"But..." Luke was annoyed. On the one hand, this was too much of a burden for Laufey. On the other hand, this was something necessary.

"Brother. Please let me do it. Tell me how to do it!"

"It's going to be long. You are going to suffer and I can't bear this..."

"I am not suffering alone. I know that you are tortured by this, Brother. I've told you this whole time... Please share that 20:44

burden of yours with me."

"No. You don't understand." Luke shook his head. "If you do this, you have no choice but to brainwash yourself to hate me, the Ardagan family, and even your nephew."

"What?" Laufey dropped his jaw. When he thought about it, his words made sense. The organization should have one way or another to check whether he was a spy or not.

And to avoid their suspicion, he had to act like he hated the Ardagan family. However, if it was just an act, it was going to be found sooner or later.

That was why Luke said he had to brainwash himself. He had to genuinely hate them from the bottom of his heart.

His only thought could only be filled with hatred or he would be found out.

"Brother... Are you planning to destroy the organization for Noel?"

"No. There's not enough time. However, I believe that Noel will rise up and destroy the organization."

"I see. So, my nephew will become the hero of an era." Laufey felt relieved when hearing it. If it was going to harm Noel or the family, he would reject this idea.

But he somehow longed for the time when Noel stood proudly as a hero. He suddenly unbuttoned his shirt, showing the spirit mark on his chest. He cut the spirit mark, letting the blood flow out.

"With this blood, I swear that I will do everything for the sake of the Ardagan family, even if I have to become the vengeful spirit of the family." Laufey looked at Luke with a solemn expression. "Brother. I need your blood to perform this blood bond. With your blood and my blood flowing together, it will stop me from killing my nephew."

20:44

"But..." Luke gritted his teeth. The burden that Laufey would

carry after this was unimaginable. He loved the family, he cared for his nephew, and yet, this mission would make him hate that gentle side of him.

"Brother!" Laufey gave a gentle smile. "Noel doesn't have to know about this. It's only right for his elder to carry this heavy burden. He doesn't have to remember me. All I wish is for him and the Ardagan family to prosper. So, please..."

Luke was crying. He couldn't bear to do it, but facing this determination from his brother, Luke had no other choice.

Laufey was his brother as well as his oldest friend. He was the one who witnessed everything about him. He even went to the Demon Banner Army for the sake of family.

Yet, the only thing he could do was just give him another burden.

The last thing he said was, "Please take care of Noel, Brother."

...

It didn't take too long for Laufey to begin brainwashing himself.

For a few years, he had to torture himself by filling himself with that thought. His heart was torn and his mind was in shambles.

After two years, the effect had begun to show. He started nitpicking everything that the family did until he completely believed it.

The last time he visited the Ardagan family was the day when Noel was born.

"I have to kill... I have to hate you..." Laufey was looking at the baby Noel in tears. He was crying out loud while screaming. "I'm sorry, my dear nephew. I have to hate you and try to kill

you to protect you."

Every day, he suffered and cried by himself. The change was gradual, which made Qiel believe that she had managed to influence Laufey. Laufey even tricked Dimitri to assassinate Noel in order to make her believe him. And that was when he joined the Supreme Devil Organization.

When recalling that, Laufey couldn't help but make a sad smile. "It's time to go. Sadly, it's not the time for our reunion, but I'm satisfied with this. I can see that my nephew's fiancée genuinely cares for him and won't be swayed by anything. And the little Noel from back then has become a good warrior that can carry the burden of the world."

Laufey hurriedly left the place. Silvester and Raven found Qiel's body and shouted, "We've found her."

Leysha was staring into the distance, while Luke was looking at the sky with a tired gaze. "I'm sorry for making you do all this, Brother. Once this is over, let us drink every night until we can't drink anymore."

Chapter 1002 Reward

Noel didn't know what happened, but one thing was clear, Qiel had died in one way or another.

While Anna was heading to Layla, Noel remained at the bottom of the wall to prepare for the next scenario.

The sky was already orange, so it wouldn't take that long for it to become dark. That would be the moment they would turn around on the battlefield.

"What is the current report?" Noel asked.

"Three Superior Demons on the east side have died and one is severely injured. Two Superior Demons on the west have died and the other two are still fighting, specifically the one on Paladin Aurelia's side."

"How are the protectors?"

"Ma'am Milfa is exhausted, but it doesn't seem that she will be going down soon. Paladin Aurelia is exterminating the lower level demons and reducing their number to only a fifth of their original number. The same applies to the Water Lord."

"Tell Captain Milfa to not exert herself too much. As for Paladin Aurelia, she is to exterminate the demons in the south. The Water Lord will be controlling the west side of our city."

"Yes, sir!" The soldier saluted before sending a messenger to them.

"What about the wall?" Noel asked.

"The north wall has exterminated five Superior Demons, including the crocodile that managed to enter the city. And according to you, my lord, one more Superior Demon has died along with two Devil Saints. The remaining two Devil Saints are fleeing right now. In total, we have killed eleven Superior Demons."

"Eleven, huh..." Noel's expression turned solemn. From what he could see, the enemy had about 22 Superior Demons. On his side, there were twelve grandmasters. If not for the fact that their grandmasters were stronger than their demons, this fight would be a disaster.

"At first, there were only 19 Superior Demons, but we realized that there were two Superior Demon Trees and one yellow flower. But that demon flower shouldn't be able to possess high combat prowess. In that case..." Noel muttered before asking, "How are the Gem Lord and Faust?"

"They are conserving their stamina."

"Great." Noel smirked, thinking, 'Faust should have no problem killing one Superior Demon. Someone as strong as the Gem Lord would be able to kill two. We still have Clara and once we launch a full scale attack, Paladin Aurelia and the Water Lord can unleash all their strength to kill at least one Superior Demon each.'

'Milfa is the same. She has been using a lot of energy the whole time, but she should be capable of defeating one more Superior Demon. This means we can kill seven more Superior Demons. With only four Superior Demons left and one of them only the yellow flower, they should be pulling back.'

Noel smiled. This was a good opportunity to end everything. With his plan, killing one or two more Superior Demons seemed plausible.

"In that case, pass my messages to all Grandmasters who are still fighting. On my signal, we will start the killing fest."

"Yes, sir."

Once he had passed down the order, Noel started thinking about what happened that allowed him to kill Qiel.

'This is weird. In the north, there are two forces: my own family which is currently hiding from the spotlight and the Greenwood Kingdom's army. The Greenwood Kingdom army should have been stalling a lot of demons, so I don't think they could stop Qiel. Then, did my parents do it? If they made a single move, it would be the same as announcing their fake execution. If a single of them survived, they would definitely tell the royal family about it, which would put me in a difficult position.

'But I couldn't imagine that Qiel just died after losing too much blood. She should be able to survive in one way or another.'

Noel clicked his tongue. No matter how hard he thought about it, he didn't get the answer he wanted. There were simply too many unknown variables.

Since it was useless, he should think about something else.

Although he was curious about the mission, there was one more thing he had to take care of.

'Ardagan. How is Heisk?'

[Her condition is stable and she has returned to the great Spirit God's side.]

'I see. Then, it seems that I won't be able to use her power for the time being.'

[You can still use her power, but not her True Spirit Body. In the end, she has to complete it first before utilizing it. And I've warned you earlier about the delay that the forced True Spirit Body brings, right?]

'I know. I won't be relying on it for now.'

[Also, your body is damaged severely due to that as well. While you can still use ice ability, its power won't be comparable to a Spirit Grandmaster. You are currently in a weakened state.]

'I don't mind that. I'm trying to take it easy in the next few months. Besides, the Sword Arbiter will be coming here soon, so there will be another protector to keep my enemies in check.'

[Is there anything else you'd like to know?]

'How about you? When are you planning to give me your True Spirit Body?'

[Preferably Spirit Transcendence Rank.]

'Is your True Spirit Body that dangerous?'

[I am an artificial spirit. Unlike other spirits who are granted or awakened their True Spirit Body, I am born with it.]

'No wonder. I guess I should focus on completing the advancement mission first before thinking about your True Spirit Body. At the very least, I still have an Advanced Rune that I haven't revealed in this war, which is a good thing.'

[If you wish to get my True Spirit Body, I will give you the mission once Heisk returns or when you are at the peak of Spirit Grandmaster.]

'I'm looking forward to it.' Noel smiled. 'I guess I will take a look at my rewards for now. I still have some time before dark anyway.'

Noel opened the system. He had taken a look at the two sword techniques he received from killing two Devil Saints: The Three Purity Swords and Divine Slash.

They looked amazing on their own, but he was still curious about the other missions.

The first mission, which was to repel the demon's invasion, was going to be completed after the counterattack. So, he was looking forward to the Demon Extermination Medal's effect.

Meanwhile, the second mission had given him an Advanced Rune of his choice.

Noel fell into deep thought.

'Which one should I choose? Currently, I have one Advanced Rune in the Offensive Rune category. Should I pick a Defense Rune next? But the Spiritual Barrier Rune is still working well. In that case, the Movement Rune? No. The basic runes are still working well for all the rune inventions. Then, the utility rune?

'They are great, but they won't do much in a battle. In that case, I should use the Support Rune. Support Rune will increase my strength to a whole new level.'

Noel immediately said, "Ardagan. I want to exchange my reward. One Advanced Support Rune please."

[Processing.]

[You've acquired Honor Bearer Rune.]

'What is wrong with this name?' Noel was stunned for a second before his head started experiencing the sharp pain. All the information was transferred to him, but more importantly, he saw another image.

It was an image of a beautiful woman standing in front of an army. She charged at millions of demons together with the soldiers under her command. And once they clashed, her soldiers turned into an army of gods. They were unleashing a might that was beyond what anyone could imagine.

Like its name suggests, the Honor Bearer Rune was a support type rune that empowered an army instead of an individual. It could affect more than a thousand soldiers.

It increased pride and morale, which would bring out the latent potential of an individual. It meant that their strength, speed, and courage would be elevated to a whole new level.

It was no wonder that the Honor Bearer Rune was classified as an Advanced Rune. If he had this rune and led an army of one thousand, killing a hundred thousand demons wouldn't be a hard task.

At the same time, Noel felt a bit scared when he saw millions of demons.

'This image... Don't tell me, it's my ancestor...' Noel gasped. That was right. While the head of the Ardagan family was his ancestor, the one taking care of the family was his wife.

'This image might be the scene where she died. It was because of this battle that she fell for that demon. Are you serious? Even without the Sword Saint or my ancestor, she led an army against millions of demons and exterminated half of them?'

Noel realized that there was still a huge gap between them. And his ancestor was actually stronger than this.

'Hahaha. My family is amazing. This is not good... I'm becoming more excited.' Noel knew that there were still so many things that would surprise him in the future.

'I will graciously take this rune.' Noel clenched his fists, not wanting to disappoint his ancestors.

'Last but not least, the hidden danger... It seems that Josephine was the hidden danger. Since that's the case, don't mind if I take this reward. I wonder what kind of information I will get this time...' Noel recalled that every time he got information about spirits, he would be blown away.

However, Ardagan actually stopped him before he could receive the reward.

[You should finish the battle first before receiving this reward. It's going to be something special.]

Chapter 1003 Last Phase

The sun was about to set. The warriors on each side were preparing for the last clash.

Even Noel had returned to the top of the wall to command the army personally. He knew that his opponent was the yellow flower.

However, the yellow flower hadn't made its move after they killed the second demon tree. It seemed that the yellow flower was preparing to retreat with this new knowledge about the battlefield.

"The sky is turning black." Duke Briton looked at the sky while standing next to Noel. He was a bit curious about how Noel planned to defeat them this time. The demon tree was dead, so the demons must have another plan to settle this.

"Duke Briton. I have one last question for you." Noel raised a finger.

"What is it?"

"During a battle, if the two sides are unleashing all their power, which one will win?"

Duke Briton was a bit perplexed by this question. On the one hand, the answer looked obvious. The stronger side would be the winner. On the other hand, this question didn't feel like an ordinary one.

Instead of replying with the obvious question, he pondered it for a moment before saying, "The stronger one will win... is what I wanted to say. But should I say the winner is the stronger one?"

Duke Briton only reversed his answer, but the meaning became entirely different. That was right. There was no telling whether the stronger one was this side or that side. Instead, the stronger one would be the side that defeated their enemies.

And due to that answer Duke Briton realized what Noel was planning to do.

"What help do you need?" Duke Briton asked.

"The Spirit Masters of your side."

Duke Briton let out a long sigh. "Alright."

"Please take command of that army. I will be the one handling the wall."

"It's truly amusing to fight with someone like you. You can rest assured that I will set up a perfect formation to defeat the enemies. Make sure your runes don't hit them." Duke Briton waved his hand while walking to the elevator.

Noel had assembled a small elite army right in front of the gate.

When the sky turned dark, the demons looked like they were retreating.

However, this was just a fake. Once the sky turned completely dark, they would have a hard time seeing the demons if they suddenly launched an ambush.

Hence, Noel shouted, "Don't drop your guard down yet."

The soldiers didn't understand Noel's instruction, but all the Spirit Grandmasters had been briefed on what they were trying to do.

The Gem Lord, Faust, and Clara had been waiting for their turn on top of the wall. Milfa, Paladin Aurelia, and the Water Lord were also ready to unleash all their power.

Once the visibility had been reduced to only several meters toward them, Noel blinked his eyes, activating the Moon Blessing. In that instant, his eyes were capable of looking at the night like it was day, allowing him to observe the movement of the demons.

As he expected, the demons were preparing for the last charge. This was going to determine the outcome of the battle.

Unfortunately for them, Noel knew their plan and aim.

The soldiers also became silent, trying to see through the darkness. The only thing they could see was the light that the Light Rune had produced, which only had a short range.

All of a sudden, the demons rushed forth. There wasn't a single roar coming from them and because of that, the soldiers panicked the moment they saw them.

"Demons!"

"They are coming back!"

"Hurry up!"

"Get into your position!"

The beasts were launching an all-out attack. All the incoming Superior Demons were moving in unison. Even the flying beasts coordinated with the land demons.

There were already tens of thousands of corpses surrounding the entire city, especially the city wall. Their corpses had been stacked up pretty high outside the wall, which became the stairs for this last charge.

"Get into your position. They are coming up!"

The soldiers were raising their shields.

However, Noel smiled. "Unleash the Blast Rune!"

All of a sudden, multiple Blast Runes appeared in front of the wall, unleashing all their power in one go.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

A series of explosions once again filled the battlefield as the corpses near the wall were launched in all directions.

Some of the bigger demons couldn't be launched by the Blast Runes, but the smaller demons ended up getting scattered around, causing the stairs made of corpses to be half-destroyed.

The demons that climbed up fell to the ground, confused.

This was one of Noel's ideas for destroying the stairs. One of the two runes he had hidden this whole time.

It was a rough plan, but an effective one.

Now that the area in front of the walls had been cleared up, Noel could finally use the second trap.

"Activate it."

Another wave of runes appeared, but this time, it didn't release any attacks. Instead, it was actually absorbing the blood the demons spilled on this land.

That was right. The last trump card he had was the Intermediate Rune, Blood Rune. It was the same rune as the one embedded on Anna's sword.

By activating this rune, the Blood Rune would charge another wave of energy for the wall. The more blood they spilled on this ground, the stronger the wall would become.

And with this, there was no need to use the energy to maintain their defense anymore. In other words, they could use all that energy to launch an all-out attack.

"Attack them!"

After hearing that comment, Tristan shouted, "Launch all our Rain of Light Runes. We will kill all of them at once!"

Grandell shouted, "All the Meteor Catapults attack!"

"Ballistas squad! Launch everything we have!"

In that instant, the rain of light showered the demons with a might they had never seen before. Because of the darkness, the demons had a hard time locating the Meteor Rune that the catapults launched.

Only those with high perception or night vision were able to react to their attacks.

The ballistas were also shooting down all the demons, not limited to the giant ones. There was no need to focus on them anymore.

The battlefield became chaotic once again, but this time, the humans didn't know whether they hit the enemies or not.

However, this was the mechanism Noel had devised before the war.

Once the demons were occupied with his attacks, the gate was opened and the bridge was lowered down.

Behind the gate was an army composed of elite soldiers. The leaders of this army were Howard and Andreas. Since both of them had used too much strength to deal with multiple Superior Demons, they didn't have enough energy to kill another Superior Demon. So, their task was to eliminate the Peak Level Demons or lower.

The army consisted of twenty Spirit Masters they recruited during the first migration as well as more than one hundred elite soldiers at Spirit Wielders or below.

"Onward!" Howard roared as he led the army outside the city.

The demons with night vision should be able to see what is going on. So, they hurriedly informed the Superior Demons about them and launched an all-out attack on that gate to enter the city.

It seemed that Howard was also planning to attack them head-on.

Sadly for them, the second phase of the plan had begun.

"Go to the left! Don't look at those demons."

The soldiers followed his instructions with absolute obedience. Meanwhile, the demons didn't understand this sudden maneuver until Noel commanded his soldiers. "Brighten up the battlefield!"

"Fire!" The soldiers threw numerous fist-sized objects as hard as they could.

Once they reached the ground, the objects activated the rune embedded in them and emitted a strong light, brightening the entire battlefield.

With this, they could see the demons pretty easily.

Tristan and the leaders shouted at the same time. "Aim at those demons!"

The situation instantly changed from releasing their attack blindly to focusing on every single demon they could see.

Roar!

Roar!

Roar!

A lot of demons instantly fell from their attacks, unable to respond. Some of the Superior Demons moved forth to protect the other demons. They should regain their composure and launch a counterattack.

Meanwhile, some Superior Demons actually moved toward the army that left the city earlier.

"Captain Howard. Some Superior Demons are coming toward us!" One of the soldiers reported.

"I told you that you don't have to look at them." Howard didn't even bother to glance at these demons.

After all, an arrow and a web appeared in front of them, blasting all these Superior Demons away.

Boom!

Boom!

Roar!

The Superior Demons were shocked and stepped back. Clara had finally stepped out of the city while Faust remained on the wall, ready to snipe all these demons.

The Flying Superior Demon saw this, thinking that Clara would be a perfect target to be eliminated first. However, a gem appeared in front of him and exploded.

"!!!" The flying demon was startled, realizing that his opponent remained the same.

"It's time to settle everything." The Gem Lord smiled.

Howard smiled because he knew that his Lord must have a plan.

"Captain. We have a hard time seeing the enemy in this darkness." Another soldier reported while frowning. If they got ambushed this way, their army would suffer greatly.

"Don't worry. They are here." Howard smirked while looking up.

The flying squads had once again taken off. They were dropping the same small objects to the ground, brightening the entire area.

With this, there was no problem with fighting during the night.

"You have seen your target. Our objective is to sweep all the demons starting from the west!"

"Yes, sir." The soldiers, who realized that everything was according to plan, instantly replied in excitement.

There were only low level demons, so they could only get exterminated by Howard and the others.

However, there was still one Superior Demon on Paladin Aurelia's side.

That was why the moment he saw the army appearing in his area, the Water Lord rushed toward Paladin Aurelia.

"Hey, young lady. It's time to kill the two Superior Demons on your side." The Water Lord smiled.

"In that case, I will trouble you to take care of that spider. I will handle the other one." Paladin Aurelia smiled. She had been waiting for this.

The moment she jumped into the air, two pairs of angelic wings appeared on his back, releasing a blinding light that revealed all the demons hiding in the darkness.

"Heaven Judgment."

The Water Lord smiled. "Liquid Manipulation!"

Boom!

Boom!

On the other side, Milfa couldn't help but raise her head. "It seems that they have begun. I guess my last job is to kill the Superior Demon in front of me. To think that this kid could win against all these enemies. It's truly surprising. This battle will surely shock the entire country."

Chapter 1004 Victory

A giant wolf released a stream of light from his mouth toward the wall, only to be intercepted by an arrow.

The arrow overwhelmed the burst of energy and eventually reached the giant wolf. The latter tried to avoid it, but it was too late. The arrow tore apart its jaws.

Unfortunately for the beast, it didn't have the time to wail in pain as another arrow arrived, exploding its head.

Roar!

Roar!

Roar!

The demons around it looked like they were mourning for him, but it was useless. Numerous rains of lights had been summoned, raining them down.

On the other side, there was another beast that stuck to the ground. Its body was completely tied to the ground.

The other demons tried to sever the threads, but it was impossible to do it. Another arrow then came toward this demon and blew its body apart.

Not long after, a bird fell to the ground with its body completely charred.

"Kill them!" Howard pointed forward while waving his sword to kill the remaining enemy.

There was a Superior Demon in front of them, but it was currently being drowned by a giant sphere of water. Howard and Andreas leaped into the air and slashed the Superior Demon, ending its life.

Behind that Superior Demon was yet another Superior Demon. This time, the demon seemed to be burned inside out by a radiant light that permeated the dark sky.

Howard and Andreas didn't hesitate to pass through him, leading the rest of the soldiers to the south. It was a quick battle as another radiant light killed dozens of demons.

Once they reached the corner, they saw another Superior Demon dying with numerous holes in its body. Even the normal demons didn't survive.

It was a quick operation as they made their way back to the north wall.

However, the moment they reached the north wall, they noticed that the demons were retreating.

"!!!" Howard widened his eyes in shock. This could only mean one thing. They had won.

Sadly, he couldn't cheer just yet as Noel suddenly pointed at the demons and shouted, "Kill them!"

Howard's expression turned serious. He didn't know why Noel wanted to do it, considering they had retreated, but he acknowledged the order and commanded the army to chase down these demons.

Noel thought that there were still tens of thousands of demons and a few Superior Demons that Damian had stopped, so it wouldn't be good if they regrouped. They could either attack this place again or crush Damian. Hence, there was only one thing to do, they simply had to crush them until they couldn't do anything.

The Gem Lord and Faust also followed them, eliminating a lot of demons in the process.

If not for the water that washed away the blood, the pungent smell of blood would have overwhelmed the city.

During the chase, they eliminated another few thousand demons and one Superior Demon.

In the end, the demons divided into a few groups and scattered.

They eliminated two groups and let the others survive. Meanwhile, Noel had sent out a member of the flying squad to send out the information to Damian, ensuring that they didn't die.

Finally, eight hours after the beginning of the war, the demons had a full-scale retreat and left the border.

Noel also got the notification from his system.

[Mission: Defeat the Demon Army (Completed).]

[Description: Exterminate the demons and repel the demon army from this land.]

[Reward: Demon Exterminator Medal.]

Looking at this mission gave him a sense of relief. The war was finally over.

Noel couldn't help but smile, saying, "Recall Howard back."

"My lord... does that mean..." Grandell's eyes were brimming with expectation.

"Yeah. This war is our victory." Noel nodded in confirmation. "You can do it, Grandell."

Grandell clenched his fists while shouting, "Blow out the horns!"

All of a sudden, a heavy honk echoed across the city.

The soldiers on the wall couldn't help but turn around, the people in the city raised their heads, and some of the injured people tried to rise. This horn only had a single meaning.

Grandell used the last bit of his energy to raise his voice. "This war is over! It's our VICTORY!"

Right after those words, the trumpets were blown, changing the atmosphere to a festive mood.

People started looking at each other as if they couldn't believe it. How could anyone believe it? This was the largest-scale attack that happened in the last three hundred years.

More than seventy thousand demons and more than twenty Superior Demons... An incomplete city that only had a single wall withstood their attacks and killed a lot of their commandants.

The Saintess couldn't help but smile. While she hadn't dropped her guard yet, she could still hear what was going on outside, especially with Anna sitting next to her.

Anna said the same thing as what Layla wanted to say. "We've won."

"We've won!" The cheers erupted inside the city.

The people rejoiced and hugged each other in disbelief. The injured ones lied down with a big smile on their faces, the kids were cheering nonstop, the elderly were crying.

The soldiers on top were also rejoicing. They were jumping up and down while cheering no matter how tired they were.

Charlotte looked up with a smile. She had witnessed the ability of the previous lord, but this time, she was convinced that his son had surpassed him. "To think that we are able to achieve this in our current state."

"Indeed." Douglas smiled. "This city will become the mark of the changing era. I wish to complete this city as soon as possible and find a successor that can take care of this city. Unlike you, I have yet to find a successor."

"With this victory, we can do a lot of things. In fact, the money we can get just from this victory is insane, especially regarding the Rune Academy. The Lord has shown the strength of runes, so there's no way people will be stingy if they want to get a spot." Balott smirked. "I smell a lot of money."

"Well, the immediate danger is gone, but I'm afraid the long war has begun. I'm going to have a headache after this. But for sure, I have to spread the news as quickly as possible. Let's shock all four countries with the deeds of our Lord." Harley chuckled.

"Indeed. Even though we'll have a lot of money, I can't neglect my research. I have to make sure that these people have their bellies filled." Jasmine pumped her chest.

"It seems that breaking my neutrality by becoming his vassal is the greatest decision I've ever made." Roel smiled.

"I guess he didn't lie at that time." Khalid smiled, recalling the words that Noel said to him when he tried to recruit him.

Sandra looked at the wall and muttered, "You have worked hard, Tristan. We were lucky to meet a good lord like him."

Felicia, who was lying down, said weakly, "Long live Noel Ardagan, Long live the Ardagan Family."

The pillars of the Ardagan Family weren't the only ones shocked by this victory. Even the helpers that Noel invited couldn't help but express their shock.

"It seems that the Saintess has made the correct decision. A headquarters, huh... It seems that I have to work hard so that the Earl doesn't expel us or anything." Aurelia smiled. "Those oldies back home would definitely be overjoyed by the news."

The Water Lord smirked. "I knew it. That guy was already abnormal when I met him as a member of the Demon Relief Squad. Fortunately, my Silica Valley isn't that far from this place, so cooperation should be possible."

Clara looked at Noel with a proud smile. To think that her former subordinate would become someone she could only look up to. It hadn't even been long either. "Paul and the others would be happy to hear this."

Milfa scratched the back of her head. "What if, at that time, I lost the bet to him and ended up becoming his vassal? Nonetheless, it seems that Dimitri has chosen the correct master to serve. I still have a lot to learn.

Faust closed his eyes, recalling the time Noel helped his squad. "It's truly surprising that a person can grow that fast. Then again, I should be happy because another good fighter and lord have appeared in the Muivell Kingdom. I'm looking forward to his future achievements."

Last but not least, Duke Briton looked at the sky while thinking, 'The era is changing, the young will surpass the old... He is going to become a hell of a monster in the future. Rune, huh? I should praise His Majesty for making the correct decision by allying the kingdom with him. I can see that a lot of things that were not possible in the past will be created through runes. With this, his name is enough to make the royal family of this kingdom panic. Sadly, I won't be able to see their faces.'

Duke Briton was still annoyed by how the Muivell Kingdom acted when they tried to stop them from coming to the Muivell Kingdom. They had to pay a hefty toll and do a lot of troublesome things just to come to this kingdom.

Last but not least, it was Noel. He was standing on top of the wall, looking at his city. In front of him was the town he swore to protect. Behind him was the battlefield where he laid waste to his opponents. Besides him were the comrades that fought together with him.

This was not his victory. It was everyone's victory.

Chapter 1005 Reaction (1)

With the help of Harley's brothels, the news spread right away. The Muivell Kingdom wasn't the only one who got shocked, the other three kingdoms simply couldn't believe what they heard.

The first one to hear about this was the Sword Arbiter as he was in the nearest city.

"What? The brat has done it." The Sword Arbiter sucked a cold breath. "More than twenty Superior Demons, huh? That brat actually managed to defeat that number of demons?"

As the number one Arbiter, the Sword Arbiter had no doubt that he could defeat five or six Superior Demons, especially with his True Spirit Body.

However, even he didn't have the connection to protect a city from that many Superior Demons along with numerous lower level demons.

"If I'm not wrong, the demons are fighting like an army, right? And that brat's city is not completed yet... Well, calling him a brat is impolite after this." The Sword Arbiter smiled. "Earl Ardagan will definitely shock the world with this achievement. I wonder if the royal family is going to grant him a Marquis title or not. If they truly give him that title, his rank instantly becomes the same as that of his father-in-law. Hahaha. That's going to be hilarious."

...

Just like the Sword Arbiter, Paladin Lloyd was looking at the report given by Paladin Aurelia.

"It seems that the saintess has yet again made us understand that her vision is much different from ours. To think that she bet on someone who people think will most likely lose and... to think that despite the situation being so overwhelming, he manages to win."

Paladin Lloyd chuckled. "I wonder what those old men are going to think about this. Well, I wasn't a part of the fighting force, so I couldn't report to them."

"Still, it seems that the Moon Temple will see the new era from up close. Should I volunteer to take care of the headquarters?"

...

Stargaze Mansion.

"Hahahaha. This is going to be hilarious." Kevin laughed out loud when he heard about the news. "It seems that I have to visit the royal hearing after this. It's going to be amazing."

"Still..." Kevin looked at the report while recalling the conversation he had with Luke Ardagan.

It was already a decade ago, but he still remembered it like it was yesterday.

"Kevin. I am going to tell you this because you are my best friend. The world is going to change and there is a chance that all four kingdoms won't be able to handle it."

"What? Is there a threat at that level? Do you mean the demon that is considered to be equal to the Spirit King, a Demon King?"

"I am not sure about it yet, but all I can say is that they are going to come soon. You and I will witness that battle with our own eyes. That's why I'm going to change this kingdom first."

"Are you sure about that?"

"Yeah. Just like in the past, when my ancestors risked their lives to protect these four kingdoms, I, too, have the obligation to do it."

"Even though the kingdom is pretty harsh on you?" Kevin raised his eyebrows, not expecting Luke to still have that kind of patriotism.

"Well, I will just change the kingdom. It's not like I'm fighting the demons for the sake of protecting the royal family." Luke carefully worded it so that Kevin knew that this wasn't for the sake of those people. Those people just happened to be saved when he was protecting his targets.

"But it doesn't seem that you're going to fight on the front line."

"Of course. If my ancestor was the one protecting humanity and eventually built these four kingdoms, I wish that my son could usher in a brand new era where we fight and reclaim the lands from those demons." Luke smiled. "Your daughter is a genius, right?"

"Yeah, why? Just so you know, I'm not going to mention her engagement to your little boy even though the engagement is there."

"I know, I know. I just know that great people will stick with each other. So, sooner or later, your little princess will be with my Noel. And I'm sure you won't reject him, right?"

Kevin chuckled.

When he recalled that memory, Kevin couldn't help but smile. "A new era, huh? Reclaiming the world from the demons. It's going to be a heavy task."

Despite saying those words, in his mind, there was an image of Noel and Anna standing next to each other. Their names resounded across the world and their statues were praised as the heroes of the era.

"Since that's the case, it's time to annoy the heck out of the royal family. For my dear daughter and son-in-law."

...

In another part of the Muivell Kingdom, Countess Christina looked at the report about the rumor circulating in her city.

"It seems that the son is much stronger than his father. It's just... the royal family is going to get in their way soon." Christina still remembered how the weak boy, who had to hide his face in the open, brought the rune book to her. Yet, in just a short period of time, not only did he manage to show his face in the open, but he also shocked the entire world.

"In the past, this territory was bullied because I was a part of the Ardagan family, who supported the Third Prince. The Third Prince didn't do anything for my family, and the Ardagan family couldn't support it any longer.

"It seems that the situation will change... I have been maintaining my neutrality after the failed throne war. Is it time for me to break my neutrality once again? Or is it better for me to sit on the side?"

Christina's expression turned grim as she watched the blue sky. It was a hard decision. After all, the Ardagan family had become stronger than ever. And if the royal family defeated them again, they wouldn't be as merciful toward their allies as in the first attempt. In the worst-case scenario, there wouldn't be any Countess Christina anymore.

...

Demon Banner Army.

Oscar pumped his fists when he saw the report from Milfa.

"I knew it." Oscar smirked. "It seemed that the Supreme Devil Organization would retreat for a while because of this setback. In that case, I don't have to be careful anymore. Alexander. It's time we settle the score."

Oscar moved extremely fast. The moment he got the news that the Supreme Devil Organization, he instantly informed every single Captain of the Demon Banner Army.

All the squads categorized as Shield Squads were mobilized to protect the border, while those known as Sword Squads were sent to eliminate the Supreme Devil Organizations.

After hiding for so long, Septa could finally show everything he had found so far.

It turned into a huge operation to make sure the organization couldn't recover for a while. Even the Third Prince couldn't stop the commander this time.

...

Demon Relief Squad.

"Look! I've gotten the letter from Captain Clara. They've won!"

Let's read it together!" Paul came to the Zero Squad while waving the letter.

All of them had their expressions brighten. Even Jonathan, who often had a gloomy expression, instantly lit up.

They were curious about the battle.

75,000 demons.

22 Superior Demons.

4 Devil Saints.

Just looking at the numbers alone made their jaws drop to the ground. And when they knew that only a single wall had been erected, their brains short-circuited. There was no way they could win against the demons with only minor damage to the city.

The runes were also amazing as they managed to crush the demons.

And in the last part of the letter, there was a note that piqued everyone's interest.

'Noel promised me to give two Automatic Carriages for the Zero Squad as thanks for taking care of him in the Demon Relief Squad as well as my help this time. Make sure you look forward to it. Those carriages are amazing.'

"What is this automatic carriage?"

They were confused, but once they knew about it, there was no way they would return to normal carriages after experiencing it.

...

Zaecuria Kingdom.

"Hahahaha! Good job, Duke Briton. To think that the runes are this amazing." The king of the Zaecuria Kingdom couldn't help but rise from his throne when hearing the report. "Who says that I'm foolish for supporting him and sending Duke Briton there? I want to see those people again!"

"Your Majesty. Your image..." The minister next to him had a wry smile.

"Just for one day! Let me be free for one day!" The king grinned. "With this, the rune battleship won't be the only thing we have. There will be a lot of technology that our kingdom can adopt.

"And there will be a lot of things that are impossible right now but will be impossible after the introduction of the runes. Our kingdom will have to accept all new rune technologies and adapt to this new era. We will industrialize runes as soon as they arrive. Tell Duke Briton about our intention and share it with Earl Ardagan."

"Understood. I shall send the fastest bird to Duke Briton." The minister nodded.

"Oh. That's right. How are the young talented people we'll send to the Rune Academy?"

"We are still in the middle of selection. If we choose the proud men, they might cause a conflict with the Ardagan family even if we warn them. So, we want them to be obedient first before finding out about their talents."

"Good. Let's do it in that order. I don't want any conflicts with the runes on the line. Also, monitor the situation with the Atracaeca Kingdom. We'll have to see their stance."

The minister frowned. "Are you going to stop them, Your Majesty?"

"Of course not. However, our neighbor is more than willing to warn them. So, we'll share the information with them." The king winked, implying that the Greenwood Kingdom would be the one suppressing the Atracaeca Kingdom, not them. This way, there wouldn't be too much bad blood between the Zaecuria Kingdom and the Atracaeca Kingdom.

"Certainly." The minister bowed politely.

Chapter 1006 Reaction (2)

Greenwood Kingdom.

"Hahaha. Did you hear that?" The king of the Greenwood Kingdom laughed out loud while looking at Raincart standing before him.

All ministers had gathered to hear the joyous news because of the impossible feat.

"75,000 demons, 22 Superior Demons, and 4 Devil Saints, huh?" Raincart thought for a moment. "As expected of my grandson."

"But is that even possible? I mean, the north wall is the only one standing. I believe the princess has informed us of the weird shape of the wall..." A minister asked in doubt. If there were only ten Superior Demons, he believed it was possible. But the number of Superior Demons simply surpassed anyone's imagination.

"That's true. And the majority of the Superior Demons died, right?"

The ministers were filled with doubt, but the minister who read the message earlier added, "According to the princess, the runes played a huge part in this battle. It was said that a Spirit Master was actually able to defeat a Superior Demon amidst the demon rank."

"What? A Spirit Master? Are you kidding?" The ministers gasped in shock.

"A Spirit Grandmaster is the requirement to fight the Superior Demon and you need a lot of experience if you want to defeat a Superior Demon. Only a Peak Spirit Grandmaster can defeat a Superior Demon pretty easily, but you are saying that a Spirit Master has defeated a Superior Demon?"

The minister nodded. "The letter stated that this person is called Felicia, one of Earl Ardagan's direct vassals. She proclaimed herself to be the first Rune ian. After learning from Earl Ardagan about the runes, the princess believed that it was possible to have that power.

"The runes could close the gap between a Spirit Master and the Superior Demon. However, there is one fatal weakness in this strategy. The Spirit Master has to defeat the enemy as quickly as possible. After all, even if the firepower gap can be ignored by runes, the spiritual energy they possess is different."

The ministers sucked a cold breath. If that were truly possible, the Rune ian would become the most popular profession.

The king asked, "What do you think, Raincart?"

Raincart said, "The fact that there is only one Rune ian means that the concept itself is still in the creation process. However, I wonder, what will happen when that concept matures?"

"Don't tease me, just tell us about your opinion." The king chuckled.

"What if we can train a batch of Rune ians? Even if the Superior Demon has prepared for this, they will still lose if we send a few Rune ians at Spirit Master level, right? A single grandmaster is worth more than twenty or even thirty Spirit Masters, and if you think about it, the future potential is actually limitless," Raincart explained.

"That's right. If we can send twenty Rune ians, they can deal with at least four Superior Demons. This is much better than sending a single grandmaster. And what if we apply that idea to grandmasters? Can they somehow deal with an Ancient Demon?" Another minister understood the idea.

The atmosphere turned grim when they realized the potential of the runes.

The king looked at Raincart, asking, "Has he thought this far, Raincart?"

"I'm afraid so." Raincart nodded with a serious expression. "If he shows off the power of runes like this, it's impossible for people not to become greedy. To satisfy their greed while maintaining his sovereignty over runes, he creates the Rune Academy.

"When you think about it, Rune ian is not the only path. The letter states that a lot of demons died from the rune technologies. That's probably the reason why he divides the group into two: technology and ians.

"The rune technology will advance the military and all kinds of household technologies, while the ians will become a new source of squad that can wreak havoc on the battlefield.

"I believe that we should send our talented people there. And it doesn't seem that they are forbidding them from writing a letter home. In other words, the people from there can tell us everything they learn from the Rune Academy. And because these people are going to meet people from other countries, they have to be well-educated both in runes and politics."

The ministers whispered to each other until one of them said, "I believe Sir Raincart's opinion is worth considering."

"The princess is supposed to be the principal of the Rune Academy, so we have to be careful when selecting people. If we end up causing trouble, there is a chance that the princess will lose Earl Ardagan's favor."

"Yes. We have to prepare them now to ensure that they are fit to be sent to learn the runes."

The king thought for a moment and said, "Prepare a plan for the selection and we will review it in the future hearing."

"Understood." The ministers acknowledged the order.

"If the rune technology can transform the lands, there will be a lot of controversy following it, Your Majesty." Another minister spoke up.

"The old and fundamentalist Spirit ian, huh? Ignore them for now. The Spirit Enchantment itself came from runes, so the concept of runes had been known since a thousand years ago. I believed that his ancestor was aware of the runes but never revealed them. Instead, he created Spirit Enchantment. If those fellows couldn't adapt to the present, then we wouldn't force them."

"Understood."

The king looked at Raincart, asking, "Do you have anything to add, Raincart?"

Raincart fell silent for a moment. "I've spoken as his grandfather. Now, I'm going to speak as a subject of the Greenwood Kingdom."

When Raincart started his speech with those words, everyone couldn't help but stop talking. The atmosphere turned solemn.

"Lounstein is located next to two borders. The first will be our border. Due to their existence, the Muivell Kingdom will definitely add soldiers around this border to prevent our cooperation with him.

"Hence, I am suggesting that we expand Damian's camp, which is outside the second border, the demon border, in order to create a neutral zone."

"Haven't we done that already?" The king frowned. It was the reason they stationed Damian over there.

Raincart shook his head. "I'm talking about reclaiming that territory from the demons, Your Majesty. This way, that area will be secured. However, we are not going to claim that area as our land so as to not trouble him. Instead, we will use that area for a lot of possibilities, such as future development, cooperation, or even training the first batch of Rune ians. At the very least, I believe the princess will go all the way there to do it."

The ministers agreed with this idea. When they thought about it, Spirit ians had been their specialty the whole time. So, they had to adapt and introduce the Rune ians.

Raincart thought that the Zaecuria Kingdom sent their Duke Briton because this was not possible, so they tried to squeeze as much benefit as possible and introduced the Rune Technology.

In that case, they had to monopolize the Rune ian, which was the second category he talked about earlier.

The king looked at his ministers. "What do you all think?"

"I believe it's reasonable. If we can create a buffer zone, the Muivell Kingdom will not interfere."

"Indeed. Due to the special law of the Muivell Kingdom, they won't be able to stop Earl Ardagan from leaving through the Demon Border."

"This is the only way to stop the Zaecuria Kingdom from getting ahead."

In the middle of their discussion, the door was slammed open.

Bang!

"Emergency!" A soldier suddenly rushed in, carrying a letter.

All the ministers turned around and couldn't help but furrow In the middle of their discussion, the door was slammed open.

Bang!

their eyebrows the moment they caught a glimpse of the seal.

"Huh? Blue Royal Seal?"

"Blue? Not green? The usual royal seal is green, but the blue royal seal is a matter that can change the fate of our country. Whose letter is it?"

The people panicked as they whispered to each other, wondering the content of that letter.

"Bring it to me." The king hurriedly shouted. He didn't even bother for the minister to read it as he, as the king, had to look at it personally.

As soon as he read the letter, he couldn't help but laugh out loud. "Hahahahahahah!"

This laugh confused everyone. This was a matter of importance, yet their king actually laughed it off.

However, their curiosity was soon answered when the king handed the letter to the minister next to him and told him to read it out loud.

"The letter comes from Her Highness Livia. Due to the long standing relationship between the Ardagan family and the Greenwood Kingdom's royal family that traces back to our ancestry, Earl Ardagan is proposing to work with the Greenwood Kingdom in the development of an Airship!"

"An airship?"

"What's that?"

"Is it a ship?"

They were confused, so the minister continued, "Just like the Zaecuria Kingdom's battleship, Earl Ardagan is planning to develop a battleship that will fly in the air."

"A battleship that flies in the air?"

"Something like that..."

They sucked a cold breath. Everyone knew about the battleship that the Zaecuria Kingdom possessed. It was magnificent and had a lot of destructive power.

However, it could only be used in the water. It would be useless on land. Hence, this made the airship even more valuable.

This was also another reason why Noel proposed this agreement. The deal with the Zaecuria Kingdom would definitely transform their battleship even further. To make sure that the Greenwood Kingdom, the one who had been helping him this far, didn't get jealous, Noel proposed this agreement.

And obviously, the Greenwood Kingdom was the most advanced country among all of them. So, if they developed it together, they could get some results very fast.

Noel would also get a more favorable view from the Greenwood Kingdom.

This was why the king actually laughed.

"I've thought that I've increased my evaluation high enough, but it seems that I still underestimate your grandson, Raincart." The king looked at Raincart, who was actually sweating. Even he didn't expect this from his grandson.

"Your Majesty, what shall we do?" The minister asked.

The king stepped forth with a solemn expression. "Warn the Atraceaca Kingdom that if they dare to harm Noel Ardagan and his territory, our Greenwood Kingdom is ready to go to war. As for the development of the airship, we will accept it. Send an envoy to convey our words and prepare a lot of gifts. Do all my ministers have any objections?"

"Your Majesty is wise." All of them bowed down in agreement.

There was one minister who couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows. "Your Majesty. What should we do with the Muivell Kingdom's royal family?"

"I don't think we should worry about them. I'm pretty sure that there are already people messing up with them in the royal hearing." The king smirked.

Chapter 1007 Reaction (3)

Muivell Kingdom.

The royal family had once again gathered the ministers and the Arbiters they could muster at the moment.

Unlike the Zaecuria Kingdom or the Greenwood Kingdom, the opinion was split.

"Your Majesty. I believe that we have to demand Earl Ardagan to give the runes to the royal family so that everyone in the kingdom can get stronger, which will guarantee national security," one noble stated firmly.

The other nobles rebuked him. "Count Sekk, I believe that what you are saying is rather ambitious. If the royal family is abusing their privilege to get what the noble has invented, no one is going to create another thing in this kingdom anymore."

"I believe that Earl Ardagan is not concerned about this kingdom and is ready to defect. We can see how he acts toward the Greenwood Kingdom and the Zaecuria Kingdom."

"I don't think that's true. From what I heard, Earl Ardagan is cooperating with the Muivell Kingdom. He has created the Rune Academy in this kingdom, specifically in his territory. You should be aware that he has spread the runes themselves to the public. I think he has done the obligation for the kingdom."

"What did you say? He also spread the knowledge to other kingdoms."

"No. He spread the runes in this kingdom. However, we should question how that knowledge actually reached other kingdoms. Don't tell me, someone is getting bribes to fill their own pocket?"

"That's a bold accusation. Do you think you can take responsibility for your words?"

"I believe that Rune Academy is enough to prove his loyalty to the kingdom. If that's not enough, even with Princess Livia from the Greenwood Kingdom beside him, he still chooses Anna Stargaze to be his fiancée. At the same time, the number of people from our kingdom who are allowed to enter his Rune Academy is much higher than the rest of the kingdoms."

"That's right. What if your action forced the Greenwood Kingdom or the Zaecuria Kingdom to steal him? If Earl Ardagan left the kingdom, it would be a great loss for us."

"You should be the one taking responsibility for making him uncomfortable."

"Hasn't he done a great service to the country?"

"That's right. He has repelled 75,000 demons, those Superior Demons and a few Devil Saints from this land. This kind of attack far surpasses anything we've seen in the last couple of hundreds of years. Can your territory block them?"

"Not only that, but he has the backing of Moon Temple. Are you going to make people judge us by expelling him, which will also result in harming the Moon Temple? While they are not big, the people's opinion about them is rather high."

"You should be the one who feels ashamed for not being able to suppress your greed."

The arguments came back and forth. But it was apparent that the ones on Noel's side were greater.

And that was because of Kevin.

Kevin remained silent the whole time, watching the entire situation unfold.

He couldn't help but recall the letter that his daughter sent him.

'Father. The time is ripe. It's time for us to attack. I believe that you have been working hard to maintain connections with several nobles. If you mention the spot in the Rune Academy, I believe they will agree. We're also planning a few things about this rune.'

The message was simple, but that was enough to turn the tide.

In that instant, he informed the allies of the Stargaze family, who also knew the Ardagan family in the past. This way, they would definitely side with Noel. Even the royal family couldn't make a reckless decision when a lot of nobles stopped them.

At the same time, he had to thank Noel for having a lot of things to talk about. Despite showing his cards one after another, he didn't forget to share them a little bit so that he wouldn't get blamed for a monopoly.

While a monopoly could make a family strong, they would be subjected to a lot of opposition. By taking a step back, Noel created an opportunity for people to back him up in exchange for favors.

And it all started the moment he made a deal with the Sword Arbiter.

Everyone knew that the Sword Arbiter had once opposed Noel. However, it didn't change the fact that the Sword Arbiter was just.

Hence, Noel treated him with respect and even gave him a lot of benefits.

If someone like the Sword Arbiter could get all those benefits, what about them? They hadn't really opposed Noel. While they weren't as strong as the Sword Arbiter, they still had a bit of influence. And with him offering a seat in the Rune Academy, it would be easy for them to get them to his side.

Of course, by defeating the Supreme Devil Organization this time, Noel had shown that he had unprecedented strength. In addition, he showed the connections they thought were impossible.

The Water Lord, the Gem Lord, the Demon Banner Army, and even Duke Briton took part in it.

Kevin couldn't help but smile. However, his eyes were locked on three people. The first one would be the marshall, who was already known as the royal family's spear. The second person was the second ranked Arbiter, whose strength wasn't that far from the Sword Arbiter. The last one was Duke Raymond. He had already retired a few years ago, but to think that he would show up after this, it seemed that the royal family was planning to do something.

Still, Kevin was a bit skeptical about the current situation, especially with the fact that Josephine wasn't among them.

And as expected, Duke Raymond was here to fight for the royal family.

He stepped forward while stating, "Your Majesty. While I do recognize his achievement in repelling the Supreme Devil Organization, we can't ignore the fact that he brings foreign

power to this country. As everyone knows, Duke Briton, one of the most veteran commanders in the world, actively participated in that battle.

"This action was similar to acknowledging that the Muivell Kingdom couldn't protect itself. I believe that he had an ulterior motive and intended to weaken the Muivell Kingdom." Duke Raymond glanced at everyone on Noel's side.

The people instinctively feared him. If Duke Briton was one of the most veteran commanders, Duke Raymond was one of the most expert in politics in this kingdom. They were afraid that their actions would bring down their family.

"I wonder if that's true, Duke Raymond." Kevin stepped up.

Raymond looked at him with a solemn expression. "What do you mean, Marquis?"

"I heard there is cooperation in order to build a ship. However, the Supreme Devil Organization was trying to destroy it. As the lord of that territory, I don't think anyone can blame him for trying to protect what he's trying to build."

"It still doesn't answer my doubt, Marquis. Why was the duke there?"

"You should correct your words, Duke Raymond. Oh, maybe I should too. He is not the Duke Briton. He is simply a shipwright. You should have heard that he has passed down his mantle as a navy commander and retired from his position as a duke. Just like you." Kevin smiled.

Raymond furrowed his eyebrows. Kevin was clearly mocking him. After all, the royal family ended up having to recall the retired noble just to deal with the situation.

"If he was there as a shipwright, why would he unleash his power?"

"I think that question should be answered by His Majesty." Marquis Stargaze turned around and kneeled on one knee, asking out loud. "I implore the Majesty to give your subjects an explanation as to why you forbade the Sword Arbiter to participate in the battle. This battle had the potential to plunge the country into chaos.

"The Supreme Devil Organization has been rampant in the last few years. And with the previous battle, we could confirm that the demons could fight as an army.

"This kingdom only has eleven million people in population. However, if we take a look at the outside world, there are millions, if not billions, of demons.

"They have been doing nothing this whole time, but the Supreme Devil Organization has caused it to change. What if they rally millions of demons to raze this land? This will become an unprecedented attack that rivals the battle of dawn in the creation of the kingdom.

"Instead of punishing Earl Ardagan, I believe that we have to think about exterminating the Supreme Devil Organization right at this instant before they are able to rally more demons.

"The other kingdoms should be aware of this matter and think that we are unable to deal with a single terrorist organization. That's why I implore Your Majesty to exterminate these pests from this land. It's not Mr. Briton or other kingdoms that make our kingdom look weak. It's because we have let a single terrorist organization remain active to this day.

"I hope that Your Majesty could give an explanation to the subjects of the Muivell Kingdom for the sake of national security." Kevin ended his speech with a polite bow.

The nobles couldn't believe what they had just witnessed.

Most of the nobles here knew that the Supreme Devil Organization was related to the royal family.

However, they had truly become so big to the point that they couldn't be pardoned any longer. The reason was, as he said, what if the organization rallied millions of demons into this kingdom? If the royal family claimed it wouldn't happen, it was the same as admitting that the royal family was related to them. And the citizens would be enraged.

And this was why Kevin dared to be so bold. Despite trying to show his loyalty to the kingdom and its citizens, he was forcing the royal family to weaken themselves.

Chapter 1008 Reaction (4)

The entire hall turned silent. After Noel's victory, it was obvious that Noel's side was currently winning in this debate.

However, the king simply looked at Kevin as if he had expected this kind of reaction. He was angry because the Supreme Devil Organization couldn't do anything, but he had discussed this matter prior to the meeting.

Kevin remained silent while contemplating the reasons why Duke Raymond was here. Normally, the duke never appeared even if it was an emergency situation. It seemed that the royal family panicked this time and even brought the duke, the current king's teacher, to help them.

'What is the duke planning to do? The Demon Banner Army is unstoppable, so they will definitely make their move to the Supreme Devil Organization. And if we get to join them, we can crush the Supreme Devil Organization. Wait a minute...' Kevin noticed something off. 'Is Duke Raymond the only one brought back by the king?'

The king suddenly stood up and said, "For the subject, we are ready to prepare to fight the Supreme Devil Organization..."

'Don't tell me...' Kevin finally realized why Duke Raymond showed himself here.

"I order Duke Raymond and my arbiters to crush the Supreme Devil Organization," The king declared out loud.

"!!!" Kevin gritted his teeth. That was right. The Arbiters were supposed to be the ones handling the Supreme Devil Organization.

As the third ranked arbiter among the twelve, Kevin should be a perfect candidate to go. However, the royal family brought the second ranked arbiter to suppress him. If he suggested himself as the leader of this operation, which allowed him to really destroy the organization, he would be overstepping his bounds. The king would definitely use it to counter all his words.

However, with the two arbiters clashing with each other, there was a need for a person to keep them in check. That person was Raymond. Obviously, Kevin had to move according to his orders.

Duke Raymond obviously understood the task. There was no way he would order Kevin to hunt those bastards from the organization. And the other arbiter wouldn't be killing them due to his affiliation with the royal family.

In other words, this was the king's way of not killing the people in the organization. But on the surface, it looked like he was doing something.

"What's wrong, Marquis? As a loyal subject, you should have seen that I'm giving an explanation to my subjects, right? Don't tell me, are you unsatisfied with it, Marquis?"

"..." Kevin's eyebrows twitched. He calmed himself down and smiled at the king. "I believe that the marshal is a better commander in this operation. He has both the strength and knowledge to do it. With his achievement, he is able to inspire our soldiers."

The king's expression turned cold. "Kevin. You should know that we shouldn't reveal our trump card so early. Don't you think that's the one that makes us look weak?"

Kevin realized that the advantage he got was gone with that one move. And he had to measure which noble families had been siding with the royal family or even recalled back to the court in order to deal with this situation.

"I apologize; your subject has overstepped his bounds. Thank you for enlightening your subject, Your Majesty." Kevin lowered his head.

The king could take this opportunity to punish it, but the reputation of the royal family would crumble if he did it. So he waved his hand, treating it as nothing big. "You are a good subject. You merely express your concern about our country."

"Thank you for your forgiveness, Your Majesty." Kevin was annoyed. He thought he had prepared enough.

"While we're at it, what do you think about the war itself, Marquis Stargaze? Should we reward Earl Ardagan or punish him for bringing foreign power?"

"..." Kevin bit his lips. If he was still winning, he would definitely choose the former. Now that the advantage was gone, he only had one choice.

"Of course, Earl Ardagan is also in the wrong by bringing a foreign power. However, the Muivell Kingdom is blessed with good subjects. With the help of the Demon Relief Squad's Captain, Demon Barrier Squad's Captain, Demon Adjudicator Squad's Captain, the Water Lord, the Gem Lord, as well as Saintess Layla and Paladin Aurelia, we have shown the prowess of our kingdom.

"As the saying goes, the object of rewards is to encourage; the object of punishments is to prevent. If we solely punish Earl Ardagan for doing everything in his power to stop the Supreme Devil Organization, the subjects would be afraid and choose to run away in the face of disasters.

"At the same time, if we only reward Earl Ardagan, the people will be encouraged to bring foreign power.

"The most appropriate reward for this victory is to elevate the rank of Earl Ardagan to Marquis. However, bringing the foreign force would definitely be condemned by our subjects. I propose to lower the reward to 50,000 gold, 10,000 demon crystals, as well as a few treasures."

Kevin stopped. Originally, he wanted to have Noel be in the same position as him, but because it was impossible, he aimed for the second thing. After all, this was what Noel needed the most.

Money.

'Kevin is too shameless... Does he not know how much money those runes generated?'

'We should have taxed him.'

'Hush. No one is talking about it because a new noble is exempted from taxes for the first three years so that they can build their territories.'

'But the potential money we can get from those three years...'

The nobles were whispering to each other.

The king smiled. He certainly had to follow Kevin's suggestion this time, but there was one thing he could change.

"Your Majesty. I believe we can't do that." Duke Raymond stopped him. "While it was true that this victory had been claimed by Earl Ardagan, it didn't change the fact that various help had been brought to Lounstein.

"If we only rewarded the Ardagan family, the other parties would be enraged, thinking that we were looking down on The king had been waiting for this. "So, do you have any suggestions?"

Kevin shuddered. Once again, Duke Raymond stepped over him. At first, it looked like they were going to reward the people individually, and he was sure that a few of them wouldn't mind sharing the reward with Noel.

But Raymond suggested another way. "I believe we should reward the Demon Banner Army, the Tower Association and the Moon Temple respectively. A good ruler will reward his subordinates. However, this is also the case for their respective influences.

"We should split the reward evenly. I believe the Tower Association will be delighted about the rewards as they sent two of their elders to help solve the crisis. I believe the Demon Banner Army has performed its duties. With this reward, the Demon Banner Army could fight the demons and the Supreme Devil Organization even more fiercely. And the Moon Temple could help a lot more people.

"I believe this is how Your Majesty should reward your subordinates. Everything is for the sake of people."

Kevin's expression darkened. As expected of the teacher of the current king, he was an extremely formidable opponent in politics.

By giving it to the organizations to which they belonged, it was impossible for the individuals to share it.

'I have done my best, but I have performed below expectations.' Kevin thought. It wasn't that his performance was low, his opponent this time was simply that strong.

In the end, he was an Arbiter while his opponent was a true politician. In this battle of politics, it would be hard for him to win.

In fact, the only person who could obliterate Duke Raymond was probably Luke Ardagan, Noel's father.

He simply hoped that Noel had a backup plan for this. After all, he needed to secure more funds if he wanted to complete his city.

There were still a few things he could use, like the fact that Felicia could defeat a Superior Demon with runes. However, Kevin had to abandon all the plans due to Duke Raymond.

'The nobles on our side are chickening. Some of them can hold on, but they won't dare to speak out. On the other side, the nobles don't look like they are expecting this. It seems that the secret meeting has left them out in case they have become double agents.'

'In that case, I am afraid I have to reassess the situation. Then again, the king is sending me to the fake subjugation in order to stop me from entering the royal hearing. And they can use that time to bully the nobles on our side and probably force them to switch sides.'

Kevin closed his eyes for a moment, recalling the good times in the past where Luke Ardagan kept talking one thing after another and no one dared to interrupt him.

"Do you have anything else to say, Marquis?" The king asked.

Kevin politely bowed his head. "No, Your Majesty. Thank you for addressing our country's problems. I believe that the Muivell Kingdom will be prosperous for thousands of years."

Before returning to his original position, Kevin looked at Duke Raymond.

"Do you want to say something to me, Marquis?" Duke Raymond asked in the same style as the king.

Kevin smiled. "Not at all. I have long heard about Duke Raymond's achievements. It seems that Duke Raymond is a much bigger man than the rumors suggest. I can't help but respect you."

Duke Raymond harrumphed, thinking that this wasn't a fight. Kevin thought that the reason why Duke Raymond agreed to return to the royal court was probably because of the grudge against the Ardagan family. He never won against Luke, so he aimed for his son.

Still, Kevin believed that Noel had surpassed his father or at least been equal to him, in politics. Although he couldn't help much, he would definitely poke them from time to time and would savor the sight of them losing to Noel.

The king declared, "Summon the four representatives to the capital city to receive their reward."

Once again, the king wanted Noel to go to the capital so that he wouldn't have time to take care of his territory for some time. It would also stop him from doing anything for the Supreme Devil Organization.

What they didn't know was that Noel had expected this, especially regarding the funds. He was already sitting down with all his pillars to discuss the development of the city.

"Alright, everyone. It's time to discuss the next development plan. In a sense, we don't have money and won't be getting a lot of money. We can sell some Demon Crystals, but it won't be enough. Hence, I have a plan..." Noel smirked while raising one finger. "What do you think about making this family once again the wealthiest family in the kingdom? Balott?"

Balott couldn't help but smile as if he had already known about this topic. "The wealthiest family in the kingdom? I think you are setting the bar too low, my lord. Don't you think we should become the wealthiest family in the world?"

Chapter 1009 Reaction (5)

A moment ago.

The Gem Lord was sitting in front of Noel with a gentle smile on his face. "Say, what do you think if I retire in this place? I don't really need the mine. Just give me enough materials and money to do my research, and I'm set."

Noel raised his eyebrows. The Gem Lord was basically saying that he wanted to serve him. Originally, the transaction was there to get his help, but it seemed that the Gem Lord had seen the future of the Ardagan family and decided to side with them.

The Gem Lord was the eldest among the elders in the Tower Association. His strength and his knowledge were among the greatest.

For the Ardagan family, accepting his plea would mean paying a little bit more than the original agreement in exchange for his help. That was right. As long as the Gem Lord remained here, they would get yet another peak grandmaster. He might be weaker than Milfa, but the gap between them was not

big. More importantly, the explosion gems were extremely useful for city defense. Hence, the Gem Lord's value actually surpassed Milfa.

When Noel heard this, he couldn't help but ask, "Are you sure about this? You should know that this city could be said to be the most dangerous place in the kingdom."

Lounstein was definitely the target of everyone. So, the Gem Lord might have to fight again and again.

However, the Gem Lord made a genuine smile as though he had thought this through. "As long as you don't push away this old man."

Noel blinked his eyes a few times. There was a bit of disbelief since he never imagined that he would get this kind of harvest from the battle.

Noel stood up firmly, implying his answer.

Seeing this, the Gem Lord pushed his chair to the side and took a step back. After that, he fell on one knee while saying, "Jayden Rivermore would like to serve Earl Noel Ardagan."

"I accept your loyalty, Jayden Rivermore. From now on, you are my vassal."

"I greet my lord." The Gem Lord lowered his head.

"I'll make sure that you won't regret your decision today, Gem Lord."

"I have passed my mantle as an elder, my Lord. If you don't mind, you can just call me Old Jade. People usually call me that." Jayden smiled.

"Sure, Old Jade." Noel smiled, knowing that the name probably came from removing two characters from his real name.

While the Gem Lord submitted to Noel, the Water Lord had no intention of serving anyone. However, he was implying that he didn't mind some collaboration between Lounstein and the Silica Valley, which was a good opportunity for Noel. The Water Lord could get a lot of runes from Noel, while the latter could get a lot of medicinal herbs from the Silica Valley. Those herbs would be useful for Khalid. It was due to his medicine that a lot of people didn't die in the last war.

The Demon Banner Army had also retreated from Lounstein. Noel had promised Clara a bunch of stuff for her help as well as giving something back to the Zero Squad that had taken care of him this whole time.

Milfa was a bit ruthless. Instead of bringing something back from his city, she only wanted the heads of the two new Devil Saints. It seemed that she was planning to use them as propaganda to eliminate more members of the organization.

Faust, on the other hand, came because he was indebted to Noel for helping his Demon Barrier Squad in the past. Now that the debt had been repaid, he returned to his squad.

Meanwhile, Paladin Aurelia and Saintess Layla became witnesses to the power of runes, which made the establishment of their headquarters much smoother. Of course, he had to work on the carriage that would symbolize the cooperation between the Ardagan family and the Moon Temple soon.

Finally, he could take care of the rest of the matters regarding the Ardagan family's future.

He assembled all his pillars in a single room. Of course, he also added Livia, Tristan, Felicia, and Jayden.

All of them had been waiting for his conversation with the Gem Lord to finish, which made it a good time to introduce the new vassal.

There was a reason why Noel accepted the Gem Lord into the family.

Name: Jayden Rivermore

Affection: Loyal (95/100)

Description: In awe of your achievement.

Noel entered the room with the Gem Lord, which confused most people. Only a few understood the reason for Jayden's arrival.

"Congratulations, my lord." Charlotte was the first one to stand up.

Anna, Dimitri, Livia, and Harley were next.

The rest were still confused, so he introduced him. "This is Mr. Jayden Rivermore. He will be staying with us from now on."

"Ah?!" Douglas hurriedly stood up as he blurted out, "Congratulations, my lord, for getting a new vassal."

When they heard the last part, the rest of the people caught on and hurriedly congratulated Noel. Jayden was simply too big of an addition to be ignored.

"Ahaha, this old man feels flattered. Please call me Old Jade." Jayden smiled.

Noel turned to Sandra. "Please bring one more chair into the room."

"Yes, sir." Sandra hurriedly executed his order. It seemed that she had taken her training seriously the whole time. Not only her strength grew, but her skill as a maid was impeccable. In less than a minute, Sandra had returned with a chair, albeit a bit confused as to where she should put it.

"This old man will just take a seat on the side. I don't know anything about the family after all." Jayden smiled and took the chair from Sandra before placing it on the side. He only planned to observe the condition, since Noel wanted to show him the family that had been hiding its fangs the whole time.

Now that everyone was seated, Noel looked at Dimitri. "Let's start with the report of the battle, shall we?"

Dimitri nodded. "There are a total of 121 casualties. Most of them are normal soldiers. 230 are suffering from heavy injuries, but thanks to Khalid's medicine, more than two hundred of them will recover. However, the rest can only live with handicaps. 785 people are suffering from minor injuries. Half of them are soldiers while the rest are normal citizens."

"Make sure to record all the people who have died and suffered heavy injuries. Compensate them properly if they have a family or relative as it's due to their service that the city can remain standing. Of course, all the people who participate in the battle have to be compensated as well." Noel nodded in understanding.

It was truly hard to know that a lot of his subjects were dead. But the only thing he could do as a lord was to offer his sympathy and pay compensation. Even if he wanted to visit them and thank them personally, he didn't have enough time to do all that as work was piling up in his office.

"Also..." Dimitri glanced at Khalid. Khalid nodded his head, saying, "I currently don't have a lot of materials to make more medicine."

"In that case, Dimitri will buy the materials while preparing for the next batch migration. Also, we are going to have more cooperation with the Silica Valley, which is known for producing a lot of medicinal herbs, especially rare herbs. I think that is enough, right?"

Khalid nodded his head. "Yes. Thank you, my lord."

"Howard?" Noel continued to discuss the matter outside the city, specifically the demon corpses.

"We have made a rough calculation. There should be around sixty thousand corpses around the city. Although a lot of the corpses are destroyed, we should have no trouble recovering their demon crystals."

Noel thought for a moment. "We will keep all the Superior Demon Crystals, Peak Demon Crystals, and half of the Low Level, Mid Level, and Advanced Level Demon Crystals. As for the rest, we can use it for the funds."

Balott agreed with the arrangement. "That's good. I believe that my lord should use all the Superior Demon Crystals and Peak Demon Crystals. If my Lord becomes much stronger than today, I believe that our enemies won't dare show their fangs in front of us. And that is the best investment in my opinion."

Dimitri, Howard, or even Jayden were Spirit Grandmasters. However, Balott believed that Noel should be the one using it. In the end, his talent was too overwhelming to be ignored. It was better to focus their resources on the most talented ones to increase the possibility of a Spirit Transcendence Expert being born in this family.

"We will talk about that later." Noel waved his hand before turning to Harley. "How about it, Harley?"

"I have gathered all the information you want, my lord. How do I say this... The situation doesn't look that good for us." Harley paused for a moment before raising three fingers. "First, we have seen the second carriage bearing the flag of Rosenhoood. I'm assuming that the royal family is bringing back that despicable bastard to the royal court."

"Are you serious?" Charlotte frowned.

"Who is he?" Noel asked, not knowing about this figure.

"Raymond Les Rosenhoood. His sister married the previous king, thus putting him as a teacher of the current king. We heard a lot of his names brought up by Master Luke. Master Luke and Duke Raymond had been stepping on each other's toes during the throne war.

"He retired after the execution. The reason he came back was probably to once again destroy the Ardagan family. It could be said that if Marquis Stargaze didn't step in and take care of the execution, he was the one who would remove the bloodline of the Ardagan family forever.

"In terms of ability, he might be the best politician in the kingdom right now. So, we have to raise our guard or something bad is going to happen."

Noel frowned while Anna couldn't help but ask, "I have sent the letter to my father about our next move. Is he going to hinder us?"

"Most likely." Charlotte nodded. "I'm afraid that he is looking for a way to punish us."

"For the time being, there is no way to punish us. The reward is simply much greater than the punishment, so if they still openly punish us, there will be great unrest in the kingdom. The only way to hit us is probably by cutting a portion of our reward." Noel looked down, contemplating.

"This is bad. Are we not going to get our reward?" Anna's expression darkened. "My father..."

"It's fine to be honest." Noel waved his hand, assuring her that everything was fine. "I have never put the reward into consideration. Isn't that right, Balott?"

"Eh?" People couldn't help but look at Balott, wondering what he was talking about.

"Of course, my lord. People don't know that there is one hidden meaning when showing the runes in this war. What will you think about the runes in this war?" Balott smirked. "Overwhelming? Strong? People will focus on the Rune Academy to acquire it? People want to cooperate with the Ardagan family to get a bite on the rune technology? No. That is not the real reason. What we want to show is the effectiveness of runes. This will be proof that the runes can be developed further and used by the masses. And..."

"Yeah. It's time to discuss the next development plan. The reason why I'm not bothered with the money is because of this plan." Noel asked, "How did people see the Ardagan family in the past?"

"A merchant noble family?" Charlotte tilted her head in confusion.

"That's right." Noel smirked. "What do you think about making this family once again the wealthiest family in the kingdom?"

Balott shook his head. "The wealthiest in the kingdom? I think you are setting the bar too low, my lord. Don't you think we should become the wealthiest family in the world?"

As expected, Balott understood him the most. As a merchant, they would definitely sell something. And by proving the rune's effectiveness, he could finally sell runes.

Noel snapped his fingers while saying, "It's time to set up a new merchant group under the Ardagan family's name. We will sell the rune technology, their maintenance, and even their development under a single banner. I call this company, Rune Garden, or to make it short, Runegard."

Chapter 1010 Family's Future

"Rune Garden?"

"Runegard?"

The people in the room were confused. This was the first time they were thinking about this.

Balott had a smug smile. "Now that people have accepted Rune Technology, there is one thing that we should do. It's to utilize it to our advantage and bring in wealth that no one has ever seen before. Or to put it simply, a monopoly."

"A monopoly?" Charlotte's expression turned dark. "Isn't monopoly banned in the kingdom?"

"Of course. That's why our master is creating the Rune Academy. It's to spread knowledge about runes. However, it doesn't change the fact that we are the sole possessors of Rune Technology. While the technology will spread in the future, we can still take advantage of it now... Or should I say, we should utilize it now."

"What do you mean?" Charlotte frowned. She certainly knew the trouble that would come with monopoly. Even after following Luke, their former master, she had never seen him create a monopoly.

However, there was one thing that reminded her of this strategy. And Balott's words jolted her mind.

"We will create this company to spread the rune technology, send off experts, and even do maintenance. This is to build trust. Once the rune spreads, there will be a lot of companies doing the same thing. However, what do you think the customer will do?" Balott smirked.

Charlotte sucked a cold breath. "A lot of people might go to the cheaper alternative, but even if our prices are slightly higher but still affordable, people will go to us. After all, we have shown them that they can trust our company. And if we start early, we can create an environment where our runes are connected to each other."

"That's right. Most people will go to us because we have all the convenience they want, with just a slightly higher price." Balott smirked. He was sure that the nobles or even the royal families would choose them over a cheaper alternative because they were much more trusted. After trials and errors, their Runegard would know which things the customers wanted and needed.

In addition, Noel was the source of all those runes, allowing them to create one weird technology after another.

While most companies would only produce rune technology that had better design or a cheaper price, they couldn't be compared to Runegard in producing a never-before-seen invention.

"This is..." Charlotte sucked a cold breath. She could see how much money they would get from this.

Noel smiled. Both he and Balott had thought about this. They knew that the only way to move forward was to regain the 'status' of the Ardagan family.

Of course, Noel had planned for this money. Building the territories might be an important task, but he could use all this money to send forth expeditions in order to help more people. In fact, he could become a sponsor of the Moon Temple.

By taking advantage of this money, Noel could finish the mission to help people. Helping thousands of people was just a simple task in the future. He might be able to help even tens of thousands of people every single month with this money. And all those honor points could be used for his improvement.

That was why Noel planned to make an unlimited amount of money.

"Still, Master..." Dimitri raised his hand. "While I do understand the importance of the Runegard, who will take charge of this operation? In the past, the previous master delegated this task to someone else because he was too occupied with his work as a lord."

"As for that..." Noel turned his head toward the most promising young talent. He believed that he could do this task pretty well.

Everyone thought it was going to be Balott, but they soon dropped their jaws when they followed Noel's gaze.

"Me?" The voice of a young man echoed inside the room as he pointed at himself with a panicked expression. Yes, the one Noel wanted to be taking care of the Runegard was his disciple, Tristan. "M-Master! It's impossible for me."

Noel had two reasons for choosing Tristan for this task. The first one was Tristan's self-esteem. Because of his previous status as a slave, while Tristan believed that he could become a normal commoner in the future, he didn't have confidence in becoming a person of better status.

That was why his low self-esteem was always something he had to take care of. If Tristan showed a lot of success in this project, he would definitely feel more confident in himself and transform into a man worthy of the status of Noel Ardagan's student.

As for the second reason, it was basically his talent. Tristan had a photographic memory, which was extremely useful in this area. He could remember the numbers of purchases or even the minor details of transactions. It was so overpowered, to the point that he would be able to find corruption inside the company.

He knew that this Runegard would make it big, so there would definitely be a lot of corruption. With Tristan as the head, they wouldn't have the chance. Tristan was also going to become strong soon as a rune ian.

"There is one problem about this, Master. It's not that I doubt your decision, but Tristan doesn't have the knowledge or skill as a merchant," Dimitri expressed his concern.

"I know that. Hence, I'm planning to have Roel's children support him. They have gained a lot of experience as merchants, so I think it's fine to give them a chance. Of course, Balott will be supervising everything as well as teaching Tristan and the twins the necessary skills as high level merchants," Noel explained.

Tristan should be able to close the gap easily with that memory of his. That was why Balott would probably become a bit too busy for a while, but in the future, he would just monitor the situation.

Balott agreed with this.

"Yes. I don't have a problem." Balott nodded with a serious expression.

"If that's the case, I think it's worth a try." Dimitri nodded.

"Of course, I will bring in some experts if it doesn't work. This is the Ardagan family's main source of income, so I'm planning to take this seriously." Noel waved his hand, ending the conversation.

The others were slightly concerned, but they didn't raise any more objections.

Tristan was so panicked that he forgot the fact that he was still the vice principal of the Rune Academy.

"I'll make the business proposal later. But considering the situation, we have the Sword Arbiter, the Moon Temple, the Demon Relief Squad, and the Silica Valley as our first targets. So, we can use them to spread the word regarding the Runegard. Since you all don't have any more objections, I shall continue on to the next topic." Noel looked at Livia.

"Oh, it's my turn right now? I was about to ask who would be the replacement of my vice principal, Teacher." Livia smiled.

"Tristan will still hold that position, but the majority of the work will be on you. And once the Rune Academy has developed a bit, why don't you pick up a student as your personal disciple and teach them about more runes?"

"Mhm?" Livia raised her eyebrows. Even though she was Noel's student, she was still the princess of the Greenwood Kingdom. She understood perfectly what Noel meant. By taking on a personal disciple, she could teach them a lot more things and eventually become the replacement for Tristan.

Though she would be extremely busy for a while, working on everything by herself, it could be said that this was a fair exchange.

"I understand. I shall work very hard so that you won't feel unsatisfied with the Rune Academy." Livia politely bowed her head. This was an opportunity for the Greenwood Kingdom, which was something she couldn't pass on. In any case, she intended to work to the bone when coming to this place, so this was just a bonus for her hard work.

"Good. I will send you the proposal regarding the development of the Rune Academy later. I'll leave the details to you."

"Understood." Livia nodded.

"In that case, who is next..." Noel looked at the people and pointed at Roel.

"Oh. It's my turn now?" Roel thought for a moment. "Currently, we are understaffed. Are you planning to divide our people for this Runegard, my lord?"

"No. It's more like all the blacksmiths in this city will join the Runegard. And if you plan to leave and become the exclusive blacksmith of the Ardagan family, then that would be fine. I'm planning to raise the Runegard to the highest level to the point where Master Blacksmith has to bow down to the blacksmiths of my Runegard."

Roel contemplated for a moment. The proposal was tempting. The Runegard would become the Ardagan family's face in the future, so it wouldn't be weird that their blacksmiths would be considered elites. In fact, joining Runegard would mean that they could leave the company in one way or another.

If nobles actually recruited them, they would definitely have the status where even nobles had to be polite to them.

If a master blacksmith was equal to a noble, this new status would definitely put them slightly above nobles.

At the same time, Noel planned to show other Master Blacksmiths that they could join Runegard and receive instruction about runes. When this happened, the Ardagan family would have a lot of master blacksmiths.

No one would dare to oppose this family anymore.

Roel nodded in understanding. "Then, what am I going to become next?"

"Well, I hope that you can become their supervisor for the time being as the blacksmith exclusive to our Ardagan family."

"I see. So, you're planning to separate the Ardagan family and the Runegard."

"Yes."

"I understand." Roel nodded.