

Pant!

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Noel was quite exhausted even though the enemy was only a single demon. And it didn't seem to be a high rank demon either.

Even Alfred couldn't say anything after challenging the demon.

Before talking to them, Noel cut the wood carefully and found the small creature inside the trunk. The sensation on his hand felt like as if he was squeezing a wool that he could crush with his hand. There was a purple blood coming out of the stab wound, so he avoided touching that area.

After taking a closer look at the demon, he used his sword to cut open the demon, specifically in the head's area, finding a small purple crystal.

'So small...' Noel thought as he used Ardagan to scoop it out and poured some water to wash the blood away. Only then he returned to the group while handing the purple crystal to Alfred.

"Here, the purple crystal."

Alfred frowned, pondering something in his head. After a while, he said, "I apologize for being so arrogant. I take my words back. It turns out I can't handle the demon by myself. So, I want to ask you two to cooperate with me so that we can finish the task as soon as possible."

"!!!" Noel and the bully widened their eyes as they didn't expect the proud and arrogant noble actually apologized.

When they were about to say something, Alfred explained the reason. "I am here as a trainee of the Demon Banner Army, not a noble. Even I will die if I

can't cooperate with both of you. So, this time, I want to renew our agreement."

Noel looked at Alfred weirdly. Just like Alfred said earlier, he was someone who stated all the facts. If he was in the wrong, he would say so and choose to lower his pride to survive.magic

At the same time, the bully looked at Noel and said, "In that case, I'd like to apologize as well. If not for your help, I would have died earlier. I acted earlier because of my prejudice against noble, but it turned out you're different than them. So, If you want to hit me to pay back for what I have done, do it. I won't fight back... as long as we can cooperate. The better the group ranking is, the bigger chance I can grab for my life."

Noel became even more surprised. Even though the situation compelled for such an action, they were still not that bad. At the very least, they didn't cling to their useless pride and cause the group to be defeated by a demon.

"Once again, I'm Noel Ardagan. You can call me Noel... Hitting you here is the worst move I can make, but if we can finish the mission and return to the base, let me hit you once... we will call it even." Noel smiled.

The bully closed his eyes as he said, "Sure. I am Lezlev."

Alfred thought for a moment before finally introducing himself. "I am Alfred Starwood. You can call me Alfred. Before we continue, we need to tend to our wounds first."

"That's right." Noel agreed without hesitation.

Alfred immediately covered his hands with white cloth while Lezlev bandaged the wound on his arm and thigh. Since Noel's wound was only a graze, he finished first and helped Lezlev bandage his thigh.

Lezlev felt embarrassed because the fallen noble that he had bullied in the past week was actually far different than his imagination. He regretted to fall for cheap provocation and bully him.

In the end, he apologized over and over again even though Noel said, 'It's fine.'

After they finished, Alfred said, "According to my family teaching, an introduction is a must for a group, especially about their specialty and what you can expect them to do. I thought you guys were useless, so I didn't do it. But I'd like to talk about this now.

"To show my sincerity, I'll tell mine first. My sword is a slightly heavy sword that can deal a lot of damage. It can crush a demon if I put all my strength to it, but it seems that I've underestimated them. That's why I'm planning to change my role... considering Noel's sword seems to be sharper than anyone else here."

Lezlev thought about his quality before explaining it to them. "I use a normal sword and armor. My technique is so-so, but I have some confidence to execute some tasks like earlier. I can move around to help when needed."

Since both of them had revealed their strength, Noel also showed a bit of his power. "I'm just a fallen noble and I've never held a sword in my life before my family was ruined. I'm relying on my sword right now, but I think I have improved quite good in the past few days... I don't know about my specialty though."

"That's enough." Alfred nodded. "After listening to both of you, I think I'll be the one taking the attack from the demons. Noel can attack the demon with your sword. Even if you can't take down the demon in a single strike, make sure to wound the enemy. Lezlev will move between us and cover our backs.

"We might have a grudge between us, but I'd like to ask you to forget about the grudge when we're in this forest. At the very least, we need each other to survive in this mission. What do you think?"

After listening to Alfred, Noel and Lezlev exchanged looks as they were the bully and the bullied. Noel had recognized this fact before they talked, so he nodded. After another round of apology, Lezlev also agreed to the arrangement.

Just like Alfred said, the group might have a grudge between each other, but their cooperation would be better until they finished their mission.

'Well, the situation has improved I guess... It seems that I'm pretty lucky to have this teammate over those who will only continue with their prejudice even in danger...' Noel thought as he expected more in the next fight.