

## **S vs Rebirth 241**

### Chapter 241 Mission

Since there was nothing they had to do in the mansion, they immediately returned to the Demon Banner Army headquarter. Due to the distance, it took them two weeks to reach the army.

On the way, Noel focused in sorting out his emotions because it completely confused him in the mansion.

Of course, after leaving the mansion, Noel reminded her of something important.

"By the way, aren't you supposed to tell me about the Fire Bird Nest and Body Strengthening Liquid?"

"Ah, you're right." Anna nodded with a serious expression. "Fire Bird Nest is like the name implies. It's located in the Demon Territory and you should be able to go there to find the Fire Bird Nest.

"There is one thing that you need to prepare against the Fire Bird. Do you know about Spirit Levels?"

"Yes."

"Then, to put it simply, you have to reach Spirit Master to fight the Fire Bird since it is a Peak Level Demon. So, I guess you have to wait for another year to go there."

"What's the specialty of the Fire Bird? I don't think the Sword Saint asked you to give away that information for no reason."

"I know. Aside from the Demon Crystal, you'll like to have the bird's heart because it contains a ferocious flame. That's the most important thing if we're talking about the fire bird." Anna explained but didn't say anything about why Noel needed fire bird's heart, considering it was only good for a spirit with fire element. From this alone, his identity as someone with two elements had been revealed.

But the Sword Saint had seen Anna's memory, so he was already aware of Anna's reincarnation. There was no need for them to hide it anymore.

"I see. So, there is such a thing." Noel nodded. "What about the other one?"

"The Body Strengthening Liquid?" Anna thought for a moment. "There is nothing much about this Body Strengthening Liquid. Even if you go now, you should be able to get it. The Body Strengthening Liquid is a concentrated liquid that has been compressed naturally. I don't know about the specification of the liquid itself, but if you bathe in it, it can strengthen your body.

"As for the location of those two, the Fire Bird Nest is located Northwest of Lelelei Fort and the Body Strengthening Liquid is hidden underneath the Geolythic Mountain. There should be a cave leading to that area."

"I see." Noel narrowed his eyes and asked, "What if we fight the Fire Bird together?"

"Fighting the Fire Bird together? But this is your reward. I don't intend to take part in it." Anna shook her head. "Besides, fighting against the Fire Bird is hard, even for me. I don't think we'll be able to do that before you're moving with your second identity. So, I don't think I'll go with you this time."

"Fair enough. Then, let's go to the Body Strengthening Liquid."

"Listen here... I have—"

Noel shook his head, stopping her words. "I should bath in this liquid, right? It means the liquid itself won't lose its efficacy after a single bath or you can say, it will still give that effect even after someone using it. Hence, it's better to bring an additional person."

"But that's your reward!"

"Yeah. That's why I'm inviting you here."

"Huh? Why would you invite me?"

"Although it makes me smile to get stronger than you, overpower you, and bully you continuously, I have thought about the bigger picture. If you get stronger, you can help me more when searching about the truth."

"..." Anna felt silent, never expecting Noel to ask her personally. After all, this was unthinkable to the previous Noel who had been burying that hatred in his heart. It was also the sign of Noel's change. It might be forced, but Anna actually didn't mind the current him.

It was quite awkward to see Noel like this, but everything could be solved with time.

"So, are you going or not?"

"Of course, I'm going since you've gone all the way to invite me." Anna accepted it without hesitation.

"Alright then."

[Mission has been registered.]

[Mission: Defeat the Fire Bird Demon]

[Description: Go to the Northwest of Lelelei Fort and kill the Fire Bird Demon]

[Reward: 49 SP and One with Flame Medal]

[Penalty: Someone gets it.]

[Mission: Body Strengthening Liquid]

[Description: Go to the Geolythic Mountain with Anna Stargaze and bath in the Body Strengthening Liquid]

[Reward: Sword Aura +3 Level and 20 SP]

[Penalty: Someone gets it.]

Noel could see that the mission had been finalized after his will. It seemed that Noel could understand the mission system a bit.

When Anna first told him about the information about the Sword Saint Tomb, it was clear that Anna had placed herself as one of the explorers. That was why the mission would be together with Anna and immediately notified to him.

The Ancient Demon Tree mission was similar. It was finalized and given to him directly. He went there with Anna because Anna was an anomaly at that time. Now that Anna wasn't a stranger anymore, Ardagan could update the system accordingly.

With this, he had confirmed that he could put some conditions before Ardagan finalized the missions. If he simply accepted the information for himself, the mission would be given just for him. But Noel had asked Anna to go with him, so the mission became related to her. That was why the Fire Bird Mission was only for him and the Body Strengthening Liquid mission was together with Anna.

Noel couldn't help but smile because he indeed had some influences in the system itself. Depending on how he used it, this system could perfectly match his preference.

Though, he wondered whether his ancestor had known about this or not, considering he didn't tell anything in the book. Considering the ancestor considered Ardagan as a living spirit, he should have found out about it. The reason why he didn't tell anything about it because he wanted the later generation to find it out themselves, making a system unique only to them.

Thinking about this couldn't help but put a smile on his face.

However, Anna was unaware of his thought and misunderstood his smile. She thought Noel was just happy that they could go together.

## Chapter 242 Invitation

"We have finished our mission." Noel and Anna stood in front of Shale, reporting.

"Mhm." Shale nodded and recorded their achievements and asked, "By the way, I apologize since I am talking about this after you just come back. I know that you're tired, but do you think you can go for another mission?"

"Mhm?" Noel furrowed his eyebrows.

"It's surprising to find you asking us like this, Instructor." Anna tilted her head in confusion.

"You two are currently the strongest pair in this generation. I don't know the extent of your ability, but considering you can handle an Advanced Level Demon, you should be able to do this mission. No, even if you can't do it, you two should be able to escape to get some help."

"What's the situation, Sir Shale?" Noel asked.

"Do you know Kirika and Lokhar?"

Noel and Anna exchanged looks and nodded. "Yes, we do."

"We sent them on a mission a month ago. But we still received no information about them."

"Aren't they spending their free time? I believe other than the requirement, we're free to do anything we want," Anna replied with a calm expression.

"The problem is... there is no proof about their mission completion when the time limit should be up a week ago. The place is not that far, so the letter should have arrived by now."

"!!!" Noel and Anna widened their eyes in shock.

"To be honest, I was about to send a letter to the Demon Banner Army branch around that area to notify them about their conditions. Although I know that candidates can die during the mission, we're not going to let you die easily. So, I'm trying to figure out what happens."

'Did Kirika fall into a trap at a time like this? Now that I think about it, the incident that caused numerous knights' deaths is only six months away... Don't tell me this incident is related to the Supreme Devil Organization?' Anna came to a realization. "I think we should take this mission."

"!!!" Noel was taken aback by Anna's agreement. Seeing how she agreed to this so easily meant she had some information about it.

Noel asked, "So, where is the area and what's the mission?"

"The mission is infiltration. This is the detail." Shale gave the mission information.

Mission: Heinsforth Warehouse Infiltration

Description: There is some rumors about the warehouse storing a mysterious substance. Investigate the rumor.

"This is..." Noel narrowed his eyes. "If you have this kind of mission, shouldn't you just have to give it to Captain Septa?"

Shale shook his head. "No. We are providing you with a wide range of missions to check your interest in the Demon Banner Army as well as your capability. For example, if you excel in espionage mission, you're going to report to Septa's squad after the graduation. If you focus on extermination, you're going to be under me and so on.

"In other words, these missions are the measurement on how you are going to be placed after graduation."

"So, that's why the requirement is to have five group missions and five individual missions. And the fact that we have a free time other than that..." Noel closed his eyes, understanding everything.

"Yes. It's all for your assessment. Don't forget that you are still an Apprentice Knight, so your talent has to be assessed first before becoming a full-fledged knight. Of course, don't tell anyone about this. You two can know it because I already know where you're going to be placed later."

"That's true." Noel nodded with a serious expression.

"I can understand the Individual Mission, but what's the relation with our specialty with the Group Mission? I mean, it's a group mission, right?"

"There are two!" Noel raised two fingers. "The first is to assess the group's overall prowess. For example, if one of them has a good martial prowess while the other one is good at espionage, they can see how good they are able to coordinate in a wide variety of mission, which reflects the group's overall prowess.

"The second one will be to influence the other party. Just like the first example, what if the first guy actually has a talent in espionage, but because he has been trained as the former, he never goes to that field, resulting in him not discovering his true talent."

"Ah!" Anna nodded in understanding. "I see."

"Well, since Anna said that we have to accept this mission, then we'll take it."

"Good. If it turns out they're fine, I'll still record your contribution. At the very least, I'll make sure that you finish a single individual mission for investigating your comrades."

"Understood." Noel nodded calmly.

"When are we going to leave?" Anna asked.

"The time limit is quite low, so we're going to depart three hours from now. I want to restock our supply and some other things."

"Understood."

"Then, please excuse us," said Noel to Shale as he walked away to prepare for their next mission.

Before Noel left, Shale called him. "Noel!"

"Yes?"

"After graduation, do you want to come to my unit?"

"Is that an order?"

"No. It's an invitation."

Noel furrowed his eyebrows. Shale actually scouted him because of his ability and judgment.

"There is a hidden reason why captains of Demon Banner Army has to take role as an instructor every year. It's also an opportunity to scout talented recruits for their own army."

"So, there is a reason like that..." Anna nodded in understanding. Noel obviously knew the meaning of this invitation. Shale had recognized his talent, even more than her who couldn't even receive his invitation.

However, Noel ended up shaking his head and said, "I apologize, Sir Shale. I am thankful for your guidance this whole time, but I have a squad in mind."

"Demon Relief Squad?" Shale narrowed his eyes.

"Yes." Noel nodded.



"Tsk. I guess I lose to that bastard, Raymond." Shale clicked his tongue, annoyed. "Anyway, do well with the rest of your missions. I will send a letter to that guy to take care of you or I'll snatch you from him."

"Thank you." Noel politely bowed to him before walking away.

#### Chapter 243 Plan

"Another mission, huh." Anna yawned while stretching her body, waiting for Noel to come to the gate. She hadn't gone to her room for months, so she would have to clean it later. "Still, is this related to the Supreme Devil Organization?"

Anna muttered while contemplating. However, a gentle voice soon echoed in her ears.

"So, you don't know the whole thing?"

"!!!" Anna turned around and saw Noel sneaking up on her. "You... What are you doing?"

"Nothing." Noel shrugged. "Anyway, we have to be fast this time around, considering those guys might not have much time left."

"Yes, I know." Anna nodded and got on her horse. "Let's go."

Noel smiled and rode the horse next to her as they rushed to the city where Kirika and Lokhar were last seen.

On the way, Anna couldn't help but feel a bit curious about what Noel had said earlier. "Say, Noel. Are you truly going to the Demon Relief Squad instead of Demon Extermination Squad?"

"Yeah." Noel nodded without hesitation. "Though, for our plan, I do want to ask you to follow me there."

"Do you know what it means to be in the Demon Relief Squad?"

"Of course, I know." Noel smiled. "The Demon Relief Squad is always on the move because they have many people to save. The Demon Relief Squad's purpose is to go to deal with the demons that will help the people. In other words, they're like the guards of the kingdom.

"Meanwhile, the Demon Extermination Squad is focusing on the front line, trying to expand the territory. It's interesting, but it's not my thing.

"If I'm in the Demon Extermination Squad, I can only kill the demons. But if I'm in the Demon Relief Squad, I can kill demons as well as save people." Noel explained his reason while adding inwardly, 'The squad is perfect for me to earn more points. Hahaha.'

Though, Anna didn't know his true motive. She misunderstood his action for the goodwill and looked at Noel in admiration. "Noel, you..."

She could understand why Noel was able to save so many people. Noel was actually a good guy in heart. If there was no hatred between them, he could do much more for the people. Yet, it was her stupid decision that turned him against her.

'Back then, we were on the opposite side. And in this life, we're on the same side. I wonder what will happen now that we're on the same side.. No, to what extent Noel can go in a situation like this... I can't help but feel excited.' Anna muttered inwardly.

"Sure. I'll join you in the Demon Relief Squad. Though, that instructor is going to be mad after this since the best pair in the generation are going to the Demon Relief Squad instead of his squad."

Noel shrugged because he had chosen his path.

"Anyway, what do you know about the mission?" Noel asked.

"Hmm..." Anna contemplated a bit while looking at the detail of the mission Shale gave them earlier. "According to the information, the target of our infiltration mission this time is a brothel... What?"

"Brothel?" Noel furrowed his eyebrows. "Continue."

"The rumor say that many men who visited the brothel went missing."

"Hoh, interesting. I should probably go there myself."

"Noel!" Anna gritted her teeth, glaring at Noel. "Are you serious? Going to the brothel?"

"Why are you so angry? It's to infiltrate that place, right? I'll just act like them and go there." Noel shrugged. "Now that I think about it, I don't have much money. Well, I never had any needed for money..."

"You're trying to hire a woman without money." Anna laughed as if she was truly happy that Noel couldn't do it.

"What's wrong with you?" Noel shook his head helplessly. "Anyway, since I don't have money, you give me some."

"..." Anna was speechless. There were so many things she wanted to say to him. After all, this felt like a husband and wife quarrel because the husband wanted to go to a brothel and asked his wife for money.

"Instead of that, I have another suggestion for you." Anna sighed. "How about I become the girl instead? This way, we don't need money."

"You?" Noel furrowed his eyebrows before suddenly thinking a bright idea. "Ah, now that you think about it, it's a good idea."

"A good idea?"

"Yes." Noel nodded.

"So, what's the plan?"

"I'm going to enter the brothel through the usual way and find a girl there. Meanwhile, you come from the window or whatever and drag me from the waiting room to the bedroom before the girl I ask come in. With this, we can successfully enter the room. Using that as an excuse, we're going to go around the floor to find any clue about Kirika and Lokhar."

"I see. That's an option as well." Anna nodded in understanding.

"Good. That's the basic plan. If we don't have any clue, just kidnap one of the girls... Or maybe I should go to the room with that girl instead and you knock her out to interrogate her?"

"That's also another plan. I guess we have to see what kind of brothel it is first?"

"Yeah. For now, that's the base plan. We'll discuss it again after we arrive. Also, is there anything you'd like to say about the mission itself?"

Anna thought for a moment and said, "It might be related to the Supreme Devil Organization."

"They are everywhere, eh..." Noel shook his head helplessly.

"Yes. Their low ranking members are easy to find but the high ranking members are hard to find because their tattoos are hidden. The low ranking members are used for the advertisement... I mean, they're going to scare the people or make them feel relieved by the sight of them. Meanwhile, the high ranking people do the things in the shadows. That's why they're extremely dangerous."

"I see." Noel nodded with a serious expression. "In that case, there must be a hidden room or something. That much is required for their operation... And it's most likely where they put all the kidnapped people in."

#### Chapter 244 Awkward Acting

Since the town wasn't that far from them, Anna and Noel arrived at their destination within three days. Since it would be bad if they caught up because they had just arrived, Noel suggested them to go to an inn and wash their bodies.

They couldn't easily enter the brothel because of their age, but Noel could still act like a useless young noble that wanted to do anything he liked, including indulging in pleasure.

Meanwhile, Anna would infiltrate through another way.

Of course, infiltrating on the very first day they came in would be bad. Hence, they decided to investigate the brothel first, especially on how they worked.

This time, Noel and Anna grouped up in the red-light district.

"Is this the only way?" Anna asked while hugging Noel's arm.

"Yeah. This place is only for couple." Anna nodded and pointed to the front.

They could see that most of them were actually couple.

"The red-light district doesn't offer only brothel after all... There are also places for them to indulge in their fantasy."

"That's how it is. So, we're going to pretend as one just to pass this street. Look, I won't get caught by those girls from the brothel too if we do this."

Anna glanced at the girls in front of the brothel who were seducing the single men that tried to pass the street to bring them in. She could see the reason but she still felt embarrassed acting like this with Noel.

'Did this guy never have a heart movement? I'm embarrassed here since this is the first time for me. No wonder he had no woman in his previous life.' Anna glared at Noel.

"What?" Noel asked with a poker face.

"Nothing. Let's go." Anna harrumphed.

"Sure." Noel nodded as he walked slowly.

"Why don't you say something here, Noel?" Anna asked.

"Saying something? Ah. What am I supposed to say anyway?"

Anna's eyebrows twitched. "Don't tell me, you don't have any knowledge about this?"

"Other than reading some books, lazying around, and listening to some lessons, I haven't done anything."

"..." Anna seemed to have misunderstood him. It wasn't that he was cold. He was just inexperienced in this matter. "Then, I'll lead this time."

Anna had a huge smile on her face and asked, "What are we going to do tonight?"

"I'll let you do whatever you want tonight." Noel smiled, trying to play along. While he was looking at Anna, he was also investigating the people from the brothel.

"Is that so? What should I do with you." Anna chuckled as she pointed at the bench not far away. "How about we sit there first? I'm a bit tired."

"Sure." Noel nodded.

They didn't realize that since both of them didn't have any experience in this, they were a bit awkward.

It truly came out of nowhere. In fact, Noel wouldn't ever suggest this idea if not for the clues from his family mansion. But he hadn't accepted Anna either. That was why this became a bit too awkward.

"We're only walking for two minutes and I feel tired." Noel sighed while lowering his head as if he was ashamed by this result.

Anna chuckled. "Now I can find your weakness. It seems that you're weak for something like this."

"Not at all. I often walk with my maid."

"Then, is it because you're walking with a beauty like me?" Anna made a smug smile.

"Well, you might say that way." Noel made a small smile, admitting it.

Anna was startled. She blinked a few times, stunned by Noel's reply.

"Haha." Noel laughed at her reaction.

In that instant, Anna realized that Noel was acting. "You... you teased me."

"Thanks to your awkward lead, I can kinda understand our situation. We have never pretended or role play as a couple, so why bother to do it right now? Just be ourselves." Noel chuckled, whispering to Anna so that no one could hear it.

"You... Do you know what you're saying?"

"Of course, that's precisely why. Just act like usual and people will think we're flirting." Noel shrugged.

"No way."

"But don't forget where we are right now."

"Huh?" Anna looked around and understood Noel's words. "Ah."

Although they weren't really a friend usually, their simple discussion looked that way since Noel buried that hatred in his heart this whole time. With the fact they were a pair, they truly looked like a friend.

And this place was no different. If they acted usual like a friend, the red-light district would turn their atmosphere to a romantic one. So, even if they talked like usual and had fun together, the people thought they were in a date and flirted as usual.

Noel smiled and said, "Alright. I know where to go."

"Oh?!" Anna was confused but Noel grabbed her hand and dragged her somewhere.

Noel took the lead this time as they visited a place not far from the brothel. It was actually a clothing store, but unlike a normal clothing store, this store had all kinds of lingerie or dress for the night.

"So, you want to go here?" Anna made a wry smile, not knowing what to expect from Noel.

"Yeah. Get some dress for you." Noel nodded without hesitation.

"Welcome, Mister and Miss." The staff from this shop immediately greeted them.

"I want to get a beautiful dress for her. Do you think it's possible?" Noel winked his eye.

The staff instantly understood what Noel wanted to do. The lady next to him must be his woman and he wanted to dress the woman beautifully to enjoy the night. She politely bowed and said, "Of course, we can. We have all sizes, so we can make sure she's dressed beautifully."

Noel nodded and gently pushed Anna to the staff.



"Welcome, Miss. I'll be helping you with choosing the dress." The staff smiled before turning to Noel. "Also, would you like to come together so that you can check whether it's up to your preference or not?"

"I can?"

"Of course." She waved her hand to the side and said, "Then, please follow me."

#### Chapter 245 Buying A Dress

Anna ended up trying several dress. The first dress was a blue one-piece long dress that matched the color of her eyes. It gave a nice contrast to her hair too.

The second dress was a short one-piece dress. This beautiful white dress gave an impression of a beautiful and pure girl. As expected of the flower of the Muivell Kingdom, even Noel had a hard time to look at her.

The show continued for five dresses. All of them suited Anna or Noel thought that Anna was the reason why those dresses would look pretty. In the end, Anna struggled to pick one.

After some thoughts, Anna said, "Then, can you wrap up this white one?"

"Certainly." The staff politely nodded and brought the dress to the counter.

Since Anna had finished changing her dress, she was wondering where Noel went and found him talking with the shop's staff.

He was just joking around and the talk seemed to be smooth as they were laughing from time to time.

Anna furrowed her eyebrows. Her heart felt a bit shaken when she saw him that way, wondering if she couldn't receive the same treatment. The only thing they would laugh in their conversation was when they teased each other, so it was a bit disappointing when Noel could laugh like that with others.

"..." Anna walked to the counter with a sad look, saying, "How much for the dress?"

"Eh?" The staff was confused for a moment. Since Noel was the one asking for the dress, she thought Noel would buy it. But Anna somehow decided to use her own money for the dress.

"The dress is 21 Silver Coins."

"Alright." Anna nodded. Luckily, the dress wasn't as expensive as the ones in the capital. The materials weren't as smooth either, but for this mission, it was fine to use that dress.

However, before she took out the money from her bag, Noel placed a small bag on the counter and said, "There are 24 Silver Coins in here. Just split the rest for you three."

"Noel, you..."

"Well, I'm the one proposing to buy a dress, so I should pay for it." Noel shrugged.

"Ah, thank you, Sir!" The staff immediately accepted the money. One silver coin was equal to half of their monthly salary, so this tip was so generous. In that instant, she processed everything so fast that Noel could get the dress in just one minute instead of a few. "This is the dress. Thank you for your patronage."

Noel nodded and grabbed the bag. "Let's go."

Anna was dumbfounded for a moment but she still followed him.

When they were outside, Noel simply led her away from the red-light district without saying anything.

"Noel. Are you sure it's alright for you to spend that much money? If I'm not wrong, you don't have that much money, no?" Anna asked.

"I still have some. If I'm too poor, I can simply hunt some demons and exchange their Demon Crystals for money." Noel shrugged and handed the bag to her. "I might be poor, but not that poor. Here you go."

"Ehm." Anna received the bag timidly. This was the first time she received a gift from Noel. Even in her past life, she never received this kind of gift. Of course, as a talented genius, she had received numerous gifts that were worth far beyond this dress. But she didn't know why but this present was actually the sweetest out of them.

"Well, I choose this dress because it's easy to move. The white dress might be flashy, but you won't think I'm an assassin or a spy wearing this kind of dress. Also, if I pair it with shorts, I can fight without worrying about my image."

Noel only nodded to her as if he was thinking about something.

"Ah, that's right. We were supposed to be investigating the brothel. I think we have left the red-light district. I forgot because I was too busy choosing the dress."

"Don't worry. I've done all that." Noel shrugged calmly.

"Huh? When? You were with me in the store the whole time."

"When we sat on a bench near the brothel, I saw them picking some customers and bringing them in. I could sneak in with that way and one of them seemed to have seen us. I can simply say that I'm running away from you and I can enter smoothly."

"When we were in the shop, I asked the staff about the brothel. Though, I said that you misunderstood me that I wanted to go to the brothel when I got some money and went to the shop just to pacify your anger."

"Ah!" Anna blinked her eyes a few times, realizing all those moments. In other words, his head had been in the mission this whole time. She was the one who couldn't perform her job.

"You don't have to worry since your job is to sneak in through the window instead of from the entrance."

"But... I was supposed to be the one leading you this time." Anna was disappointed on herself, especially when she misunderstood Noel's action.

"You are more adept than me in concealing your presence and I'm more adept in adapting to all conditions. We have our own strength, so you don't need to worry about it." Noel shook his head helplessly. "Instead, we should worry on how we shall investigate the brothel tomorrow. It won't be easy to find it and we can't linger for too long as well."

"That's true. Hidden room... But they're gathering a huge number of people. Won't they need a large space? I don't think the brothel has that kind of space, except for..."

"Basement." Noel finished her words and agreed with this thought.

"Yes." Anna nodded with a smile. She suddenly thought of something and grabbed Noel's arm.

"Hey, what are you doing?"

"We are still on a date, right? Who knows if those people are tailing us or not." Anna chuckled and walked while hugging Noel's arm.

"Seriously..." Noel shook his head helplessly, but not pushing her away.

Chapter 246 Brothel

"Aaahhh... too hard." Anna let out a moan as her body was twitching.

"How did this happen?" Noel muttered inwardly. No, they weren't doing anything they would regret. Noel was simply helping Anna to wear her dress. And he had to tighten her corset so that she could wear the dress.

...

A moment ago.

When they were going to prepare for their infiltration, Anna suddenly invited Noel. "Can you go to my room later?"

"Sure." Noel just agreed readily, thinking it wouldn't be that big of a deal. Anna would probably need him to bring some stuff.

But when he knocked on her door later on, Anna opened it slightly and took a peek instead of opening the door wide like she used to. Her face was slightly red as she said with a wry smile. "Come in. I need your help."

Noel nodded, not knowing anything about what she wanted him to do. But when he entered, he saw her wearing only a corset and the short to barely cover her skin.

Even Noel was stunned for a second, finding Anna like this for the first time. Even when Anna was bathing, he never took a look because of the hatred in his heart. But now that he had changed slightly, Noel had a different opinion of Anna.

"..." Noel gulped down before closing his eyes. "So, what are you planning to do? You're not trying to seduce me, right?"

"What? Seduce you?" Anna widened her eyes in shock before a sly smile appeared on her face. "What's wrong, Noel? This is the first time you are saying that. Maybe it's you who has the dirty mind? I simply want to ask you to help me tighten my corset. I have to wear a dress after all, so I need this corset."

"O-oh!" Noel felt ashamed that this kind of thought would even appear in his mind.

Anna turned around with a big smile on her face. She felt she had a victory against Noel for the first time. Of course, she couldn't show this expression to Noel or he would have a come back.

Instead, she gently held her hair to the side while showing her back. "Can you tighten it for me?"

"Alright." Noel nodded awkwardly as he never did this in his life. "Well, I apologize in advance if I use it the wrong way."

"Well, I'm sure that you know at least how to tighten something, right? You won't loosen it or I'll truly call you pervert at that time."

"I know that already." Noel sighed while pulling the thin rope attached to it. "Is it this way?"

"Mhm. Yes." Anna's body twitched as the rope was pulled.

Noel maintained his poker face as he endured this torture for another three minutes before he managed to do it perfectly.

Anna chuckled when she saw how hard Noel tried to maintain his expression. Though, she wasn't going to push him too hard, so she immediately put on the dress while showing her back again. "One more. You see the holes behind my dress? Just make a cross a few times and tie it neatly. It's going to be hidden with my hair anyway."

"Still, don't you think it's necessary to go like this? I don't think those women from the brothel is wearing this kind of dress that will make it hard for them to put it back on."

"Of course not. But this one is better for mobility and it looks quite sexy as well, which is perfect for the brothel."

"Huh? Mobility? Isn't a one-piece dress easy enough?"

"The corset. Do you think I'm the same as you?"

"Ah!" Noel nodded, realizing what she meant. "Alright. Is this tight enough?"

"Yes. It's good enough."

"But how are you going to fight like this? I mean, you can't hide your sword like this."

"I don't need a sword." Anna shrugged.

"If you say so." Noel nodded and took a step back. "It's pretty hard to wear a dress, huh."

"Haha, that's why we take more time to prepare." Anna chuckled. "I guess my pretty face comes in handy, since I don't need more cosmetic."

"Say, I have been thinking about it. You sure are narcissistic."

"I'm just stating the fact." Anna shrugged. "Anyway, we're ready now. Also, pick up those two gold coins on the table. It should be enough to hire a woman. Don't forget to open the window so I know where to sneak in. Don't choose the room that faces the street, will you?"

"I know." Noel sighed and grabbed the coins. "Surely being rich makes life easier."

Before she said anything, Noel immediately walked out of the room while saying, "I'll be going first."

"Sure. I'll follow in three... No, two minutes."

Noel nodded as he walked to the brothel with a calm expression. As he expected, the moment he walked in front of the brothel by himself, the girls instantly noticed him and one of them even came to him while smiling. Of course, Noel had given the gesture that he was planning to enter.

"Hello, Mister. Do you want to visit our brothels?"

Noel ignored her calmly as if he was too shy to say it out loud. When he entered the brothel, he could see the building itself wasn't that big since they were filled with rooms. There was only one big counter that handled the process and the floor was split into two, left and right, leading to the rooms they were going to use.

"Welcome." The receptionist smiled. "We have the list of girls here."

Noel nodded and randomly chose a girl and took out two silver coins, realizing that they were cheaper than he thought. Then again, he was just getting a service for a night, not buying the person. It seemed that both Noel and Anna had overestimated the price.

"Certainly. Please wait a moment and we'll call the girl for you."

"Also, can you get me a room that doesn't face the street... I'm..." Noel made a wry smile while scratching the back of his head.

"Certainly." The receptionist nodded. She even heard the girl that escorted him in whispering, 'He must not want his woman to find him playing here. I saw him yesterday with another woman.'

The receptionist acknowledged that information and immediately walked away to pass the message to the girl Noel chose.

Chapter 247 Drink

A blond woman came to meet Noel. She politely nodded her head and said, "Welcome, Customer. Thank you for choosing me. My name is Melia. I'll bring you to your room."

Noel nodded with a calm expression and walked together with Melia. Of course, he remembered what happened earlier when the woman that escorted him inside actually whispered something to the receptionist.

Normally, the girls outside wouldn't be that sharp unless they were wary about something. Hence, this brothel was as suspicious as it could be.

Noel didn't show it on his face, but he would be suspicious of everything that this Melia would give him next.

Melia led Noel to the room on the second floor. The room was small as it only had one purpose. There was only a bed and a drawer for everything they needed to use.

Still, Noel's eyes were glued to the window as he looked around suspiciously.



Melia misunderstood his action as him fearing that his woman would catch him here. After all, she had been told that Noel had a woman out there.

"Sir. This place is protected, so you don't have to worry. No one will find you here." Melia smiled, assuring Noel.

Noel got an idea when hearing that assurance as he immediately played along. His awkwardness soared through the roof as he became even more suspicious. His head turned everywhere to make sure that nothing could happen.

Noel even walked to the window to check the outside.

Melia could only make a wry smile. She had attended many customers, but no one was as afraid as Noel. She even wondered why Noel came here when he was this afraid.

"Why did you lie to me?" Noel panicked and asked Melia with a desperate face.

"I lied to you? I'm sorry, but I don't understand what you're talking about, Sir." Melia tried to apologize since she didn't want trouble.

Suddenly, Anna reached the window perfectly and her feet were already on the edge of the window, ready to jump.

"See?" Noel pointed at Anna, shocking Melia completely. He took that opportunity to rush to Melia and covered her mouth with his hand while Anna jumped to Melia's back and hit her neck, knocking her out.

,m "Can you be more gentle? She can die that way, you know?" Noel said while confirming that Melia had passed out.

Anna, on the other hand, walked to the window to close it. After hearing Noel's words, Anna shrugged. "How can I do that? I don't have the ability to do it. That's the best I can do and don't worry, I have learned the proper way to do it."

"..." Noel shook his head helplessly. "Anyway, lower your voice a bit more."

Anna nodded.

"First of all, I've got to say, they're extremely suspicious. They're sharper than my imagination, so I'm afraid they're hiding something. Still, it's hard to go to the basement because we don't know the exact location. It might even be inside the waiting room."

"So, we have to interrogate her?" Anna asked while looking at Melia who passed out.

"Probably. Or we can catch another girl..."

"I see." Anna thought for a moment and said, "Maybe we should investigate the room first. They've been catching many people, right? If that's the case, we have to consider about the potential of them using something in this room to catch us."

"A drug?" Noel thought for a moment and said, "Now that I think about it, the missing cases should be extremely suspicious. Why haven't the authority investigated this case properly?"

"!!!" Anna was stunned as if she thought about something. "Who was the one commissioning this mission?"

"The city lord. Even if he leaves everything to us, it's weird to see him not participating in this case. Even the mission's description told us to not bother him."

"Are you suspecting that the lord of this city has some relationship with the Supreme Devil Organization?"

"Or he might even be one of them." Noel nodded, answering her doubt.

Anna narrowed her eyes and muttered, "This place is under jurisdiction of Marquis Laplace. But I don't think Marquis Laplace knows about this, considering this place is at the edge of his border."

"If that's the case, there might be something in the city lord's mansion too." Noel thought for a moment and said, "Let's investigate the room."

Anna nodded in agreement as they immediately searched every nook and corner.

The drawers contained numerous items like lotions. Meanwhile, there was nothing under the bed. In other words, all the clues were in the drawer.

"There are only lotions here," said Anna while inspecting their smell.

Noel took out something from the bottom part of the drawer, finding a bottle of drink. "A drink?"

"Don't you know that it's better when you're drunk? Well, my teacher said that."

"..." Noel fell silent while taking this bottle out. He thought for a moment and asked inwardly, 'Ardagan. Is there any poison in this bottle?'

[You have to take it.]

'Do you think your flame can burn everything that enters my body?'

[Yes.]

Noel hesitated for a moment before he opened the bottle and took a sip.

"Noel, you? What are you doing?" Anna was shocked that Noel chose to drink the alcohol.

Before he could respond, Noel started to get dizzy. As a noble, he had drunk many alcohol and wine before. Yet, he couldn't take on this one, so it was completely weird. Even without Ardagan, he knew there was something wrong with this bottle.

"..." Noel gritted his teeth and ordered, 'Ardagan.'

The Undying Flame started circulating in his body, burning the liquid that just entered his body along with the toxin.

[There are three types of herbs, which two of them can be recognized. The first herb is Aproximadelei, a type of herb used for sleeping. The second herb is Fagant Leaf and its purpose is for sealing one's Spiritual Energy and the connection to the spirit. Lastly, an unknown herb for numbing one's body.]

"Seriously?" Noel muttered while falling to the ground, waiting for Ardagan to neutralize the job.

"Noel?!"

Chapter 248 Fired Up

"Noel?!"

Noel clicked his tongue and said with a pale face. "I'm fine. Wait a bit."

He could feel that the toxin efficacy gradually decreased from his body. If he continued this way, he should be able to recover. Even though the poison could sever the connection between him and the spirit, the poison couldn't stop Ardagan from doing his job.

After all, Ardagan was a living spirit. Unlike Heisk who could only remain in the Spirit Seal, Ardagan had its physical form.

Ardagan used this chance to burn all the toxin. The process took a few minutes before Noel took a deep breath to calm his fuzziness.

"This is quite dangerous." Noel muttered while furrowing his eyebrows.

"Noel, what happened to you? Why did you drink it?"

"That's not important. I have to tell you something. I'm going to drink this again and pretend to be drugged. Meanwhile, you're going to follow whoever takes my body because it'll surely lead to the end place."

"Drugged?"

"Yeah. There are three drugs: one for numbing my body, one for making me unconscious, and one for severing the connection to my Spirit, stopping me from using the Spiritual Energy. That's why this is gonna be dangerous."

"Severing the connection to your Spirit and stopping you from using the Spiritual Energy?" Anna dropped her jaw to the ground as if she realized something. She asked, "Is that related to Fagant Leaf?"

"How do you know?" Noel was dumbfounded once again.

Anna's expression became serious as she thought, 'Fagant Leaf Incident. It caused the collapse of Marquis Laplace's territory. There was a territory war between Marquis Laplace and Earl Anderson and it was said that Marquis Laplace couldn't do anything against him because his soldiers had no power left to defend themselves.

'After a while, this incident was called Fagant Leaf Incident because Fagant Leaf was found in the alcohol the soldiers drank when they celebrated a small victory. Then, is this truly a territory war instead of the Supreme Devil Organization?'

Anna contemplated for a moment on how to address this issue to Noel. After a while, she began to explain, "Do you know there is a dispute between Marquis Laplace and Earl Anderson?"

"Is this related to it?"

"Yes. Fagant Leaf was supposed to be extinct five hundred years ago. No, it could be said that they were forced to go extinct because of their dangerous characteristic."

"Extinct..." Noel understood the reason why Ardagan recognized it. He came from a thousand years ago, so he must have recognized this herb when traveling with his ancestor. Still, the fact that the extinct herb would make another appearance again meant something was suspicious here. "Who has the herb now? Since we're in the Marquis Laplace's territory, is it him?"

"No. I believe it's Earl Anderson. He has been suspicious for a while because he hasn't done anything during the past three years. Unless you're a noble who doesn't care anything about your territory, you will do something for better or worse."

"Interesting." Noel narrowed his eyes and noticed something. "So, it's not related to the Supreme Devil Organization?"

"I don't know now. I'm afraid I have been mistaken."

"Say, don't you think this is a bit too suspicious?"

"What do you mean?"

"Earl Anderson is the supporter of the current royal family while Marquis Laplace leans to the third prince, right?"

"!!!" Anna widened her eyes in shock. Noel's hints truly gave everything she needed to connect them. "Then, are you telling me that the Royal Family is the one..."

"No, it could also be the other way around just to make the Royal Family look bad. Hence, I'm going to drink this again and infiltrate their base of operation. I want you to do something else for me."

"What is it?"

"Follow me and get some help."

"..." Anna fell silent, worried about him. At the same time, this case might be far more dangerous than they could imagine. So, they needed some help.

Shale had mentioned that there was a branch of the Demon Banner Army one city away from him. If she rushed right now, she could return to this city within half a day.

"So, what do you think?" Noel asked.

"I can go back here within twelve hours. I'll immediately leave to get some help after I confirm where you're going."

Noel smiled and gave a thumbs up. "Alright. I should be able to buy that much time."

"I understand." Anna sighed.

Noel then grabbed the alcohol and used Heisk power to purify this drink. After that, he grabbed two glasses from the drawer and poured the drink for two.

He forced the unconscious Melia to drink slowly. She didn't have to drink the whole thing, since some was enough to get rid some of the suspicion. Meanwhile, Noel also drunk a bit, which didn't have any impact to his body.

Noel then laid down Melia at the edge of the bed while he also sat down on it, preparing to lie down.

Anna opened the window again to leave.

However, Noel looked at her for a while as if he had some thoughts. Noel knew that it was impossible for him to reach the neighboring town within six hours. It meant Anna was preparing to use her full strength to go back and forth. It would put a strain on her body, but she dared to do it because of him.

Noel couldn't help but say, "Anna. Thanks. I'm glad that I went with you in this mission."

Anna's body trembled when she heard that. She almost slipped from the window.

When she turned her head, she saw Noel have started pretending to be unconscious, hiding his embarrassment from saying all those words. However, that statement put a smile on Anna's face.

No matter how hard she tried to contain that smile, it wouldn't leave her face.

Anna leaped to the top of the building next door while observing Noel's movement from the window. She felt a bit more excited in this mission that she couldn't help but say, "I'm fired up."

Chapter 249 Pretending

\*Creak!\*

The door was slowly opened as the receptionist that Noel saw earlier politely entering the room as if she was trying to ask something.

But the moment she entered there were no words coming from her. Instead, she locked the door as if she had known that both Noel and Melia had passed out.

With a single glance, she could know what happened inside the room. Both glasses fell on the bed, so they had to clean the sheet after this. Still, this pose also meant that Melia and Noel had to drink at the same time. No, Melia was forced to drink together to make it not suspicious.

The receptionist suddenly grabbed Noel and lifted him up easily despite not showing enough muscle to do something like that. She even carried the unconscious Noel with one hand.

When she came out, there were two other girls waiting for her. She said, "Clean up the inside. I'll bring him to that place."

The two women nodded and immediately entered the room. Meanwhile, the receptionist continued carrying Noel to the first floor before entering the waiting room.



Even with his eyes closed, Noel could easily sense the number of people inside the room. And it was more serious when those girls actually talked like it was normal.

"Is he the target this time?"

"Is he a Spirit User?"

"I don't know, but seeing his vitality, he doesn't seem to be a normal person either. Anyway, he will be a good catch for the lord."

"Indeed."

There seemed to be another door leading to the basement as the receptionist carried him for a while. Noel couldn't see it, but the basement he suspected wasn't actually a basement. Instead, it was a tunnel.

Noel tried to count the steps and roughly measure the location. He was quite surprised to find the receptionist carrying him for a whole ten minutes in the tunnel.

His body still managed to sense the direction, so he could roughly calculate the direction and the distance to locate his current position. As he expected, they were moving toward the city lord's mansion.

Still, Noel didn't plan to break his cover just yet. Hence, he kept pretending to be asleep. The receptionist didn't know yet that she was carrying an explosive to the city lord's mansion

After another few minutes, she gradually climbed the stairs again and said, "Exelam Monda."

The instant she said it, the grumbling sound started as if there was a mechanism for the door in this side. Noel soon sensed two more people in this new room.

"Put him down. We have to tie him first."

The receptionist followed the order and tied Noel's hands on the back. Since the drug had made everyone depraved from their spirit, even a normal rope was enough to stop them. So, they didn't put too much effort in using chain or metal to bind them.

Noel felt that his hands and feet were tied up. He didn't put up any resistance because he thought of them as fools. Even if they could seal his Spirit Seal, they couldn't seal a living spirit.

Soon, he was lifted up again and carried to a certain area. It seemed that they had to go through the hallway before they had to climb down again as the sign of a basement.

This time, Noel could feel multiple presence inside the basement, but with how they were separated, he could imagine what kind of place this basement was.

Suddenly, the one carrying him stopped as if she noticed something. She turned around and asked, "What's wrong, Demon Banner Army weaklings? Ah, it seems that you recognize this man. He must be someone from the Demon Banner Army then. Haha, to think we would get someone from the Demon Banner Army again.

"The Demon Banner Army this year is a pair. I see, so that blond woman was his partner. We could use him to bait that woman out and catch her too."

"You..." Kirika roared. "Release him right now!"

The woman kicked Kirika on the stomach and blew her away. "Shut up. A mere weakling dares to talk to me."

"Gah!" Kirika coughed a few times. Her face was filled with anguish. Not only was her Spirit Seal was sealed, but she couldn't help Noel too. She had sworn to help Noel to repay him, but when the chance appeared, she wouldn't be able to do it... again.

She had lost against Anna and this time, she was useless too.

Noel, on the other hand, was angry. However, he couldn't show it just yet since he didn't know how many enemies he had to fight in this place.

He knew that Dimitri, his father's most trusted knight, was following him. He didn't want to rely on Dimitri for everything. Just because his life was assured, he never considered Dimitri as a factor in his plan.

After all, it would just make him weaker since the only thing he could do was telling people to do the job that he should actually do.

Hence, Noel remained silent, while remembering this receptionist.

After being satisfied with Kirika's reaction, Noel was thrown to the cell next to her.

Kirika reacted even more. She tried to release herself from the rope but to no avail.

After the basement was closed again, a man's voice echoed in the basement. "Is that Noel?"

"Yes." Kirika nodded. It turned out, Lokhar was also locked in this place and his cell was right in front of Kirika.

The receptionist must want to make them suffer like this. Hearing the weak voice from Lokhar, it was clear he had been tortured.

Watching her own pair getting tortured must be painful. And now, Kirika had to experience the same thing with Noel.

They wouldn't stop with only Noel. They would catch Anna too, making them fall into despair.

Of course, Noel couldn't blow up his cover for the time being. After all, he had promised Anna to wait for her reinforcement.

Twelve hours.

Anna had the same thought as she had left the city. Since there was no one who would spot her anymore, lightning began to spark around her.

"I have to hurry." Anna took a deep breath as her blond hair gradually turned into purplish white like that of a lightning. Her body was enveloped by a thin layer of light of the same color. "Lightning Possession."

Anna's eyes gazed upon the terrain she had to cross to reach to the neighboring city. "Here I go."

The moment she leaped forward, she disappeared as the lightning trail blasted the ground and soared up to the sky. If she actually used this ability when she was running together with Noel, she would have run around the Demon Banner Army fort in just ten seconds instead of half an hour.

"Wait for me, Noel."

Chapter 250 Status

In the basement, a guy walked in with a bucket of water. It was clear who was the target of this bucket.

"You, stop!" Kirika shouted, but the guy ignored her as he immediately walked to Noel's cell and splashed him with that much water.

"Haaa!" Noel's voice instantly echoed in the basement. He coughed a few times as if he was still too shocked by the water.

"It seems that you have waken up now." The guy smirked.

Noel looked left and right as if he was confused with this place. At the same time, he tried to move his body but to no avail. After that, he released his Spiritual Energy but it dispersed the moment it tried to connect.

With those three facts, Noel suddenly looked at the guy who splashed him again. The middle-aged man had spiky white hair, but Noel's eyes focused on the guy's stomach.

Due to him lifting the bucket to drop the water, his shirt was tilted up, allowing Noel to find a tattoo of a skeleton head and two bright red dots as its eyes.

'Supreme Devil Organization? It's truly involved?' Noel thought.

However, the guy immediately kicked Noel in the stomach and said, "Demon Banner Army again. You are like pest!"

"Gah!" Noel coughed a few times as he was convulsing on the ground. He could hear Kirika's voice the whole time, trying to stop the man.

But the more she shouted, the bigger the smile of the middle-aged man. He started stomping Noel's body.

"Kh." Noel gritted his teeth, enduring the pain. He still acted confused as if he was unaware of his current condition.

"Heh, you're acting like a tough guy, huh. I like beating a tough guy like you!" The middle-aged man smirked.

"Who are you?" Noel tried to jump on him and hit him on the stomach with his head. However, the middle-aged man grabbed his head before that and kneed his stomach. "Gah!"

Noel dropped to the floor again and started gasping for air.

"This is enough for now. Don't worry. I'll play with you a bit more later." The middle-aged man snorted and walked away from the cell.

Noel glared at him in silence, seeing the man who took pleasure of that hatred. At the same time, Noel was confused because the man didn't do anything more.

If it were him, he would have at least break his bone. So, this was surprising for Noel.

"Noel. Noel!" Kirika kept calling him, worried about his condition.

Noel took a deep breath and leaned to the wall. "Yeah. What happened here? Do you mind explaining it?"

"Are you alright?"

Instead of answering her, Noel asked another question. 'Where is Lokhar? Shouldn't you two suppose to be together?"

"I am here." Lokhar answered weakly.

"You alright?" Noel obviously had known the answer since he was just pretending this whole time. But he couldn't really show it because the enemies might suspect it from their reactions. So, he had to play dumb.

"I'm still alright, I guess."

"You sounded weak. Did anything happen to your body?"

Lokhar sighed and said, "You should worry about yourself. How is your stomach?"

"I'm fine. I expected that guy to do it more brutally..."

"It was just the beginning. He's going to start beating you more violently from now on. Every few hours, he will beat you up to give you constant pain. And eventually, he'll start to use knife or break your bones."

"Are you sure you're alright? Has he broken your bones?"

"My left arm and right leg."

"How many days have you been here?"

"Six days."

"I see." Noel fell silent for a moment and asked, "How are you, Kirika?"

"I am fine. They haven't done anything to me yet."

"Yet?" Noel furrowed his eyebrows.

"Yes. There seems to be going an inspector coming to this place. They're going to send me to somewhere else and it's probably where my hell is about to begin."

"I see. Then, do you know the identity of the culprit? I mean, any information about this incident?"

"The brothel seems to be cooperating with the lord of the mansion. There's no information other than that currently."

"..." Noel fell silent while looking at the other cells. "Are the rest dead?"

"Possibly. Our body is stronger compared to the rest and due to the Spirit, we can still hold on for a bit longer. But if this continues, we'll die sooner or later."

"How about you, Lokhar? Do you know anything about this?"

"One man per day. It seems they're bringing one person everyday. I don't know what kind of people they're trying to bring though."

"I see. Then one last question, how did you two get caught?"

"The same as you."

"I see. So, you entered the brothel while Kirika tried to save you."

"Yeah."

"It seems that the enemies are a bit extraordinary this time. Even though I have never seen you two that much, I know that you two are excellent among our generation."

"The receptionist is a Spirit Wielder. And that guy from earlier was also a Spirit Wielder. I don't know about the rest of the enemies."

"Two Spirit Wielders, huh. Then, I'm assuming that this inspector guy is someone stronger than them? Or maybe more important. Either way, there must be a stronger person among them..." Noel narrowed his eyes.

"Yeah."

Noel let out a long sigh and said, "It seems that we have no way to go out."



"We have been hoping for reinforcement this whole time, but I guess, you're the reinforcement." Lokhar sighed in disappointment. "I'm afraid that Anna Stargaze is going to get involved in this."

"Haha. She's going to leave me right away if that happens." Noel laughed. His tone didn't carry a single hesitation as if he knew that would happen in this scenario. "So, now that you're disappointed in me, what are you going to do next?"

"I'm going to break out."

"Do you think you can do it?"

"No. But I'll at least die trying. I'm just worried about Kirika." Lokhar glanced at Kirika. He knew that her hell would far surpass him.

"I can at least kill myself by smashing my head to the wall." Kirika made a sad smile and said, "Still, I'm glad that at my last moment, you're here, Noel."