

## **S vs Rebirth 301**

### Chapter 301 Dinner

"Eat everything you like. Today is my treat." Noel smiled, looking at the kids. He brought them to the restaurant since this might be the last time he will see them.

"Woah!!" The kids were surprised because they never went to this kind of place.

Since it was a rare occasion, Noel sold a bit of his Demon Crystals to treat them.

The kids enthusiastically picked up the menu, albeit they couldn't read it. "Uh..."

"Ahaha, should I read the menu for you?" Noel chuckled while picking up the menu.

However, Erica suddenly interrupted him and asked, "Big Brother... This is kind of expensive..."

"You can read, Erica?"

"Yes. I'm probably the only one who understand reading and writing." Erica nodded without hesitation.

"I see. You can pick everything you want. I told you, right? I'm going to treat you today."

Erica bit her lips, hesitating. She recalled when Shale suddenly came back while they were talking in the training ground, mentioning about Noel's graduation.

In other words, Noel would leave this city and might never come back. She was a bit reluctant to order because of it.

But she ended up ordering some in order not to reject Noel's kindness. "Then, eleven corn soups, two fried chickens, three potato salads."

"That's all?" Noel didn't know how to feel. Erica ordered the food enough for them to fill their stomach, but she made sure to consider Noel's money as well so as to not burden him.

He felt gratified for Erica's thoughtfulness and said, "Then, let's add three more chickens and..."

Noel ended up ordering a bit more.

"Big Brother..." Erica wanted to stop him, but Noel had given the order to the waitress, so it would be impossible for her to take back their order.

"It's fine, it's fine. I want you to get something good once in a while." Noel chuckled while patting Erica's head.

"Ugh." Erica looked down, having no words to rebuke him.

"Thank you, Erica..." Noel looked at her with more fondness. "Thank you for taking care of the group. You've worked hard."

"Mmm." She pouted, having no words to say when Noel praised her like that. The others also knew they would be in a mess without Erica.

Eric, her twin brother, was the leader of the group because of his charisma, but the one controlling the group was Erica.

They both did their own parts, allowing them to function.

"What are you planning to do after this?" Noel asked.

"We want to keep dancing." One of the kids raised his hand, answering Noel's question.

"I just want to make sure they're safe." Eric gave an answer befitting his position. Although he was still a kid, he knew his responsibility in this group.

As one would expect from Erica, her answer gave a more concrete idea. "We'll train for a bit more to make sure we don't lose to bandits. Even if we can't defeat a Low Level Demon, we want to be strong enough to escape from them. Only after we have accomplished this requirement that we'll begin our journey.

"We'll continue dancing like this and become more popular. If Big Brother doesn't mind, if you manage to reclaim your territory, can we go to your place?"

"Of course, why would I reject you? You are free to come." Noel smiled and looked at Erica, warning her. "Still, if you choose this future, you're going to have a lot of hurdles, not only from the bandits or demons, but also from the people with good clothes."

"I know." Erica nodded with a serious expression. "We have seen them many times."

Erica confirmed that people had been approaching them to get them. However, Erica always refused them and made sure that the other kids didn't take anything from them that could be used against them.

They were still safe within the fort because of the laws, but if they moved to another town, the laws that protected them would be no more. So, that was where their true hurdle came.

"Is that so?" Noel thought for a moment. "If you need any help, just tell me about it. I'll help you."

"Mhm, thank you, Big Brother."

The food soon came, ending their conversation. "Alright. Let's stop talking and begin eating."

"Ooh!" The kids cheered up. This was the first time they saw such an appetizing food, so they couldn't help but start devouring them.

Even Erica was impressed after taking a bite, albeit she was a bit more reserved compared to the others.

Noel was smiling the whole time, looking at these cute kids. The dinner felt warm, filling the emptiness in his heart.

He couldn't help but remember when he had dinner with his parents. He never talked too much, so it felt a bit distant to his parents. 'Maybe our family will be in a different situation if I talk more openly to them...'

He kept reminiscing about his family, hoping that they could reunite in the future. At that time, he would surely correct his mistakes.

After half an hour, the kids had finished. All the plates were completely empty, but it was enough for Noel after seeing their blissful expressions.

After paying the bill, Noel took a walk with them before going back to their houses in the slum. Despite being in a bad condition, it seemed that the group was a bit scary to the people around them. They must have fought a lot, Noel thought.

Noel stopped in front of their hut and waved his hand, seeing them off.

"Big Brother Noel. Thank you very much." The kids shouted together.

"No problem. I'm glad that you enjoy it. Bye..." Noel waved his hand while closing the door.

To his surprise, when he was about to walk away, Eric came out of the house and held his shirt.

"Eric?" Noel was confused because Eric's expression completely changed. He seemed to be filled with worry, so he knelt down and looked into his eyes. "What's wrong?"

Eric hesitated for a moment before sharing his worry. "I'm afraid... Am I a good leader to them? Can I protect them? I'm afraid that they will..."

Eric stopped when Noel suddenly patted his head. His expression was gentle as if he understood all his worries, saying it would be fine.

Chapter 302 Leader

Noel understood Eric's worries.

"You will do just fine as their leader." Noel assured him.

"But Erica is better in taking care of them."

"Being a leader doesn't mean taking care of everyone. Being a leader, you can make a decision when others are arguing about their choices. Being a leader, you can stand in front of them to let them know you are there. That's why I can assure you their leader is you."

"Big Brother..." Eric felt like he understood a bit of what he was saying.

"What do you think of them?"

"They are my family."

"Then, you have to protect them." Noel smiled and gave him a question. "What will you do if someone threatens them?"

"I will step forward and protect them."

"That's correct. Leave everything about the group to Erica. You just have to do what you can do for the group. When Erica has trouble, you have to step up and become her strength, assuring her that everything will be fine.

"Use your body to protect them and sacrifice your life to keep them alive. There are so many things you can do as a leader. That's why this is my advice to you. No matter how hard it is for you or the group, never show it in your face.

"If you are troubled, the group will also become troubled." Noel pointed at Eric's heart. "Become a pillar for everyone; a pillar they can lean on, a pillar that can protect them, and a pillar that can support them."

Eric looked down for a moment, not knowing if he could do it or not. But he remembered what Noel said earlier. Even if he had a hesitation in his heart, he couldn't show it.

He wiped the tears on the corner of his eyes and took a deep breath as if steeling his resolve

"That's right. It's not that I can do it or not. I'm their leader, so I have to do it." Eric clenched his fists and looked at Noel with a serious expression. "Big Brother. I'm going to do it. I'll protect them!"

Noel patted his head and said, "That's good. I'll leave the group to you, Eric."

"Yes!"

After giving his last advice to Eric, Noel turned around and walked away while waving his hand.

Eric was sad because they had to be separated, but he slapped his cheeks until it was red before showing a calm and brave face. He swore in his heart that he would do it.

When he went back to the barrack, he saw Anna standing outside as if waiting for him. A bag was sitting on the ground next to her.

"Have you properly bid farewell to them?" Anna asked with a concerned face, thinking the emotion from when he left his family would resurface in his heart.

In fact, he might be the most saddened person among them. He just couldn't bear to part with the kids.

However, as he said earlier, he shouldn't show it to them because they would be saddened as well.

Noel sighed and asked, "Why do you have to look so mature right now? Can't you just be your energetic self like usual?"

That concerned face alone was enough to comfort him, making him embarrassed because he was seen through by Anna.

Anna handed him the bag and said, "The reward for the liquid is inside this bag. Since it's going to take a long time to absorb all this, the graduation will be held a week from now. I'm going to finish in five days, so if you have any trouble, you can come to me after that."

"No, it's fine." Noel picked up the bag and asked, "What's about the appointment?"

"We'll be going to the squad right after the graduation. The letter of recommendation will be given in the graduation as well, so just bring everything you need and throw everything else outside your room since they're going to clean up the place.

"After reaching there, we'll be getting a new place. Then again, the Demon Relief Squad is always on the move, so we won't have any luxurious place, I think.

"As for the rest, everything will be taken care of by the instructor. So, you don't have to worry for the next one week. Just absorb the Demon Crystals to get as strong as possible.

"Although we have a recommendation from the commander itself, they won't look at us that favorably."

"I know. They'll think we're here because of our connection, so there might be a test or something. By the way, where is their current location?"

"According to the instructor, they're currently at Shinonot Village, ten days from this place. There seems to be a Peak Level Demon attacking that village."

Noel thought for a moment before warning her. "That's right. I almost forgot that we're going to the Zero Squad. The fact that this is a leading squad means they're stronger. The mission they will receive is also at high level, meaning our opponents will be Advanced Level Demon or stronger."

"Yeah. But we won't have any trouble with that, right?"

Noel made a small smile. "I guess you can say that way. Just don't underestimate our opponent."

"Of course. Then, I'll see you again soon."

Noel nodded and picked up the bag. While walking inside the building, Noel said, "Anna, thank you."

"!!!" Anna was startled and turned around, finding Noel had shut the door. This might be the second time he thanked her. Still, the first time he thanked her was due to her ability. Meanwhile, this one came because of her own self, not her ability, meaning the thanks came from his heart.

The corner of her lips kept raising as she had a hard time containing her smile.

In the end, she just let the smile out while looking at the building, thinking about Noel. "Although I'm sad that we can only be a teammate for another two or three months, I'm glad I came here."

Chapter 303 Graduation

One week later.

The Apprentice Knights who were still in the fort gathered in the training ground to witness a historical moment. There was also a group of kids witnessing the ceremony.

Noel and Anna were kneeling on one knee in front of the commander, who personally handled the graduation as they were the first pair that graduated from this place. They were also the strongest out of all of them. So, they deserved such attention.

The commander stood in front of them as Shale handed him a tray with a token, a knife, and a uniform.



He grabbed the token and the knife before extending them to Noel while saying, "I'm happy to announce that Noel Ardagan has fulfilled the requirement to be the Elite Knight of our Demon Banner Army. Will you use your power to eliminate the demons in the name of the Demon Banner Army?"

"I vow to protect the people from the demons in the name of the Demon Banner Army." Noel received the knife and cut his finger, letting the blood drop to the token.

After that, he returned the knife and held the token with his hand before pouring his Spiritual Energy. Suddenly, the token shone in silver color. From now onward, the only one who could activate this token was Noel. If he died, then no one would be able to light up the token anymore.

This token would act as his identity, proving him to be one of the elite knights from the Demon Banner Army. It came with many benefits, considering the army handled far stronger opponents than the regular army.

Last but not least, the commander handed the black-colored uniform to Noel, which he gratefully received.

Anna also experienced the same thing. She proved the token and received the uniform.

They received thunderous claps from the other Apprentice Knights. Although these knights didn't admit it, they knew Noel and Anna deserved it.

Meanwhile, Noel got another cheer from the kids, which livened the ceremony.

Before finishing the ceremony, Shale brought them a letter.

"This is the letter of recommendation for both of you. You shall become a member of the Zero Squad of the Demon Relief Squad. Work hard in your next post and keep climbing through the rank. The people beside you might be your best comrades, but they're also your rival."

"Yes, Commander." Noel received the letter on behalf of them.

"With this, I declare from now on, Noel Ardagan and Anna Stargaze are the Knights of our Demon Banner Army. Those who harm them are harming the Demon Banner Army, and I shall spare no effort in handling this problem."

p Another round of applause was heard as the commander returned to the building.

Shale patted their shoulders and said, "I'm sad that you two can't join my Demon Extermination Squad, but I hope that you use this privilege to do something right. Don't break the law."

"Yes, Sir." Anna and Noel answered in unison.

Shale took a look at the people first before retiring to the inside. This was their moment, so they should get some fun.

As soon as the ceremony was over, the other Apprentice Knights immediately swarmed them. Though, they approached Anna more than Noel as if they still had some prejudice against him, believing his current achievement came directly from Anna.

On the other hand, Noel never cared about it since the kids came to him to congratulate him.

Surprisingly, Lokhar was in the fort today and attended the ceremony. He came to Noel and extended his hand. "Congratulations, Noel."

"Thank you." Noel shook his hand firmly.

"Haha, I'm going to follow you right after. Just you wait."

"I'm looking forward to it." Noel smiled.

After Lokhar left, Noel took care of the kids.

"Big Brother, Congratulations!"

"Big Brother..."

"Big Brother..."

Noel thanked each of them with a smile on his face. Eventually, he came to Eric and Erica, holding their hands. "Eric. Please take care of the group for me."

"Yes, Big Brother. I'll protect them with my life on the line."

"Erica, you are the smartest among them. It will be hard for you from now on, but I hope you can continue supporting the group."

"Yes, Big Brother. Leave them to me." Erica nodded with a smile.

"Good." Noel smiled and turned around to look at the rest of the kids. "Thank you, everyone. I will treasure this memory. If something happens, I will rush to your place to help you."

"No, Big Brother. We should be the ones thanking you for providing us with this opportunity. Without you, we might not survive this winter. So, thank you very much." One of the kids answered while bowing to him.

The rest also followed him, showing their gratitude.

"In that case, this is a goodbye from me." Noel smiled and hugged them one by one, wishing them luck. The kids ended up crying because they knew they couldn't meet him anymore.

But Erica stopped them while saying, "Don't cry. We have to work even harder from now on if you want to meet him again. Be prepared!"

The kids tried their best to stop their tears. While wiping their tears and snots, they tried to see Noel off with a smile on their faces.

Although their voices were shaking because of crying, they still shouted in unison. "Big Brother, Thank you!"

Noel waved his hand while walking to the exit. This was the end of his life in this fort and the beginning of his career.

As soon as he left the training ground, Anna suddenly appeared next to him.

"Ha... I can finally leave." Anna let out a long sigh. "They're too annoying."

"Should you be the one saying that?" Noel rolled his eyes.

"What? I am annoying? You must be blind."

"Yeah, yeah." Noel shrugged as they continued to walk to the gate. There were two normal soldiers standing next to the gate while holding the horses. Each horse had a bag on top of it as this was their luggage.

Noel and Anna received both the horses and the bag from them and rode the horse together.

Noel smiled while glancing at Anna. "This will be the start."

"Indeed. I'll be counting on you, Noel."

Chapter 304 Demon Relief Squad

Shinonot Village.

There was a tent right outside the city. Seven people were sitting inside the tent, with a brown-haired woman sitting at the edge. She had a gentle expression, but her gaze seemed to be able to see through anything.

She sat down with a smile on her face, watching the other six people.

"Captain. We heard there would be a new team member. Is that true?" A guy raised his hand, asking with a concerned expression.

"Aren't they the newbies from the headquarters? Why do they send them to this squad even though there are many other squads? Are they qualified to even become a member of this squad?" Another person let out a long sigh as if she didn't want to take care of the mess.

"Shut up, Stella. You might not know about this, but one of them is called Noel Ardagan." Another person glared at her to stop her rumbling.

"Ardagan?" Stella widened her eyes in shock.

"Yes. One of them is the son of your idol, Luke Ardagan. You come here to the Demon Relief Squad because you admire him, right? If I'm not wrong, your village once got destroyed by demons, and he was the one helping your village. That was why you also wanted to help people now, which became the reason you joined this squad."

"Well, Count Luke's reputation is like thunder reverberating in one's ears. I doubt anyone here hasn't heard anything about him. The wealthiest man in the kingdom as well as the most generous one. He has relieved one place to another."

"However, what about his son? I heard his reputation is not as good as his father's. He was a lazy young master, and no one had ever seen him doing anything. I mean, he didn't do anything bad, but he didn't do anything good either..."

The Captain, Clara, shook her head and explained their identities. "They should be arriving today. I'll brief you about their achievement ever since coming to the Demon Banner Army."

"According to Shale, Noel Ardagan might not know a lot of knowledge, but he was extremely smart. He learned many things easily. Also, his talent was peerless. He claimed he told the ignorant Noel about Spirit, and in just a few minutes, he managed to awaken his spirits."

"What?" The group widened their eyes, not believing what they had just heard. Awakened their spirits might be their hardest task before graduation. Even then, only half of them usually managed to awaken their spirits within one year.

Yet, Noel actually managed to awaken his spirit within a few minutes, and he never knew anything about spirits before that. They simply couldn't believe it.

"On the other hand, Anna Stargaze comes to the Demon Banner Army with a solid reputation, strength, and background. They weren't that sure about her initial strength, but she is currently a Spirit Wielder. After the last reward, she should be near the high level of Spirit Wielder."

"A high-level Spirit Wielder right after graduation? Is this a new record?" The people were even more shocked by this strength.

"But she came to this army with solid strength. So, we couldn't really call this an achievement. We have to know her initial strength first, and awakening the spirit usually takes the longest."

"I haven't finished here." Clara glared at them, making their bodies tremble and their mouths stop moving. After regaining their peace, Clara continued, "Of course, Noel Ardagan isn't that far from her either. He has become a Spirit Wielder and received another reward from the commander to solidify his rank as a Spirit Wielder."

"Are you serious?" Stella gasped, never expecting the son of her idol was this talented.

"There are numerous praises about them, but I can see that the people they help are more grateful to Noel. There is even praise from the Moon Temple's Saintess, saying Anna might be a hero, but Noel is certainly the savior."

"The Moon Temple's Saintess?" Stella furrowed her eyebrows. The Moon Temple's mission was similar to their Demon Relief Squad, except for the fact Moon Temple developed inside the kingdom while they

were helping the people near the border. Still, they often worked together, so they certainly had a high opinion of the Saintess.

Hearing such high praise from the Saintess wasn't that easy, meaning Noel truly had done something extraordinary.

"But don't you think Noel is the one setting up the record right now? He completely breaks Septa's record, considering he came to the Demon Banner Army without any solid knowledge or strength. Yet, he became a Spirit Wielder and graduated early.

"Even though Septa graduated around this time, he was one step away from Spirit Wielder, and he had some solid strength for his foundation. So, I think Noel has become the current record holder?"

"Certainly."

The people agreed while Stella, who had been grumbling until now, suddenly looked down and fell into deep thought.

Before long, Stella raised her hand and said, "Captain. Can you leave Noel to me?"

"Stella? Don't steal people just like that!" Another guy stopped her while gritting his teeth.

Although they didn't admit it, they had already accepted Noel and Anna in the group. If the record was true, Noel and Anna had the potential. So, it was their turn to give them enough experience to become true members of their squad.

"That's right. Do you think you can use your idol card to snatch a person from us?"

"Yes, yes. If you are the one taking care of your idol's son, you will end up spoiling him, which will limit his future. You're not suited to do it."

They started arguing to see who would become Noel and Anna's mentors. The argument got pretty heated to the point it annoyed Clara.

Clara slammed the table.

\*Bang!\*

"!!!" The people instinctively stopped and looked at her.

Clara took a deep breath and finally assigned them properly. "These two have enough talents but lack experience. So, I'll divide all of you into two groups. Stella, Zion, and Jonathan will be in group A. You three will take care of Noel at the same time.

"Paul, Ben, and Rose will be in group B and handle Anna. They've been informed they won't be treated as noble, so make sure they know they're a part of the Demon Relief Squad. In two weeks, all of you are to go to Lawrence Fort to handle their problem. They're investigating it right now, but we might expect there are two Peak Level Demons causing the unrest."

"Understood!" The six of them stood up and placed their hands on their chest, receiving the order.

#### Chapter 305 Arrival

"This should be the place, right?" Anna asked while staring at the village in the distance. She couldn't see how this place was a village. Unlike any other village they had seen, this village was guarded by a tall wooden wall, protecting them in all directions.

There was even a ditch outside the wall filled with water that would hinder anything from coming in. There was only one gate leading to the village and a wooden bridge that connected it.

There were a few huge tents outside the village, which was probably their destination.

"Reinforcing the village here?" Noel narrowed his eyes.



"That's probably it. A wall and a ditch are the basic after all."

"Will that even work? I mean, the monsters near this place often find Advanced Level or even Peak Level Demons, right?"

"True. If those demons attack this village without the help of the army, they'll be useless." Anna agreed with Noel, seeing this reinforcement had no purpose.

Suddenly, a mature and gentle voice echoed in their ears, answering their doubt. "It's not as useless as you two thought. Their primary purpose is to keep the village outside Demon's sights, mostly for Low Level and Mid Level Demons. Although there are Advanced Level and Peak Level Demons around here, the majority of the demons that are roaming around are the Low and Mid Level Demons.

"So, by covering the village with a wooden wall, those demons wouldn't think there was a village in this place. And with the ditch filled with water, the demons would think this place was a lake or something, not going to bother to enter it."

"!!!" Noel and Anna hurriedly turned around because they couldn't feel this presence at all. To their surprise, the one next to them was a woman. And only Anna would recognize her in this life.

"C-Captain Clara?"

Clara raised her eyebrows and looked at her. "Do you know me?"

"Ah?!" Anna forgot that her knowledge came from her previous life. There was no way she didn't know Clara, considering Noel had grown up in this place. However, the current Anna shouldn't know Clara at all. Hence, she had to bluff. "I have heard about your achievement in the past. Although I don't know your face, there is no reason for a powerful Spirit Grandmaster like you to appear in this place for no reason."

"So, there is only one person that fits your description?"

"Yes."

Clara stared at Anna for a while as if judging her answer. In the end, she dropped the matter and said, "Well, you are right. I'm Clara, the Captain of the Demon Relief Squad. I heard both of you from the report Shale sent here."

Noel hurriedly handed her the recommendation letter. "Captain Clara, this is the recommendation letter."

Clara looked at Noel like Anna before accepting the letter.

She opened it to confirm the content of the letter and said, "I see. This is a surprise for the commander to get involved in this. But I guess that's for a reason. Despite her outburst, Anna Stargaze is calm enough to handle the problem. She is also knowledgeable and resourceful.

"Noel might not have enough information and knowledge, but he can adapt to all situations. The example is him giving me the letter."

"!!!" Noel and Anna's hearts skipped a beat, realizing she was assessing her this whole time.

"That's good enough for now. I welcome you to my Demon Relief Squad. I don't have many rules personally, but I just want you to understand three things.

"First, never think yourself above the others, whether it's toward other knights in our squad or toward the people. If I find you flaunting your identity as a noble, I'll immediately report you to the headquarter to expel you from my place.

"Second, our job as a Demon Relief Squad is to help people in all kinds of forms. So, you can't complain about your work. Instead, you should learn how to do it properly.

"Last but not least, you are bound to work together with other knights. If it's with the same Demon Relief Squad, treat them gently. If it's with other squads, make sure they don't look down on our Demon Relief Squad. I permit violence. If they don't change their way, the violence must not be enough."

Noel was dumbfounded when hearing the third one. The first two were truly the essence of the Demon Relief Squad, so Clara's explanation was quite good. But he never expected Clara to permit the use of violence against other squads.

Her kind face felt like it was just a calm but cold face. Her soothing tone sent a chill down his spine. He even wondered which one was the real Clara.

"Do you understand those three rules?" Clara asked.

"Yes, Ma'am!" Noel and Anna hurriedly answered.

"Good. I welcome you to my Demon Relief Squad. Follow me." Clara walked toward a tent to introduce them to their groups.

But when they came in, the six people inside the room suddenly trembled as if death just came in.

"!!!" All of them hurriedly turned their bodies around, staring at Clara. They were already long enough in this squad to know Clara. Despite having no change in her expression or demeanor, they could clearly see Clara was pissed.

'Did they do something they shouldn't?' Stella thought while gulping down. She tried to find an answer by glancing at the others.

'They must be Noel and Anna... They just came here, so what kind of mistake could they make?'

'They just came here?'

'Ah!'

Something clicked in their mind as they greeted Clara. "Captain Clara."

"This is Noel Ardagan and Anna Stargaze. They'll be with us from now on, so please treat them kindly."

"Yes, Captain!"

Clara walked to her seat and explained, "Noel will go to group A, and Anna will be with group B."

"Ah! We're not going to be together?" Anna asked.

"No. You might want to be together with your partner, but there's no guarantee in the future that you won't have your partner on your side. So, you have to do it with what you currently have. By separating both of you, I believe you can grow further."

"I understand." Anna nodded.

"Good. I'll let them explain all the work to you."

Chapter 306 Introduction

"Please excuse us." The six people immediately left the tent, bringing both Noel and Anna away.

The first thing they did was actually warn them.

Stella came to them and said in distress, "You two... Can I assume that both of you addressed her other than 'Captain'?"

"Yes. We called her Ma—" Anna wanted to answer, but her mouth was covered by Noel to stop her from continuing. Noel even said, "It seems we have made a mistake. Please forgive us."

The group was speechless by Noel's reaction. They knew what Anna wanted to say, but Noel seemed to know it would just cause more problems and stopped her.

Stella scratched the back of her head and said, "Well, it seems you've understood it. I just want to say you should call her 'Captain' instead of anything else. Understood?"

"Yes." Noel nodded while whispering to Anna. "You don't want me to call you 'old hag,' right?"

"!!!" Anna widened her eyes before nodding her head, understanding what they were talking about.

After that, Noel released her and stepped back.

"Well, it seems that we can introduce ourselves." Stella smiled. Stella looked like she was in her early twenties. She had an energetic appearance and a cheerful smile. Her red hair was tied into a ponytail so that it wouldn't go in her way while making herself look enchanting by wearing the military uniform but with shorts. They could ask for a tailored made uniform, so she must have done something like that.

"My name is Stella, I am from the group A. And these two here..." Stella pointed at two guys that seemed to be in her group.

The first one was a fat guy with slanted eyes. He had a calm expression. It gave a peaceful feeling that seemed to be able to de-escalate a situation. He introduced himself. "Hello, I am Zion. I'm also from group A. He is Jonathan."

The second one was a tall but skinny guy. He was the complete opposite of Stella, one without energy. In fact, Noel and Anna could feel his gloominess. He didn't really express himself other than when he was scared of Captain Clara. He only nodded to them as a greeting.

"Then, this is the B Group as well as our Vice Captain, Paul." Stella pointed at the muscular guy brimming with fighting intent. One would wonder why a guy that seemed to be planning to fight everyone to be the vice captain of the Demon Relief Squad.

Paul gave a thumbs up and said, "Nice to meet you, newbies. I'm Paul! You don't have to respect me or anything, but I hope you can listen to me in an emergency. These two will be with me in group B, they are Benjamin and Rose."

Benjamin might be the most normal among them. He wasn't skinny, muscular, or even energetic. He was just an average guy. "Hello, I'm Benjamin. Well, my name is too long, so just call me Ben. We don't care much about seniority here."

The last person was a woman with glasses. Her sharp gaze seemed to be scrutinizing Ben and Paul. However, she didn't say anything to them and proceeded to introduce herself. "I am Rose. You might be annoyed when talking to me, but I don't care much about it."

Noel politely nodded to them. "I'm Noel, a fallen noble. Even if I want to flaunt my title, I'm now just a commoner. So, I hope that all of you can treat me as such."

"I'm Anna Stargaze. I'm here not as a representative of the Stargaze Family, but as a knight from the Demon Banner Army."

Stella nodded, satisfied. "Alright. Since we have done with the introduction, let's move on to our jobs. It's hard to explain our work, so you have to experience it yourself. But I'll give you a brief explanation.

"To put it simply, we're doing all kinds of works that the villagers usually do. We can become a carpenter, a farmer, or even a hunter. We kill demons and help the reconstruction of the village. Of course, we are Knights from the Demon Banner Army, so we are not burying our talent here.

"I don't know if you have noticed it or not, but all of us here are Spirit Masters, except for Paul, who became a Spirit Grandmaster last year," Stella explained while showing a bit of her Spiritual Energy.

Anna was more sensitive than Noel, so she had felt it from the start. All of them were indeed Spirit Masters.

However, Noel was more interested in their groups instead of in their strength. He raised his hand. "May I ask a question?"

"Yes, you can. There's no need to be that polite. Just treat us as your colleague or comrade."

"Then, I can see all of you are different and seems to be specialized in something. Why do you work in different groups instead of working together? I'm pretty sure it's going to be more effective..." Noel furrowed his eyebrows, assessing them.

"Hoh?" Paul grinned as if he liked this newbie. Stella, on the other hand, explained to him. "We always work together as you said. But because of your enlistment, we'll work separately for the time being. In other words, these two groups will only exist for two weeks to introduce you to our work."

"In two weeks, we're going to another place, which might require us to hunt Peak Level Demons. As for the Captain, she is not really with us every time. She often inspects other groups as well, so you'll only be with us most of the time."

Noel nodded in understanding, thanking her for the explanation.

"Do you have more questions?"

"No, I believe I'll observe everyone first to learn what my role is." Noel shook his head.

"How about you, Anna?"

"I have one. What kind of place does this group usually visit?"

"Hmm, our Demon Relief Squad goes all around the kingdom, but our Zero Squad is near the border because the Demons are stronger and no ordinary squad can handle them. So, it means we'll be facing one dangerous place after another. If you're scared, I don't mind telling the captain to move you to another squad though." Stella smirked as if provoking Anna.

"So, it means there will be more Demon Crystals?" Anna wasn't scared of her.

"Yes." Stella's expression became calm again before pointing at the village. "If you don't have any more questions, let's go inside the village. We'll show you our jobs."

## Chapter 307 Building A House

The group entered the village that seemed to be in the middle of reconstruction. It seemed the village was badly damaged by the demons from the earlier attack and the Demon Relief Squad helped them in dealing with all their problems.

"Oh, Stella and the group. Are you going to help us today?" One of the villagers came to them with a smile on his face.

"Of course. We'll make sure your village can function like usual soon." She pumped her fists and assured the man with her energetic tone.

From the way Noel observed them, Stella seemed to be the pillar of emotional support for the people.

Meanwhile, Rose came over and said, "For the time being, we should help with the house over there."

"Oh, let's go then!" Paul nodded with an excited expression.

The group nodded while Stella said, "You two can watch how we work first to see if you can do the same thing or not."

"Understood. We'll learn many things from you." Noel agreed and stepped back. Meanwhile, Stella and the group walked to an empty space they had prepared for the house.

Rose was the first one to make her move. She gathered her Spiritual Energy and raised both hands. "This will be the house!"

All of a sudden, a house appeared out of thin air. The wooden house had a slant roof to the left. It was only one floor and the basic shape was a box, so it shouldn't be that much of a hassle.

Noel widened his eyes in amusement. "That's..."

"An illusion ability?" Anna furrowed her eyebrows, knowing that this ability came from a spirit that dealt with illusion.

Even Noel had expected this to happen, considering he had seen Elsa and Alanton from the Loetzel Family. Many spirits were similar to each other, but there were unique spirits like an illusion, money, and so on.



This ability showed him that there was more than one way to use an ability.

As soon as the illusion was erected, the group took a glance at it before Paul said, "Alright. That's enough. We've got the basic down."

"Zion!" Stella shouted one's name, who seemed to have disappeared without anyone noticing.

"!!!" Noel looked left and right, trying to find Zion. He suddenly reappeared with a few logs that seemed to have been freshly cut.

"Here you go." Zion threw the logs into the air.

Stella unsheathed her blade, smiling as if she wanted to show off in front of the son of her idol. She closed her eyes for a moment before she opened them and began cutting the logs skillfully.

In an instant, the logs turned into a long wooden block. In other people's eyes, Stella seemed to be wasting the log by not properly cutting it. But he seemed to be wrong when he saw the waste that fell to the ground.

"Wait..." Noel gasped. 'She actually cuts the wood in precision. It seems she has calculated the depth of her sword... That took skills.'

Stella winked her right eye playfully as if telling him she had a lot of effort into it.

However, the trunk didn't stop there. Since Zion threw it forward, the fallen wood would drop on top of her.

This was the time for the gloomy Jonathan to work. He lifted his hand and the wood miraculously floated in the air.

"Telekinesis." Anna sucked a cold breath. This ability was quite unique because there were many applications for it. But not many users could become a Spirit Master since the ability was too weak to be used against monsters.

Jonathan lifted the wood with his Telekinesis and moved it to Ben. Ben cut a bit of the wood just to fit a certain shape. It seemed he was making a hole in the wood to act as a connector to the other wood.

More and more logs were brought over by Zion, and Stella cut them. And after a few logs, Noel and Anna could see Paul began working.

He was wielding a small hammer. With his energetic vibe and muscular body, they thought he would smash that hammer and end up crushing the blocks, but they were wrong.

Despite how he looked, Paul covered the hammer with his Spiritual Energy and struck the hammer with only enough energy to perfectly finish his job. Each nail and each connection were dealt with a single hit, which reflected his control over his strength.

'Impressive. This is the first time I've seen so many applications to one's power with my own eyes.' Anna thought, amazed by their teamwork. 'Well, the bigger question is... will our ability fit this place? It's true that Noel has been helping people, but he does it with his speech and killing. He hasn't done anything to help with the construction or any miscellaneous task.

'The same applies to me. My Spirit is Thunder Berserker Spirit. It might be a humanoid spirit, but I haven't seen anything about the applications for the work in the Demon Relief Squad.

'What about Noel? He has an Ice Ability, which works for...' Anna tried to imagine how Noel could work together with them but to no avail. The only thing they could do was either cut the logs or bring them to this place like Stella and Zion.

This thought gave Anna a dilemma, which made her fall into deep thought.

On the other hand, Noel approached this matter with more positivity.

"This is amazing!" said Noel while staring at the house. They only worked for fifteen minutes, and the house was already twenty percent done. This way, they could finish a house within an hour or so.

"Hehe, is it?" Stella smiled, satisfied with Noel's reaction. "What do you think about it?"

"It's so wonderful to see many applications to one's ability. I feel like I can see a lot of things... Ehm, but can I observe more? Maybe I can get a more concrete explanation..."

"Sure, just observe our works for this house and we'll listen to you after this." Stella nodded. "It won't take too long anyway."

#### Chapter 308 Observation

As Stella said, they finished the house not long after. If normal people worked on this house, they would need at least a couple of days just to finish it. Yet, it only took an hour or so for this group. This showed a lot of differences between the normal people and the Demon Relief Squad.

After finishing the work, Stella came while giving a thumbs up. "So, how is it?"

"It's fast and it's kind of unique." Noel nodded with a serious expression. He constructed the words that had been forming in his mind after watching them. "I don't know if what I'm saying is correct, but let me tell you what I've seen first.

"Zion brought the logs from the forest near this place. I don't know how he did it, but his speed was amazing. I mean, you had to come out of the gate... Or maybe he jumped over it?

"After that, you were the one cutting the logs. The precision you have in order to cut that log was extraordinary. Meanwhile, Jonathan brought the log with his power and placed it so that no one had to move from their positions. It created a complete flow for the group.

"Then, Ben took care of the details before Paul finished it. Of course, it couldn't have been started without Rose's help. Without the shape that she gave with the illusion, you wouldn't know where to start."

"Hoh?" Stella and Rose were amused by his observation.

"Don't you think there is another application for it?" Rose asked, trying to incite Noel to think.

However, Noel seemed to have prepared for this question. He nodded and explained, "Even though we're helping the construction, we shouldn't forget about our identity as Demon Relief Squad. No matter what, we're also dealing with the demons.

"In other words, we have to be someone who can work with many things to help reconstruct in one's place, and in the front line, we have to use our power to deal with the demons. And from what I can see, it seems that the work of reconstruction is actually the one making you stronger.

"For example, Zion is the kind of guy who usually gets asked to bring something. However, due to this kind of skill, he can actually do a lot more like overwhelming the enemy with his speed.

"Then, Stella's precision can deal a lot of damage to the demons. Even if you can't cut the demon in one's strike, Stella's precision allows her to deal damage on the same spot over and over again.

"I don't know much about Jon's power, but it feels like your power can be used in a lot of ways. I'm sorry that I can't say anything much about it other than your power is versatile.

"After that, it's Ben. He seems to be the all-rounder in the group that can take care of most of the matters. If someone messes up, I feel like Ben will be there to help. I don't know much about his power though, since I don't think he used his power during the construction...

"Paul is a powerful vice leader. He has a lot of strength and the precision to work with his Spiritual Energy. I don't mean to be rude, but he seems to be a guy who might make a rash decision but seeing his control over his Spiritual Energy, I know that I can trust him to make a decision in case of emergency.

"Last but not least, Stella. As I said earlier, you are the beginning. It seems that you are the one taking care of the group from the shadow, no, it's more like... You observe the battlefield more than they do. You're the calmest person in the group and probably the one giving them instruction most of the time."

"Wow..." Paul and the others were impressed by Noel's observation. They never expected Noel could see through that much just by observing them.

Even Rose couldn't help but look at Stella. "Let's move Noel to Group B instead of your Group A."

"What did you say?" Stella glared at her, not wanting to lose Noel. In her mind, she had accepted Noel from the bottom of her heart. His observation alone befitted his identity as her idol's son. There was no way she would give up on him.

"You can see that he is similar to me. I think it's better if I become his mentor."

"We don't know about it yet! Just because he shows an exceptional observation skills, it doesn't mean that's the only thing he has!" Stella gritted her teeth and desperately looked at Noel, asking, "What can you do other than this?"

"I'm not very sure what I can do in this situation yet. After all, this is my first day of joining this squad. I hope that I can get some time to see what I can do." Noel scratched the back of his head, feeling embarrassed to know he wasn't up for the task.

"I see. That's understandable." Paul nodded. "Either way, even though we're divided into two groups, you can simply come over and ask about something. We'll try to train you and give you experience as much as possible."

"Thank you very much." Noel politely nodded, thanking him.

"I think no one objects to Noel being here, right?" Stella asked once again, confirming their intention. No one opened their mouth since they were impressed by Noel's ability. Considering he had become a Spirit Wielder in one month, it was clear that Noel's strength in battle couldn't be underestimated as well.

There was no way they would let go of this extremely talented man. If he had been working hard in the past instead of being lazy, he might become the most talented man in the kingdom instead of Anna.

That was why they turned to Anna, expecting her to showcase her skill.

Anna maintained her silence for a moment. As someone stronger than her, she had seen what Noel said earlier. But since Noel took the chance to showcase his skill, she had lost that chance.

It could be said Noel stole her moment, but it could be said she lost that opportunity because her reaction speed was slower than Noel.

And now, everyone was looking forward to what Anna had to say.

#### Chapter 309 Punishment Game

Anna shook her head calmly. "Since Noel has said everything that needs to be said, is there a need for me to add anything?"

"..." Stella and the others were dumbfounded, never expecting to have Anna reject this chance.

Still, Stella didn't give up. "Well, if you want to say something, you should tell us clearly. Our group is not a jerk who will destroy you just because you're a bit impolite. Besides, if you can tell us something we don't know, we'll be grateful. Basically, we see our weaknesses as a challenge to improve ourselves."

"Then, I won't hold back." Anna smiled and turned to Zion. "You put too much Spiritual Energy in your boots, causing you to leave a mark on the ground. It can be traced by enemies. I don't know if you're already aware of it or not, but the Supreme Devil Organization has been implementing a system of working together with demons. What we're fighting right now might not purely be a demon, so a trail like that is fatal.

"Stella has precision and speed but lacks power. Although she can hit the same spot many times with what she has, you'll make your whole life a lot easier if you have strength.

"Jonathan's Telekinesis is quite good already, so I don't think I'll say something about it right now. The same applies to Paul's strength. His control over Spiritual Energy is already good enough. As long as he has good techniques and control over his weapon, he will be invincible on the battlefield.

"Ben is an all-rounder, which is good to have. But you have to remember that sometimes a master of something is better than an all-rounder. Of course, I'm not putting you off just because of this... Your all-rounder system is created with Spiritual Energy as your foundation, so you should add technique or something to solidify your foundation.

"Last but not least, Rose's illusion is already good enough, though, I know it's not what you usually use. The illusion is less solid than I thought."

"!!!" The people were dumbstruck by her observation. Noel had explained all their power, but Anna turned out to be able to criticize their strength. It was clear that in terms of sensitivity to Spiritual Energy as well as knowledge, Anna was superior to Noel.

Rose, as the calmest person in the group, managed to catch a glimpse of Noel's expression. Noel might maintain his calm expression, but his gaze seemed to be telling her something else. It felt like he had known about this side of Anna and recognized her ability. In other words, he had accepted Anna to be superior to him.

"Wo-Woah?!" Paul smiled and gave a thumbs up, showing no hostility. "You're good, Miss."

"I'm impressed." Stella nodded in understanding. She pointed at her bracelet and said, "Your analysis is correct, and this wristband is my way to handle my problem. It's quite heavy, you know. In fact, everyone has been trying to solve their weaknesses."

"Thank you." Anna politely nodded, thanking them for not having any hostility because of jealousy or something.

"Since you're this good, then I don't think anyone has an objection to her joining the squad, right?" Paul asked, confirming the group's intention.

All of them nodded, acknowledging Anna's ability.

"Good. Then, let's move on to the next introduction..." Paul glanced at Stella.

"Alright. In this step, we're going to test your fighting ability. As you can see, you are currently a Spirit Wielder while we're Spirit Masters. So, we want to test your ability to see if you can join our fight or not." Stella made a playful smile while adding a condition. "But this time, we'll go separate ways."

"Hoh? Is that a challenge, Stella?" Paul smirked.

"Of course. We haven't hunted anything today for the temporary food supply, Vice Captain. Don't you think it's better to do it now?"

"What are the objectives?"

"There are a lot of Advanced Level Demons in the Laguna Lake ten kilometers from here."

"Good enough for me."

Both of them smirked, challenging each other.

As soon as Paul accepted the challenge, Stella turned to Noel and Anna. "There you have it. We'll go to the lake right now. I'm sure you're not tired, right?"

Noel and Anna exchanged looks and shook their heads in unison.

"Good. The goal is simple. We kill as many Advanced Level Demons as possible. Our teams will only support you and try to give you some advice to help you in defeating those demons." Stella glanced up to see the sun's position. "The moment the sun is right on top of us, the battle is over. The loser will be the gofer of the winner for the rest of the day."

"Sounds good enough." Paul nodded in agreement.

"Does the punishment..."

"Of course, it'll be no fun if we don't have punishment. As usual, the pair will be me and Rose, Paul and Jonathan, Zion and Ben. Last but not least, you and Noel. Whoever loses will be the gofer." Stella smirked. "This is our usual style of doing things and you'll probably find it again and again in the future, so you might want to change the squad if you don't like it."



'Anna becomes my servant?' Noel glanced at Anna. If they compared in raw power, he would stand no chance against Anna. However, he still believed his hunting ability was better than Anna's. So, he had the chance to win.

'A game where I can make Noel do anything I want?' Anna smirked.

p Anna and Noel seemed to have their own ideas of what they wanted the others to do.

"Good enough. I'm in." Noel nodded, confirming his participation.

"Indeed. I don't mind releasing all my abilities in today's hunt." Anna smiled excitedly.

"Haha, let's go now!" Paul laughed as he led the group to the lake.

Meanwhile, Stella stayed quiet after inciting them. There was a reason why she suddenly fell quiet.

She had heard of what happened to her idol and the cause of everything was Anna Stargaze. So, it was kind of absurd to see a good relationship between Anna and Noel.

She brought up the punishment game to see Anna and Noel's reactions to understand their relationship and the extent of what they would do to each other. At least, she wanted to confirm whether Anna planned to kill the last Ardagan or not.

#### Chapter 310 Challenge

They reached the lake within twenty minutes since they had to adjust their pace to match Noel and Anna while making sure they weren't exhausted from the speed as well.

The lake had a radius of two hundred meters. The water came from the nearby mountain, which was filled with demons. In fact, the reason why Stella said this place had many demons were due to the mountain.

The surrounding of the lake was mostly plain and it would soon become a gentle slope. If they were going to fight in a place like this, they could assess their abilities to adapt to terrains.

"Alright. We'll talk for five minutes before moving to our respective position," said Stella while pointing in two directions to show their starting position.

Since there was no objection from Paul's side, Stella turned back to Noel and said, "Well, I don't know about your abilities right now, but all I can say is how our Demon Relief Squad fights. You should know we're doing all kinds of things, right?"

"Yes." Noel nodded.

"That's because we emphasize versatility. We want to be as flexible as we can. It includes the terrain... If we are in a plain, we can't do much because there is nothing but soil and grass. But if we're in a forest, we can use the tree as an obstacle or even throw them to the demon to hinder their movement. Basically, don't hesitate to use everything around you to your advantage."

Noel thought for a moment and asked to confirm his doubt. "Are you talking about traps?"

"No, no. Traps are good, but they're not that easy to make. Unless it's necessary, there's no need for traps." Stella turned around and pointed at the tree not far from them. "You can see that tree? What if I cut the tree down and throw it to the demons?"

"They might go separate ways or even smash the tree..."

"Exactly. Use that opportunity to hit them."

"Ah, that's what you're talking about." Noel nodded. He had done it by forming an ice wall before, so he might be able to do it again this time.

"It seems you've understood. Alright, let's go to our position then." Stella smiled while walking to their position, waiting for Paul's team to do the same.

Before they started, Jonathan added, "Although we'll be saving you in case of emergency, I hope that you don't move recklessly just because we're near you. There will be a time where we're not together, so I hope that you don't get used to acting recklessly just because you know someone is there for you."

"Don't worry. I know that already." Noel nodded with a serious expression. If he was that type of person, he would have relied on Dimitri more this whole time. But he chose not to do it.

"Good. I have high hope in you." Jonathan patted Noel's shoulder. If not for his gloominess, Jonathan would surely be a cool guy. However, his tired face and huge black bags under his eyes made him a bit unapproachable.

...

Group B.

"No need to think about anything. Just blast those demons, and you're good! Hahaha!" Paul laughed.

"Can you not give our new recruit a hard time with your foolish rumbling?" Rose glared at him, causing Paul to tremble.

"I'm sorry, Ma'am..."

Rose sighed and formed a blue screen in front of her with eight blue dots flickering in it. "This is my ability. As you said earlier, that illusion wasn't my usual ability.

"My senses are better than the rest, so I can see everything more clearly. If I have the high ground, I can find demons near you unless the forest is too dense. And..."

Rose snapped her finger and formed a thumb size ball. Suddenly, her voice echoed from this ball, saying, "I can guide the team with this. Basically, I'm using my illusion on you, and that illusion allows me to say something to you. By taking advantage of this ability, I can control the group from afar."

Suddenly, two red dots appeared next to them.

"As you can see, these red dots are the movements within the area. I'm still not sure whether they're Advanced Level Demons or stronger, so you still have to be careful."

Anna furrowed her eyebrows and said, "This is very useful."

"Well, there were cases where I couldn't find the enemies, so don't rely on it too much, alright?"

"Understood. I'll be asking you to help me during this hunt." Anna nodded.

"Alright. Make sure you win." Rose agreed to help her wholeheartedly.

Ben, as an all-rounder in the group, added, "I can only say one thing to you. Even sand can become your weapon, so don't hesitate to use them. Your only limit is your imagination after all."

"I understand. I'll work hard and learn many things from you guys." Anna nodded.

"Good. Since we have finished our discussion, all I have to say to you is that... Don't be afraid and do whatever you think is right. We'll be the ones covering things for you. We'll be following you, so if you have any trouble with the enemy, wave your left hand. If you don't want us to interfere, only raise your left hand. Understood?"

Anna nodded.

Since they had reached an agreement, Paul started walking to their position while glancing at Noel's side, who had finished their discussion.

Anna and Noel were staring at each other. Without opening their mouth, they seemed to know what each other thought. Of course, there was nothing but a provocation from them.

'I'll be winning this and turn you into my slave for the rest of the day, Anna. Be prepared for it.'

'Hehe, you are going to follow my order today, Noel. I wonder what I should make you do? Massage me? I'll use this opportunity to spoil myself a bit.'

Both of them were brimming with fighting intent as Paul clapped his hand as loud as possible so both of them could hear them. "Start!"