

S vs Rebirth 361

Chapter 361 New Medal

"So, because the poison concentration in the lake is beyond your expectation, you have to take another approach?" The Valley Master frowned, falling into deep thought.

"Yes. We are measuring everything right now, but of course, I'm here not to bring only bad news."

"Hoh? What is the good news?"

"One of our members has the ability of water purification. He might be a Spirit Wielder right now, but after some testing, we can ask him to purify the water. This way, we don't have to drain the lake."

Water Purification ability caught the Valley Master's eyes. "Are you sure about that?"

"Yes. We first divide the lake into fifty sections and ask him to purify fifteen sections per day. If we can ask him to start earlier, then we will only have one day's delay. On the plus side, the city won't be harmed in any way, considering you can use the water immediately."

"But how can I know that his purification ability is working?"

Paul glanced at Ben as the latter brought forth a container filled with water. "This is the sample of the water lake along with the purified one. As the Water Lord, I'm sure that you are capable to test the water whether it still has the poison or not."

Paul nodded. "And if you still can't believe us bringing the right sample, you may check our progress directly. This way, you will be able to see whether the purification works or not."

"That's certainly tempting." The Valley Master thought for a moment. "With your previous plan, the lake needs a few months to recover, but if you can purify it, then the water can be used immediately."

The Valley Master closed his eyes as if he was imagining the entire process. "I'll give the approval if you can prove to me that your idea works. If I'm not wrong, you haven't started the work yet, right?"

"Yes. Today was supposed to take a rough calculation and run a few simulations. We would be draining tomorrow."

"In that case, I'll test this water first and visit the lake later. Ask him to purify a part of the lake and I'll try to see the difference right there. If you truly can purify the water, then I'll agree to this plan."

"Understood. We'll be looking forward to your visit." Paul nodded. He was happy but he couldn't show it at this moment. If he smiled, the Valley Master would think something was up.

However, his trial wasn't over yet. The Valley Master frowned and asked, "Still, why did you not bring it up previously? Why did you make a sudden change in the plan?"

"That's..." Paul scratched the back of his head, feeling troubled. "I won't lie to you, Valley Master. This guy is a new member of our squad, so we don't have extensive knowledge of what he can do. And because he is still a Spirit Wielder, we don't know how long it will take him to purify that lake.

"Hence, we couldn't bring it up. After some testing, we've seen how effective it is, so we choose to go with this plan." He explained.

"I see." The Valley Master nodded. "Alright. I'll approve if I see the result."

"Yes, Sir. We will start working on it then." Paul and Ben bowed politely to the Valley Master, showing their thanks. They then stood up, ready to leave.

Before leaving, the Valley Master asked one last question. "By the way, the new member that has the purification ability in your mouth... Is it that guy that came with you in the last meeting?"

Paul knew it was impossible to fool the Valley Master in this situation. After all, there were only two Spirit Wielders in his group, and both of them came not long ago. And since their genders were different, it was clear who Paul was implying earlier.

Paul smiled. "Yes. He is the new pride of our Demon Relief Squad."

"I see." The Valley Master nodded and finally let them go.

As soon as Paul and Ben left the room, the Valley Master turned to his butler and asked, "What do you think about them?"

"They're unique. In fact, their group is the most versatile group in the Demon Banner Army. They can act as a vanguard like Demon Extermination Squad, as a protector like Demon Barrier Squad, and as a helper, which is their original purpose. As for that fallen noble kid... he is even more amazing than we might have expected."

"I see." The Valley Master waved his hand, dismissing his butler. His expression soon darkened as if he was foreseeing great doom. "..."

...

Noel, who was working on the lake, was startled when a notification popped out right before his eyes.

"!!!" Noel's heart beat rapidly, but he still maintained his calm expression. He glanced at the mission while making sure that his eyes were still focused on the work so that no one suspected him or anything.

[The Valley Master is interested in you.]

'What the—' Noel wanted to curse because he misunderstood the words. He thought 'interested' in the system meant affection, but Ardagan immediately added.

[Mission: The Valley Master's Interest.]

[Description: The Valley Master requires your ability for his project. Help him.]

[Reward: Affection Medal.]

[Penalty: None.]

'...' Noel became confused as he asked inwardly, 'What is this affection medal, Ardagan?'

[You have chosen Rune Swordsman instead of Commander or Noble. As such, the medals you receive will be related to Rune Swordsman. Affection Medal is a way to understand one's affection for you.]

'Now that I think about it, I have explored the mission but I haven't paid any attention to my job at all. Then again, Affection Medal should be related to Commander Job, no? I mean, it'll be better to know your subordinate's affection as a commander instead of a swordsman.'

[The affection is not limited to people.]

'...' The moment he saw that sentence, Noel widened his eyes in shock. His mind was going crazy because he knew exactly what it implied. 'You mean...'

Chapter 362 Hidden Message

'You mean the affection medal can see all beings' affections?'

[As long as they're alive.]

'This...' Noel sucked a cold breath because he knew the importance of such a thing. If he could see all living things' affection, it meant he could see the intention of the demons, the animals, and even plants.

With this Affection Medal, he could even differentiate which tree was a hidden demon. In fact, he was satisfied with the plants alone since it was hard to differentiate a normal tree and a demon tree in a forest. He often got ambushed by them, making this medal even more powerful.

But there was something he feared from this medal. With this medal, he could see someone's affection. It was fine if he just looked at strangers. But it would be a different case if they were close to him.

It would be terrifying to know if he could see his wife's affection, which turned out she actually hated him, it would truly scare him for life.

The same applied to his children. So, this was a double-edged sword. There were things he shouldn't know after all.

That was why this medal couldn't be used easily.

With that thought in mind, he continued working with the purification as Paul and Ben came to them, telling them about the agreement.

After understanding the situation, Jonathan began to split the lake into fifty parts with the soil around it.

As agreed, the Valley Master visited them after confirming the result of his research. As the Water Lord, he was already good with water and understood its property, so it didn't take too long for him to know that the poison had truly been removed.

"So, here it is..." The Valley Master muttered while staring at the lake.

As the vice captain, Paul was the one accompanying him. "Yes. Thank you for coming, Valley Master."

"Mhm." The Valley Master nodded. "Well, I have a lot of work to finish after this, so I hope you don't mind if we cut to the chase."

"Of course." Paul extended his hand, asking the Valley Master to follow him to the part Noel worked on.

"Hello. We met again, young man." The Valley Master smiled, observing Noel.

"Yes, Sir." Noel nodded. "How can I help you?"

"I'd like to test the water, but there is a possibility that you change the water with the new one in one of these ponds. Although I don't like to doubt you, would you mind if you work on a new part that I choose?"

"Yes, I don't mind if it can erase your worry. After all, we're talking about thousands of lives here."

"Thanks." The Valley Master immediately walked to a certain area. The water soon rose with a single wave of his hand, forming a bubble.

After that, the Valley Master raised his other hand and started waving it up and down. The bubble was wobbling around as if it was trying to mix something into the water.

"Do you know that the poison itself is a powder? The powder is like sand, but not sand either. A portion of them can be dissolved into the water and another portion will remain solid.

"However, the problem is the solid part since it will poison the water again. That's why I agreed with you about draining the lake and leveling up the ground. And with that, all the poison will disappear from the lake completely.

"But something piques my interest because a young man claims he can purify the water. I thought at first the water would be contaminated again by the remaining solid powder.

"Hence, this was the reason I wanted to check your work first before approving this method."

While the Valley Master explained his reason, he formed another bubble with his Spiritual Energy and tried to mix it with the water from the lake.

Surprisingly, the water from Spiritual Energy became muddy as soon as it mixed, showing a reaction.

"This water is indeed poisonous." The Valley Master glanced at Noel. "Why don't you purify this area for me?"

"Understood." Noel nodded with a serious expression as he placed his hand into the water and began using his Purification Ability.

Meanwhile, Paul explained, "Don't worry about the poison, Sir. Our people can lift the soil up. For now, we're just trying to make some simulation."

"Hoh?" The Valley Master smiled. "Actually, you don't have to do that."

"What do you mean, Sir?" Paul frowned.

"I told you the poison couldn't be dissolved completely, right?"

"Yes."

"And in the water sample you gave me, I found the poison that hasn't been dissolved there. To my surprise, the poison has lost its effect."

"!!!" Paul widened his eyes in shock. "You mean..."

"Yes. The Purification Ability is strong enough to make the poison lose its effect. Do you know that when you're diluting your wine with water, you'll get less taste?"

"Yes."

"I believe his ability works the same. The Purification Ability is diluting the poison again and again until the poison is used up and the original poison becomes nothing but normal sand.

"In other words, you don't have to lift up the soil to extract the remaining poison. Instead, you can simply let him do all the work and everything will work perfectly. And right now, I'm trying to see whether my theory is correct or not." He smirked.

Paul was impressed by Noel once again. He never thought Noel had this powerful ability.

It took Noel more than an hour to purify this water, and the Valley Master tested it again, confirming that the water had been successfully purified.

"Alright. I have confirmed it. You've got my approval. I know that it'll be hard for a Spirit Wielder to purify the whole area in an instant, and that's the reason you asked me to extend the time limit."

The Valley Master smiled. "In that case, let me invite you to eat with me tonight. At the very least, I want to thank you for giving me the best solution."

"That can wait until we've purified everything, Sir." Paul smiled awkwardly.

The Valley Master thought for a moment before agreeing. "I know. Fine, in that case, I hope you join me after the work is completed."

"Yes, Sir. We'd love to."

Before leaving, the Valley Master walked to Noel and patted his shoulders a few times. "You're good, Young Man."

He looked like he was praising him, but his head suddenly came closer to Noel's ears as he whispered a few words.

"Haha, I'm looking forward to your work." The Valley Master laughed and stepped back, leaving Noel in shock. No one knew what he said to Noel.

Chapter 363 Movements

"Alright. Today is the day we finish our job. We don't know when the exact time they'll attack us, but I'm pretty sure that it's going to be today. Make sure you're aware of your surroundings and prepare for battle," said Paul.

They had been working on the lake for the past three days, but there wasn't a single movement coming. So, they thought the enemies wouldn't come to them at all.

On the other hand, they had gathered some information about the demons' activities. The city had experienced a lot of attacks during their project since they couldn't stop the flow of the river that had been contaminated.

Luckily, the city's soldiers and the Valley Master managed to stop them completely.

"Still, are they truly coming?" Stella asked with a frown.

"We don't know about it yet."

"I mean if they don't come, isn't it bad for the two captains we've invited to this place? They should have work to do instead of wasting their time with this. I'm afraid they're going to complain about how we're wasting their time."

"I don't know. If they complain, I'll take responsibility for it. Even so, if there is a possibility of enemies appearing, I won't hesitate to ask for help. So, make sure you keep the danger in your mind."

Stella nodded, not complaining anymore. On the one hand, she wanted smooth sailing for this mission. On the other hand, if there was no danger, they would receive complaints from other squads, so this was the reason for her question.

Now that they had one mind for today, they immediately headed to the lake.

Surprisingly, the Valley Master had waited for them in front of the gate to share his gratefulness.

"Well, this is the last day. After finishing your work, come to my castle and have dinner. I'd like to express my gratitude to all of you."

Paul nodded. "Thank you for receiving us."

The Valley Master smiled and saw them off.

The group immediately started working on the purification.

Only Zion was missing in this group, considering he had been tasked to bring another Captain.

Paul, Stella, Rose, and Anna were looking around, making sure there were no enemies.

It was a tense day because they had to ensure the team's safety.

...

As they expected, there were a lot of movements coming from around them.

The first movement came from the hill in the east. There was a woman standing on top of the tree, watching the entire valley with a bored expression.

"Hmm... The work is about to be completed. If the Supreme Devil Organization is going to attack them alongside the demons, then it's better to do it after they finish their work. After all, they can simply repel the demons and occupy this place with fresh running water.

"In that case, there won't be any attack during the day. Then again, we can't rule out any possibility." Clara thought for a moment and turned to the castle. "Still, if they're going to attack, the first one to make a move is the Superior Demon from the north..."

Clara seemed to be planning something, but she decided to wait for it.

Just like her, among the mountain range in the south, there was a group of fifty people standing side by side.

The one leading them was a muscular bald man. His body was emitting bloodlust and his gaze could make one tremble in fear.

He glared at the people he brought and said, "Tonight is the time for us to occupy that land. This is going to be fertile land that can contribute a lot to the organization, so failure is not allowed. Anyone who contributes to the failure will be executed by me. Understood?"

"Yes, Sir." They nodded their heads. To fight the Valley Master and his soldiers, they brought five Devil Inspectors and twenty Devil Officers. With the help of the demons, this attack shouldn't fail.

But as expected, the valley might be the center of attention right now. If there was Clara in the East, the demon in the North, and the Supreme Devil Organization in the south, then there was one more captain in the west, though he hadn't arrived yet.

Zion was leading a thin young man to the fort. The young man had slanted eyes and long blonde hair tied into a horsetail. Unlike the Devil Bishop from the Supreme Devil Organization, he appeared friendly and harmless.

Even his weapon was a rapier. Still, as one would expect from a Captain, he was following Zion's top speed with ease.

Still, the problem remained in his head as he couldn't help but frown. "Are we going to be late for the party, Zion?"

"I'm not sure about that. Besides, we can't do anything, considering this is the fastest we can go."

"I can go even faster, though." The man smiled, teasing him.

"That's certainly true. In fact, I apologize for wasting your time with my slow speed."

"Well, your speed is already so high that it's beyond belief. If you were in my squad, I would have nurtured you."

"That's an honor."

"Haha, you're qualified for that. If only your body is slimmer, you might be able to increase your speed further."

Zion didn't know how to react to the last one, considering he kept his body like this for a reason. Though, he didn't refute him either since he precisely knew what he could do with a slimmer body.

"Thank you for your words, but I'd like to remain the same. This is the only thing I can't give up."

"Well, there is nothing I can say if you want it like that. But you're free to change the squad if you ever feel like quitting the Demon Relief Squad."

"Haha, thank you for the invitation, but I enjoy the company of my squad. It's truly an honor to get praise from you... After all, you are the fastest guy in the Demon Banner Army, the Demon Assassination Squad's Captain, Captain Lucian."

Chapter 364 Celebration...Or Not

Just like many people's predictions, there was no one who attacked them during the purification. And Jonathan finally removed the soil from the lake, allowing the lake to become one again.

After that, he tested them one last time to make sure they didn't leave any poison behind.

As soon as they had completed the work, they immediately wrapped up and returned to the city to bring the joyous news.

"There was no ambush...I guess we'll hear a lot of things from Captain Clara after this." Stella scratched the back of her head, thinking how awful it would be when their captain finally regrouped with them.

Paul nodded. "Either way, it's good that no one is hurt. That's the most important. All kinds of punishment and lectures are better than having one of you crippled or dead. So, that's all I care."

The group nodded their heads in agreement.

Unbeknownst to them, Noel had known another secret, which the Water Lord whispered to him a few days ago. He was still pondering about it since it was a crucial factor in their plan.

At the same time, he couldn't say anything about this to this squad. At the very least, it was better if they didn't suspect anything to make it even more believable.

'Still, to think the Valley Master asked me like that... Even now, I still couldn't understand the depth of the Valley Master. His ability is way beyond me, considering he can make a plan of that level.

'Now that I think about it, it seems that my plan has been a little too straightforward. All I do is use my abilities to overcome any challenge. I have never tried to lower the enemy's guard, pull them in, and execute them.

'I should have thought about this already... I should become shrewd. Even my father could manipulate his own execution, so it's clear that if I want to meet my father, I should be as shrewd as him or even more.

'Instead of searching for him, I might be able to trick him into coming out to meet me by himself.'

Noel furrowed his eyebrows, realizing something important. He was a former noble and if all the prestigious noble families saw the current him, he would surely become one of the top candidates for political marriages.

He looked like he was as talented as Anna since he was a Spirit Wielder. He also had the Ardagan Family, the richest family in the kingdom, on his back. And he was a genius who could think of a plan to handle all his problems.

However, the politics were harsher than that. In this political battle, they had to scheme against each other. If they didn't constantly outsmart the others, they would be devoured.

And Noel lacked that shrewdness to outsmart those people. He realized it after meeting the Valley Master.

He clenched his fists and muttered inwardly, "That's right. I'll admit my defeat for today. However, the next time I meet the Valley Master, I'm going to outsmart him."

No one was aware of Noel's thoughts because he maintained his poker face all the time.

As soon as they reached the city, they washed their bodies and wore formal clothes.

"Welcome." The butler smiled, accepting them. "Please follow me. The Valley Master is waiting for you in the dining room."

They nodded and followed the butler to the dining room, finding a long table that could fit a total of twenty people.

When they came in, the Valley Master approached them with a huge smile. "Thank you for helping my city."

"We were just doing our job." Paul humbly nodded.

"Haha, for you it was just a normal job, but for us, it was life-saving. Do you know how much it would affect the city if the problem wasn't fixed within a short period of time? And even if you could drain it, we would have a problem in getting the water."

"If that's the case, you should thank Noel. After all, he's the one doing all the job."

"That's right. I should be thanking him." The Valley Master nodded with a serious expression before moving to Noel. "Thank you very much, Young Man. If not for you coming to this city, there would be many problems coming."

"No, no. I just happen to have this ability, so I believe I should use it properly."

"Haha, you're very humble. Even I, who was known as the Water Lord, didn't have the purification ability. It was truly a good ability, you know." The Valley Master patted his shoulder before gently dragging him. "Let's go. Sit next to me. I'd like to personally thank you again."

Noel made a weird smile because he was forced to sit next to the Valley Master. And Paul was in the same position as him, just in the opposite direction.

It was clear that the biggest contribution to this mission was Noel.

"Haha, please serve the meal." The Valley Master smiled, asking the butler and the maid to bring out their food.

One by one, the table was filled with food. Last but not least, they poured out wine to drink.

"This is my wine collection, a thirty years old wine called Regel D. Blue. Try it." The Valley Master smiled while holding his cup, slightly spinning the glasses. He moved his nose next to the glasses, smelling the sweet aroma.

Cough!

The Valley Master coughed twice after smelling it as if it was a bit too strong. "Excuse me. Haha, as expected, the aroma is quite good."

Noel looked at his own glass with a troubled expression.

"What's wrong, Young Man?"

"Actually, I don't like to get drunk." Noel smiled awkwardly. "It's not because I don't have resistance, but because of my oath."

"I see. That's easy." The Valley Master raised his hand and the wine from Noel's glass suddenly floated in the air and spun a few times before falling back into his glass.

Everyone was staring at the wine, thinking it was a performance.

"I have evaporated the alcohol content. You shouldn't get drunk because of it... In fact, it'll taste like grape juice."

"Haha." Noel felt a bit embarrassed but nodded. "Thank you."

"And now... cheers." The Valley Master raised his glass.

The rest also did the same. "Cheers."

They drank the sweet wine with a smile on their face. Unfortunately for them, their smiles would soon disappear when the Valley Master suddenly coughed abruptly while pressing his chest.

"Gah... Gah..." The Valley Master gritted his teeth while grasping his heart. "This is..."

Before he could say anything, the Valley Master fell to the ground, unconscious.

Chapter 365 Emergency

"..." Everyone was shocked because they couldn't understand what had just happened.

"This is..." Paul gasped and panicked. He hurriedly went to the Valley Master to check his condition.

Meanwhile, the butlers and the maids were shocked because they didn't know what to do with this situation.

"Master, Master!" His personal butler came to him and checked his condition. Without hesitation, he declared, "He's poisoned!"

"What?!" All the people were shocked, not understanding what had happened. They looked at each other with pale faces.

The butler glared at Noel and the others at first, but he said, "This must be the work of someone in the kitchen or the maids and butlers."

Noel and the others never touched anything before the last moment, so it was clear that there was a mole hiding in this place.

"This is..." Anna gasped, thinking, 'No way. Is this the reason why this place fell in my past life? The Valley Master was poisoned? And because Noel wasn't here, Paul and the others had to face both the demons and the Supreme Devil Organization.'

Anna realized that even if they had prepared, there were only two captains who would help us with this problem.

Even if they wanted to kill the Devil Bishop, it was impossible because they lacked one more person that could tilt the battle in their favor.

That was why Anna bit her lips, thinking they couldn't achieve anything in this situation.

"Kh." Anna tried to find a solution that only she knew.

The butler, on the other hand, gritted his teeth and shouted, "We need to bring him to his room right now and call the doctor."

"We'll help you bring him to his room and you can call the doctor," Paul suggested.

The butler thought for a moment and pointed at one butler. "You... lead them to the master room."

They didn't know what to do in this situation other than follow the head butler since he was closest to him.

The butler led the Demon Relief Squad to bring the Valley Master to his room while the head butler tried to find the doctor.

"What is this? How in the world does this happen?" Paul bit his lips, not knowing why there would be poison in his drink.

However, he soon remembered what Noel had told him about the mole. Back then, Noel suspected there was a mole among them who would call the Supreme Devil Organization. "Don't tell me..."

Paul looked at Noel and asked, "Are we going to be attacked now?"

"I'm afraid so." Noel nodded with a serious expression, confirming his doubt. Now that the Valley Master had fallen, no one would be able to stop him anymore.

"Noel. I'll be taking care of this, so you take care of the group. I know you're smart, so do everything you can right now! And we need to find a way to inform others."

As soon as he received the command from Paul, Noel immediately gave his instruction. "Who is in charge of sending the message?"

"Me. We have a small bomb that can release a bright light in the sky, so we'll use it to inform the people that we're in an emergency. I'll send them into the sky with my strength." Jonathan explained.

"In that case, Jonathan and Stella will inform them. However, not now."

"Not now?" Jonathan became confused. He thought it would be too late if they didn't inform them right away. But Noel ignored his reaction and said, "Rose and Ben will go to the wall and watch the movement. I'm afraid there will be demons from the north and people from the south. So, inform Jonathan right away after finding them and that's when you're sending the signal."

"But..." Jonathan wanted to argue, but it seemed Noel had another plan in his mind.

"Alright. We'll go straight away."

"What are we going to do then?" Anna asked with a serious expression.

"You'll be with me to do something." Noel had a reason for keeping Anna by his side. The only person who should 'kill' him was Anna, so it would be best if he kept her near him to see an opportunity to execute their plan.

"Anyway, that's the current instruction. I'm sure that the two captains standing by will know what they're supposed to do in this situation."

"Alright then. Let's go with this plan." Stella nodded and turned to Jonathan, signaling they had to go to prepare their item.

Rose and Ben also planned to leave, but Noel suddenly grabbed Rose's arm, stopping her.

"Noel?" Rose was confused since they were in a serious situation.

Noel made a determined smile as if assuring Rose that everything would be right. "Rose. I know that the situation doesn't seem like it, but I'll make sure that you can get your revenge today. But to do that, I need you to mark all the people who know about this poisoning incident."

"What are you—" Rose was completely dumbfounded, but Noel had let her go, asking her to go on her way.

Noel had turned around and dragged Anna to another place.

"Oi, Noel. What are you planning to do now?" Anna gritted her teeth. She never expected that they would be overwhelmed from both sides and had no chance to turn the situation around. "We're in a very dangerous situation. There is even a mole that we have to handle to make sure that nothing happens in this city. Do you understand what this means?"

"I know." Noel nodded with a serious expression. "You just have to stay by my side since this is a perfect chance for me to 'die.' Make sure you don't waste that chance."

She thought she had prepared for it, but she still felt a bit hurt to know she would be separated from Noel. They had done a lot of stuff together, so it was such a shame that they had to go separate ways from here.

"But we have a more important task. Now that the Valley Master can't do anything, how do we fight them, especially with the mole?"

Noel smirked and said, "Don't worry. Everything has been set up perfectly. All we need to do is to kill them."

Chapter 366 Mole

"Hurry up. Where is it?" Jonathan asked while scrambling through the piles of items they had in their carriage.

"It should be in the first carriage. Since we haven't used it before, we shouldn't have moved it." Ben also helped him but to no avail.

They were gritting their teeth since they didn't have a lot of time. There would be something happening soon, so they had to call the two captains as soon as possible.

But no matter how hard they searched for it, they couldn't find this item.

"Where is the item?" Ben gritted his teeth, starting to become frustrated.

"I also want to know that answer." Jonathan bit his lips. "How about searching for the second carriage?"

"Alright. You, too, should bring out all these items to make it easier for us to find them."

Jonathan and Ben reached an agreement. While Ben ran to the second carriage, Jonathan used his Telekinesis to bring out all the items.

Yet, despite searching both carriages, they couldn't find the item they were looking for.

"What is this? How in the world could we not find the item when we need it the most?" Jonathan stomped to the ground, releasing his anger.

"Wait, that is..." Jonathan stopped him and pointed at the basket where they placed a bunch of tools.

"What are you pointing—" Ben followed his finger and found the basket before falling silent.

Both of them seemed to understand what each other was thinking.

"Ben... This is..."

"Yes. The position of the tool has been changed. Although we just toss every tool into this basket without tidying it up, we always put the heavier tool at the bottom. But why is this hammer actually at the top?"

Jonathan and Ben gasped, realizing something.

"No way. You are thinking what I'm thinking, Ben?"

"I sure do. There was a mole who knew about our signal, so this person took it away. And the only person who knew about our meeting with the Valley Master was..."

...

Roar!

Roar!

Numerous demons were coming toward their city, startling all the soldiers on the wall.

They immediately rang the bell to inform the rest of the soldiers to fight.

"All the soldiers have to go to the wall right now. There are a lot of..." The soldier, who was informing the others, gasped when he saw the sheer number of demons coming toward them. "What is this..."

Normally, they would fight one or two hundred demons at the time. But the number of demons they could see right now surpassed anything they had ever seen.

"There are a thousand, no, a few thousands... No, it might even reach ten thousand..." The soldier dropped his jaw to the ground. His body began trembling because he didn't even know whether they could stop this or not. "We only have one thousand soldiers in the city and we always win the battle. But this time, there are a few thousand demons at the very least. Are we supposed to fight all of them?"

But before he could think of anything, there was a shadow in the distance. Every step it took made the ground vibrate.

"What is that monster..." Another soldier pointed at the shadow in shock. "The height alone is around fifteen meters and nothing can stop that giant body, even this wall."

"That must be the Superior Demon lying on our south, that Demon Bear."

"Not good. We have to tell the Valley Master to take action. We can't let the Superior Demon come here!"

Before they could even go back to tell the Valley Master, another soldier reached the top of the wall while bringing emergency news.

"This is bad. I have received the news from the castle. It's said that the Valley Master is poisoned. His current condition is unknown!"

"!!!" The people were shocked when they heard it. They always thought that the Valley Master was capable of repelling the Superior Demon. But they never imagined they would be in a situation where the Valley Master couldn't fight while the Superior Demon came.

"This is..." The soldiers started to fall on their knees as if realizing this battle was as good as lost. There was no way they could stop a Superior Demon without the Valley Master.

They didn't realize that Rose was among the soldiers. She had reached this place for a while to do her mission of observing the demons. However, she couldn't help but remember what Noel had said earlier.

"I'll make sure that you can get your revenge today. But to do that, I need you to mark all the people who know about this poisoning incident."

'Why does he want me to mark these people? No, wait...' Rose suddenly came to a realization. 'To boost the soldiers' morale, they should hide the news about the poisoning incident. Yet, giving this kind of news to the soldiers will pummel their morale. No, in the first place, there are only a handful of people who know about the poisoning incident.

'Other than us, the maids and the butlers are locked in that room to be investigated. There are only two butlers who come out of that room, the butler that leads us to safety and the head butler who... No way.'

Rose gasped as she could finally understand what had happened. The only reason why this news could get out was from mouth to mouth. The butler who led them had to return to the dining room to be questioned, but they had never seen the head butler anywhere after that.

There was a mole in the castle. This was something they had agreed on. But they never expected that the mole was actually the head butler, a Spirit Grandmaster.

As she came to that realization, Paul was holding his left arm, so the blood didn't come out of the wound.

He was glaring at the head butler who was supposed to be getting the doctor. Instead of dragging a doctor here, he was bringing his sword and inflicting that wound.

Paul gritted his teeth, glaring at the head butler. "What do you mean by this?"

Chapter 367 Signal

"What do you mean by this?" Paul gritted his teeth while holding the pain. He never thought that the head butler was going to do something like this. "I have some suspicions about a mole in this place, but to think the mole is you..."

The Head Butler, who was also a Spirit Grandmaster like him, snorted without saying anything.

"You are unqualified to be a butler. To think you would point your sword at your ma—" Before Paul could finish his words, he felt a jolt in his body as he fell to his knees. "This is..."

"As expected, it seems if you don't take it directly, it is less effective and takes a long time to get affected." The butler narrowed his eyes.

'I can't even move a muscle?' Paul gritted his teeth, never expecting the poison to be this powerful. He realized that the poison came through his slash after the sword grazed him, but even so, this was still too much, considering he had been using his Spiritual Energy around that area.

"It's useless. What I have used is the Seven-Colored Poison. You won't be able to fight against it."

"Seven-Colored Poison?" Paul recognized this name. 'The Seven-Colored Poison was a mixture of seven deadly poison herbs. Although it's hard to produce because not only you have to find all the seven deadly poison herbs, but the amount you can turn into the real poison is low. And it should be impossible for them to be able to acquire it...'

"The Fagant Leaf should have gone extinct a few hundred years ago and the only person left who possesses this leaf is..." Paul gasped. "No way, one of the twelve leaders of the Tower Association, the Poison Lord, has joined your side?"

"That's how it is." The Head Butler smirked. "It's truly hard to acquire this leaf since its effect is the best. They can seal one's Spiritual Energy, no matter if they're a demon or a human. And now..."

The Head Butler placed his sword right at Paul's neck. "I can kill you both effortlessly."

He raised his sword and swung it down.

...

On top of the wall, Rose and Stella noticed a few people who had been dampening people's morale.

Rose and Stella had understood why Noel wanted to pay attention to them. Without hesitation, they followed them quietly, wondering where they were going after this.

To their surprise, there were a total of ten people gathering in a dark alley.

"We have done our job. All we need to do is to wait for the bishop to come."

"That's right. Did you see their faces? They were completely hopeless."

"No one would be able to stop us now."

They thought they had won the battle, but they didn't know Rose and Stella had been tailing them this whole time.

Both of them looked at each other as if whispering something.

'There doesn't seem anyone strong in their group. However, we shouldn't take them out right away. We have to open their mouth to know about their plan.'

Stella heard Rose's voice through illusion but gave her a confused look, not knowing how to do it.

'Wait for a moment. I have a plan.'

Both of them nodded as they disappeared to discuss their plan.

...

In the meantime, Jonathan and Ben had gone to the opposite wall as if they had a plan.

"We can't use the bomb anymore because it has been seized and we don't know where it is right now. So, we have to call the two captains in another way," said Jonathan while raising his hand. "I'm going to shoot a ridiculous amount of Spiritual Energy into the sky to alarm them."

"But we can't do it right now because we have to pull the enemy in first. If we miss this chance, we might not be able to kill that bishop. We have to kill him since he is one of the first few people we have to kill in the Supreme Devil Organization."

"Are you serious? We only have two Captains now and the Valley Master can't help us with anything. Do you think the two of them can handle both the bishop and the Superior Demon? Let's think about this rationally." Jonathan bit his lips.

Ben couldn't say anything. Of course he knew about it, but the Blood Berserker was that big of a deal.

"In that case, how are you planning to do this? Are we gonna call the captains right now to scare the enemies?"

"But if there is a mole inside, those people must have known about the existence of the two captains..."

"Yet, he still dares to come..."

"Does he have some assurance in handling both captains?"

"I don't think so. Then, what is his aim that can stop both captains?"

"That's..."

Both of them looked at each other as if they understood who would become the next target. Yes, they were the targets.

"If we're the targets, then shouldn't we try to escape from this place? If he dares to fight the two captains with that Superior Demon, it's clear that he has a way of dealing with all of us. In that case, we shouldn't become the burden for the two captains..."

"..." Jonathan fell silent, contemplating. "Then, should we inform the rest of the group?"

"No, we should inform the two captains first to come here. Since he's going to come no matter what, it doesn't matter whether we call the captains now or later. In fact, it'll be safer to do it now."

Jonathan nodded in agreement as he started gathering his Spiritual Energy into his arm. "Alright. Let's do it."

Ben nodded. "I'll support you later."

Jonathan took a deep breath as the Spiritual Energy around the area began to concentrate in his arm.

The blue-colored light began to shine on top of the wall, startling the soldiers. However, Jonathan didn't care about their distress as he raised his hand, shooting out a bird into the sky before making it explode to create a huge blue lamp in the sky.

Boom!

Chapter 368 Manipulation

Boom!

The explosion stunned all people whether they were in the city or outside the city.

"This is..." A bald man observed the huge light in the sky with a serious expression before he shouted, "Let's do it! We shall conquer this city!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The Supreme Devil Organization had moved out. The Blood Berserker was releasing his bloodlust to the surroundings as he became excited since he could kill so many people tonight.

Meanwhile, the other two captains who had been watching the city from afar frowned.

"This is... Shouldn't they have the bomb to give a signal? As for this ability, this looks like Jonathan wasting his Spiritual Energy..." Clara frowned, trying to understand their situation. "Still, it doesn't feel right... Even the Water Lord hasn't made his appearance even though the Superior Demon is about to reach the city."

It didn't take too long for Clara to realize something was wrong with their plan. She immediately jumped forward to assist them before feeling an ominous presence from the south.

"!!!" She turned her head around with a serious expression. "This is..."

Clara wasn't the only one making her move. After seeing that signal, Zion recognized it and said, "This is Jonathan's ability."

"Huh? Doesn't the Zero Squad have the signal bomb to use?"

"Yes. We should have one. That's why I don't understand why they waste their Spiritual Energy like this."

"Unless the situation is not going according to the plan."

"!!!" They became serious in an instant, knowing they had to help them as soon as possible.

"Let's go!"

"Yes, Sir."

Both of them hurriedly moved toward the city to help them before feeling the overwhelming pressure from the south like Clara.

When they turned around, they could see a group of people coming down the hill. The leader was a bald man who was emitting an extraordinary killing intent.

"A Devil Bishop..." Both Clara and Lucian stopped for a moment, thinking they had to stop them.

"Captain Lucian, it's not the time for you to make your move yet. We've called another Captain, so we can lure him first before taking his life." Zion stopped him, reminding his position as a Demon Assassin Squad's leader.

"I know. I'm more concerned about the town's situation. Even at this time, the Water Lord hasn't come out to deal with the Superior Demon, so it's clear there is a problem with the Water Lord himself."

"Then are you planning to..."

"Yes. We'll stop the Superior Demon first while raising the soldiers' morale. After that, we will shift our plan gradually depending on the situation."

"Understood. In that case, I'll go to my comrade to know about the situation before informing you about the change of plan."

"Let's go." Lucian accepted it and began to move toward the Superior Demon.

While the people outside the city were confused with the development, the people inside were panic-stricken. There were rumors about their city getting destroyed because the Water Lord had been poisoned.

However, they stopped for a moment when they saw the huge blue light in the sky.

"This is..."

The people were confused, but the one panicking right now was the members of the Supreme Devil Organization.

"What? Haven't we disposed of the signal bomb?"

"That's right. They shouldn't be able to inform them before it's too late. How did they do it?"

The people were trying to figure out the situation before another guy came in and shouted, "So, this is where you are. I'm a Devil Inspector under the Blood Berserker. What is happening right now?! Is there a change of plan?"

"We don't know either. We have disposed of their signal bomb."

"Tsk." The guy clicked his tongue and said, "Then, we have to change our plan. The bishop is besieged by two Captains of the Demon Banner Army right now. So, I need all of you to gather the remaining members to this place right away. I'm going to lead you out of this city to regroup with the rest."

"U...Understood!"

They nodded and dispersed to the area, trying to gather all their members.

Surprisingly, there were a total of one hundred people who had been spread in this city. They were disguised as farmers, shopkeepers and even butlers in the castle.

It was shocking because there were too many people infiltrating the city.

"Sir Inspector. We have gathered everyone here. Other than another Inspector who is currently dealing with the Water Lord, everyone has gathered here," said one of them who seemed to be their leader.

"Alright. Let's go." The guy nodded with a serious expression as he led them through a few alleys to sneak out of the city.

But suddenly, they stopped in a big alley, surrounded by buildings.

"Why did we stop?"

They became confused because the guy was supposed to lead them out of the city.

However, five shadows appeared on top of the building, surrounding them.

"This is..." They looked at those figures, not recognizing all of them.

"No, you're not from the organization!" One of them shouted, realizing they had walked into their trap.

"Leave some of them alive and kill the rest!" Noel's voice echoed in their ears.

The guy, who led them here, smiled as his body glitched a few times before the illusion disappeared, revealing a woman figure. She was Rose.

Meanwhile, those five above the buildings were none other than Noel and the rest of the group.

Rose's plan was to trick them and lure everyone to one place so that they could capture some of them. Meanwhile, Noel's plan was to make Rose realize her plan so that they could eliminate all of them.

Upon realizing it, Rose sent Stella to inform Noel about their plan and it was at that time Jonathan and Ben came back.

It turned out Noel had been manipulating them the whole time. Noel knew that the mole would remove their signal bomb and Ben would come back with Jonathan because they had to help Paul. The same applied to Rose and Stella, allowing them to regroup immediately.

It first started from when the Valley Master whispered something to Noel's ears.

He said, "There is going to be poison in my drink or probably in my glass since it's impossible for me not to notice poisonous liquid. I will distract everyone's attention while you remove the poison. I'll fake the entire situation to win this battle. I know you're smart, so you figure out the rest."

This was the message. The Valley Master knew there was a mole among his employee, but he didn't know who was the mole. Hence, he used this tactic to lure the mole out, which turned out to be the head butler.

And this was also the time Noel learned he had been holding back when making his plan this whole time.

'That's right. No wonder I'm not my father's match. All of my plans are about how I can solve the problems while my father always manipulates all the people around him to create a new problem that he can solve.

'In that case, instead of trying to solve the moles by finding them, I should have gathered them in one place so that they will be eliminated altogether.' Noel smirked as he waved his hand, shouting. "Kill them!"

Chapter 369 Clara

The Supreme Devil Organization couldn't do anything as there were four Spirit Masters and two Spirit Wielders on their side while their strongest people were only Spirit Practitioners.

They couldn't even do anything as they were completely suppressed by these people. Even their sounds couldn't go out because of Rose's illusion, making them think they were screaming but instead, they weren't doing anything.

They took all the enemies without any problems.

Meanwhile, outside the city, the Blood Berserker was smiling when he reached the city wall. All soldiers were frozen in fear as they couldn't withstand the bloodlust and killing intent emanating from him.

However, a female's voice resounded across the battlefield.

"Activate the Protective Enchantment!"

"!!!" The Blood Berserker furrowed his eyebrows and turned around, finding Clara heading straight toward him.

Clara raised both hands, releasing multiple threads. She waved her hands, shooting forth those threads toward the members of the Supreme Devil Organization.

Suddenly, the Blood Berserker came between them and punched forward. His fist caused a thunderclap and the shock wave blew the threads away.

Clara still continued approaching them despite seeing such a powerful fist.

"So, you're the Demon Relief Squad's Captain, Clara!" The Blood Berserker recognized her now that she had come closer.

"You're just something lower than a human."

"As expected of the Demon Banner Army, you look down on everyone." The Blood Berserker smirked and punched her face. The red-colored Spiritual Energy swirled around his arm. When the fist hit its target, it would release a burst that would inflict more damage to one's body.

However, his opponent this time was one of the Captains of the Demon Banner Army, the current rank 5th, Clara.

"!!!" He suddenly felt his punch hit a cushion, unable to move forward.

It turned out Clara formed a cobweb with the threads on her hand, stopping this punch.

"It seems that I've been underestimated. I'll break your fingers with this!" The Blood Berserker roared, releasing an even stronger force from his body to break through this cobweb.

The more Clara held on to this, the more her fingers would break or get twisted.

Knowing this fact, Clara decided to jump a bit, allowing the force to blow her away.

"All of you enter before they erect the protective barrier!"

The members of the organization immediately followed his direction while Clara gritted her teeth, never expecting that the soldiers hadn't activated the protective enchantment that would block the attacks.

"What are you doing? Hurry up and activate the b—" Before Clara could finish her words, the Blood Berserker had reached her while plunging his fist.

Clara clicked her tongue and jumped back.

However, the Blood Berserker still finished his punch. The red-colored energy swirling around his arm flew forth, turning into a tornado made of blood.

Clara clicked her tongue and got engulfed by the tornado.

However, the tornado suddenly got twisted from the inside, causing each side to hit and neutralize the other.

"As expected from a captain, you're tough."

Clara snorted. "You talk too much despite your weak strength."

"Weak strength, huh?" The Blood Berserker smirked. "That's right. If I'm not wrong, your Demon Relief Squad is the one getting called to this place. I wonder how you will feel when you see how I treat them after conquering this city."

"!!!" Clara's expression darkened. She had heard about the Blood Berserker too, especially from Rose. The Blood Berserker was a ruthless and cruel man. He would have done many things that people condoned. Even a torturer would find him cruel.

So, if the Blood Berserker ever attacked her team, there was no telling what he would do. And it would be a horror to see it.

Hence, Clara knew she had to finish him if possible. A man like this couldn't be left alive.

Clara took a deep breath and glared at the Blood Berserker.

The Blood Berserker suddenly felt a chill down his spine. He looked at Clara, who was emanating killing intent at the same level as his. He thought his killing intent was one of the fiercest in the world, but there was actually someone who had something similar. And that person was actually a doctor.

"Haha, interesting. I'm going to defeat you but not kill you yet. After all, I'm going to make you see—" The Blood Berserker suddenly stopped because Clara had appeared before him while releasing her threads around his neck.

The Blood Berserker actually let her wrap her threads in his neck. Clara thought the Blood Berserker couldn't react to this surprise attack, but it turned out he allowed her to do it because Clara would be close enough to him.

As soon as she was within reach, the Blood Berserker smirked and grabbed her left arm.

"Got you!"

"!!!"

Clara hurriedly kicked him to gain enough force to get away, but it was futile. The Blood Berserker used his strength to crush her arm. Meanwhile, Clara also utilized the threads to cut his neck.

In the end, both of them let go of each other when there was enough momentum for them to get away.

"..." Clara gritted her teeth, never expecting that the Blood Berserker would resort to this kind of attack. She looked at the Blood Berserker's neck which had been covered in blood. The threads managed to cut it a bit, but it was only a superficial wound. He wouldn't die with only this wound.

Meanwhile, Clara was in a worse situation than she expected. She looked down at her arm while gritting her teeth.

She never expected that the Blood Berserker would manage to crack her bone in that instant. There was already a vast amount of Spiritual Energy covering her entire body, so it wouldn't be that easy for her to get injured, but the Blood Berserker surpassed it.

"To think you wouldn't even let out a single sound even after I almost destroyed your bones." The Blood Berserker smirked.

Clara's expression became cold as she covered her entire arm with the threads, tightening it so that the bones would have less stress when she forced it to move.

She glared at him and said, "You're dead."

Chapter 370 Lucian

Meanwhile, on the other side of the city, the Demon Bear was terrorizing the soldiers with its presence.

"Activate the barrier immediately!"

"That's right. We will have to protect this wall first and evacuate the people."

"But the Water Lord is poisoned."

"Who cares about that? I should have died if not for Water Lord taking me in, so I'm going to fight to the end for him."

The soldiers were shouting at each other, trying to raise their morale. However, the colossal Demon Bear came closer and closer, making them afraid. Every step it took caused the ground to vibrate, so they couldn't help but shudder in fear.

A single sweep from this demon would be enough to destroy the wall. At the same time, this was the reason why they should activate the barrier right away.

After all, it should be able to stop the Demon Bear a few times, buying them some time.

Suddenly, the wall shone as a few incomplete runes appeared on the wall's surface. If Noel was here, he would have recognized these three runes.

These were the Advanced Fortification Rune, Spiritual Energy Barrier Rune, and Spiritual Energy Gathering Rune.

Normally, they only used the first and third runes since they were used to strengthen the walls physically and gather enough Spiritual Energy to supply the rune respectively. Meanwhile, the Spiritual Energy Barrier Rune was an even more advanced Rune. Even Noel didn't know whether he could draw this kind of rune or not.

A translucent wall appeared in front of this stone wall. The demons on the ground were soon split into two because the translucent wall stopped them.

The Demon Bear saw this rune and roared as if feeling challenged by this kind of hurdle. He gathered the Spiritual Energy in his paw. The Spiritual Energy was rampaging and fierce that it looked like a blazing fire.

The Demon Bear roared and charged forward, stomping any demons in his way since he couldn't be bothered to wait for the rest of the demons to give way.

Although the Demon Bear ended up killing dozens of demons, no one felt happy at this moment because the Demon Bear had finally reached them.

The Demon Bear struck the barrier with all its might.

Bam!

The collision alone created a massive shock wave that blew away all the demons in the surrounding. The ground was shaking for a few seconds and the loud bang struck fear in everyone's heart.

"Hiii..." They were scared still. If they were hit by this attack, they would have died on the spot.

In fact, if the bear hit the ground, a huge crater would be born.

"Humans and its useless invention! Do you think I'll let you off after you disturb my sleep?!" The bear roared, surprisingly speaking in human language.

"The demon can speak our language?"

"Impossible. I have never heard of such a thing."

They didn't know that a Superior Demon's brain was already beyond an average human's brain. So, it wasn't that weird for them to be able to speak human language.

However, the normal soldiers didn't have this knowledge, so they were panicking when they heard the demon speaking their language.

And even worse, after seeing his attack was blocked by the barrier, the bear raised its paw again, planning to attack it the second time.

When it was still gathering its Spiritual Energy, there was a blinding light coming from the side.

The light looked like a spear, piercing through anything. No demons could even stop it as it continued toward the Demon Bear.

"!!!" The Demon Bear widened its eyes and waved its paw toward this white light with all its might.

Roar!

Roar!

The Demon Bear let out a roar, trying to destroy this white spear.

The clash between the light and the bear's paw caused a similar shock wave that blew away the demons. In an instant, the field was cleared because of those two.

However, the Demon Bear seemed to be stronger as it managed to deflect the light.

The light ended up hitting the ground and exploded. The light engulfed more than three hundred demons and decimated every single of them.

When the light disappeared, the bear could see a human standing in the middle of the explosion. He was none other than the captain of the Demon Assassination Squad, Lucian.

"That Demon Bear is stronger than I expected... To think I couldn't defeat it with a single attack." Lucian muttered with a smile. He raised his rapier again.

Despite how thin the rapier was, its durability had been reinforced by runes, allowing him to wield a rapier like a normal sword. And that thin pointed blade made it perform like a needle, being able to pierce through anything.

Unfortunately, the bear was stronger than he thought, deflecting the attack he put everything into it.

"I'm still wondering what is the Water Lord doing, considering he is supposed to be the one fighting this demon while we kill the people from the Supreme Devil Organization." Lucian narrowed his eyes when he saw numerous demons encircling him, planning to help their leader to take him down.

"Then, let's see whether you can do it or not." Lucian smiled and gathered the Spiritual Energy in his rapier again, planning to fight against all these demons by himself.

The Demon Bear looked at him and said, "It seems that I have to kill you first before I destroy this city. I don't want any city to disturb me anymore."

Lucian smirked and ignored him as he had to tell the soldiers on the wall. "I am a Captain from the Demon Banner Army. All soldiers, ready your weapon and protect the wall from the rest of the demons. I shall be the one taking care of this huge bear."

The soldiers heard his voice loud and clear.

"A Captain from the Demon Banner Army?"

"Captains are the strongest fighters in the Demon Banner Army... If it's him, then it's possible..."

"That's right. All soldiers, raise your weapons again. Let's repel the demons! We shouldn't be the one to go down."

"This is our city and we shall protect it with our own hands!"

"Uoh!"

The soldiers cheered as they became determined to protect their city.

Lucian smiled. "Then, I have to kill this bear for them."