

## **S vs Rebirth 591**

### Chapter 591 Luke And Leysha

Though, there was one more organization that got the information about Noel's book. It was a secret organization, whose name wasn't even known to the world.

The man leading the organization was a middle-aged man. He had black hair that looked similar to that of Noel. Yes, he was none other than Noel's father, Luke Ardagan.

After faking his death, he had been covering his identity.

Next to him stood a woman. She was holding a few documents in her hand as if she was trying to check them herself. But there were two books mixed in those documents. She was Noel's mother, Leysha Ardagan.

"I received the sample. Here you go." She put the two books in front of Luke with a smile. "What do you think?"

Luke opened the book while frowning. On the one hand, he still had a hard time believing it. On the other hand, the record seemed to be true.

Luke looked carefully and examined the runes on the books. "This... They are similar... They are similar to the ones in the Spirit Enchantment Book."

He couldn't help but close the book again to check the name of the book.

Introductory Rune Book.

Author: Noel Ardagan

He ended up stroking the name of the author with a sad expression. Even Leysha couldn't help but bite her lips, having the same feeling.

"He must have suffered out there..." Luke closed his eyes as if he was regretting all his choices.

"I know." Leysha nodded with a serious expression. "However..."

"Yeah." Luke let out a long sigh. "At that time, the Ardagan Family was already facing its end. Even though I have raised it to become the wealthiest family in the Muivell Kingdom, deep down, I know that there's nothing left to be used in the Ardagan Family. Sooner or later, the family will start to decline.

"I don't want Noel to bear the burden of the decline. He is a smart kid. I know that if he is the head of any noble family in the kingdom, he will be able to bring forth the family's potential. Unfortunately, the Ardagan Family is different.

"That's why the Ardagan Family has to be destroyed once. There are three reasons. First of all, there is already a traitor in our territory. Even with our preparation, the traitor managed to steal some inheritance. And the matter became even more ridiculous when the Supreme Devil Organization came into the mix.

"It had been plaguing the Ardagan Family for over three generations. It became an even bigger problem in my generation.

"The fact that they were aiming for Noel's life and Ardagan Sword was enough for me to do all this. Even with Dimitri protecting him, Noel might lose his life if he didn't get strong himself.

"That's why Noel had to go to the Demon Banner Army to hone himself." Luke gritted his teeth. He wanted to teach Noel himself, but it was impossible to change him. As long as they were still living in luxury, Noel wouldn't change.

Only that kind of setback could force Noel to improve. And he could only believe in his ability.

"Still, you have made a lot of preparations so that they can protect Noel. Even Dimitri is staying next to him." Leysha smiled. "Even if the family is ruined, you have preserved its core members. Sooner or later, Noel will be able to gather everyone back. And there will also be the new people that he brings into the family. When that happens, our son doesn't need to face that decline problem.

"Although we can't meet him right now, I still believe this is the best we can do for us, for him, and for the family."

Luke closed his eyes for a moment. "Yeah. You might be right. Unfortunately, we can't meet him yet... If we meet him now, there will surely be a lot of complications. Even right now, the Third Prince is still hiding his fangs. It's good that our son is smart enough to find a way around to stop anyone from monopolizing this knowledge..."

"You have taught him everything he needs to know. Right now, his eyes can discern things like yours." Leysha smiled.

"Though, there are some concerns..." Luke sighed, glancing at Leysha, specifically the ring hanging on her neck.

Leysha gently raised the ring, looking at it with a smile. "I wonder if Noel is close to a woman... I wonder what kind of person she is?"

"As long as it is his choice, I don't really mind. If she is ugly, we just have to create cosmetics or something that can enhance her appearance. If she is... not as smart as we thought, we could simply teach her. If she is not capable, she can train. I am not that supportive of a political marriage. Even if the woman he chooses is a woman, it's our job to change her until she is at the level where no one can look down on her. If people still say things, those are just excuses to hide their inability." Luke smiled.

"That's true." Leysha smiled back. "Though, Noel is going to face one of the biggest hurdles in his life. Now that the knowledge has spread, I'm afraid..."

"Many old and powerful nobles, huh? Even the other kingdoms will probably join..." Luke thought for a moment.

"You should be able to hold back those nobles and I can ask my father to help with the Greenwood Kingdom. But the other two kingdoms..." Leysha shook her head helplessly.

"Well, I'll search for a solution after this. For now, we will help spread the knowledge. If we can make it public knowledge, he will be safer. It seems I have to pay a visit to Styx Canva." Luke narrowed his eyes.

"That's true. But there's something you should worry about..." Leysha raised one finger as her expression turned serious.

Luke looked into her eyes as Leysha told him about the danger. "The Supreme Devil Organization is going to be more active now that the books are out. We should beat some fanatics."

#### Chapter 592 Greenwood Kingdom (1)

As expected of the former Royal ian, Raincart Ezenholm, Noel's grandfather, managed to spread the knowledge about runes in all directions.

Unlike Noel, he didn't have to hide his own existence. After all, the author was not him but his grandson, who was rumored to be dead.

And with this knowledge being spread openly, Raincart, of course, had to deal with the Greenwood Kingdom's royal family.

He was summoned to the royal palace. Normally, he would be judged by all the nobles. Yet, there were only four people inside the throne room: Raincart, the king, the prime minister, and the current Royal ian.

Raincart fell on one knee while greeting the king. "Raincart Ezenholm greets Your Majesty."

The king, Theodore El Greenwood, frowned. His expression was dark as if he experienced a lot of stress because of the recent matter.

"I think you already know the reason for calling you here... Teacher," said the king. Although he called him his teacher, his voice was cold as if he held some grudges.

"Of course. The Introductory Rune Book..." Raincart nodded.

"Then, I won't beat around the bush." The king asked with a strict tone. "Why do you spread it?"

Raincart fell silent. He had prepared for an answer, but as expected, their relationship as a former student and teacher made it hard for him to tell the reason.

"I believe Your Majesty has seen the books... But may I ask if the author of the book rings a bell in your ears?" Raincart asked.

Normally, the prime minister and the royal ian would berate him for answering the question with another question. But Raincart was a Royal ian, so he obviously understood that. Even if he was being interrogated, Raincart seemed to want to tell them something.

Theodore narrowed his eyes and said, "Noel Ardagan... I have heard about the Ardagan Family. They were from the Muivell Kingdom and seemed to have fallen not long ago. They were the wealthiest family in that kingdom, so of course, I knew them. What's your point?"

The Prime Minister seemed to catch something. "Wait a minute. Ardagan Family... Ezenholm Family... If I am not wrong, your daughter, Leysha Ezenholm, married the head of the Ardagan Family, Luke Ardagan... And this Noel Ardagan must be their son or, in other words, your grandson."

"..." Theodore fell silent when he grasped the whole situation.

"Yes." Raincart nodded, confirming it.

The prime minister continued, "We tried to investigate the author of the book, Noel Ardagan. But we only heard about his death on a mission... Are you telling us that the reason for your action is honoring your grandson?"

"Yes. I'm simply honoring the promise..." Raincart admitted it without hesitation.

"Raincart Ezenholm..." The Royal ian stepped forward. "You and I, as the former and current Royal ian, should know that there was no way a young person like that would be able to write that, right? No

matter how talented he was, someone who just reached adulthood wouldn't be able to create something more complete than the Spirit Enchantment."

Raincart smirked. "Because you are the current Royal ian that you haven't experienced and learned everything yet."

"You..." The Royal ian was simply stating common sense, so he was a bit offended when Raincart provoked him.

However, the king waved his hand, stopping him. He had caught a hidden meaning in his sentence. "What are you talking about? Elaborate."

Raincart nodded. "As we all know, the Spirit Enchantment came from the ancestors of the royal family..."

"That's obvious." The king nodded. The Spirit Enchantment was basically the reason why the royal family could reign this kingdom.

But Raincart asked another question about their family tree. "But are you aware of the origin of the book... specifically? Where did the ancestors of the royal family acquire the book?"

They were confused. But the Prime Minister, who was the sharpest among them, couldn't help but notice the message. "Don't tell me, the Ardagan Family? They were also an old family with a deep background..."

"Exactly!" Raincart smiled. "In that generation, there were two members from the Royal Family that decided to leave the kingdom for an adventure."

"!!!" The king widened his eyes in shock. "The Sword Saint, Noah El Greenwood, and the Fairy, Alicia El Greenwood."

As soon as the king recognized those two names, Raincart immediately stepped forward with his story. "Yes. The Sword Saint and the Fairy went on an adventure and met a person that would change their lives. He was the Great General under Heaven, Alexander Ardagan."

"!!!" Both the Prime Minister and the Royal ian also recognized this name. "The first person to reach the Spirit King Level. The number one expert in that generation. Alexander Ardagan!"

"Wait a minute..." The king contemplated for a moment and asked, "Don't tell me, the Spirit Enchantment came from..."

"Yes. There was no record in this kingdom, but the Ardagan Family still had the record. Alicia El Greenwood married Alexander Ardagan. In exchange, Alexander Ardagan presented the Spirit Enchantment Book.

"But with the fact that both the Fairy and the Sword Saint chose to live and die in the Muivell Kingdom, I could only assume that their relationship wasn't that good. That was why the Spirit Enchantment that he gave was the downgraded version of what I'm currently spreading, the Runes.

"That's the origin of the book." Raincart ended his explanation with a smile, stunning all three of them.

The Royal ian frowned and asked, "Are you telling us that the books are actually the legacy of Alexander Ardagan?"

"Yes." Raincart stopped after a single word as if he was waiting for their decision.

As a royalty, the king noticed something different from these two. He was looking directly at his own family tree and couldn't help but say, "If this is the case, doesn't that mean the Ardagan Family and us have a deep relationship?"

"!!!" The Royal ian and the Prime Minister widened their eyes in shock. They didn't care about royal blood since it had been a thousand years. What shocked them was the king's intention.

"Your Majesty..."

"You..."

Chapter 593 Greenwood Kingdom (2)

The king ignored their reactions as he asked Raincart, "Is this your plan, Teacher?"

Raincart shook his head helplessly. "Even I was surprised when I was given this plan."

"Given?" The words startled all of them. After all, the only person that would give this kind of plan was none other than the author himself. In other words, such a young man would be able to come up with all this and plan everything. It was terrifying.

"There are only two possibilities after telling me this. First, I am mobilizing my elites to assassinate the author himself to avoid future threats. As for the second possibility..." The king paused for a moment as his tone became heavier. "...is to have a friendly relationship due to the connection between you and me as well as the royal family and the Ardagan Family..."

"And since you spread the knowledge already and come to this place without a fight, it's clear that you want to achieve the latter... But there is something you forget, Teacher..." The king's expression became cold as he threatened. "The decision lies in me. If I want the former, no one can stop me!"

"Of course." Raincart seemed to be unaffected by the threat. He looked like he had given up on convincing him since his grandson had died. But it turned out Raincart had already prepared for this kind of answer. He added, "I apologize, but his plan also includes the other two kingdoms."

"What?!" They dropped their jaws, not believing what they had just heard.

"Yes. I have spread the knowledge in the other two kingdoms as well. He also has made an arrangement for the Muivell Kingdom. In other words, no one can stop the spread of knowledge. All kingdoms receive the same amount of knowledge. The only difference is that this kingdom has me to tell you everything."

"Everything was planned by him?" The king never thought he would have this much headache from someone who had just reached adulthood. He asked helplessly, wondering how talented this guy was.



When he saw Raincart nod his head, the king pinched the bridge of his nose, falling into deep thought.

After a few minutes, the king asked, "Before I say anything else, I think it's better to ask this one question first. Teacher... What did he want?"

"My grandson's vision was not limited to the Muivell Kingdom, the Greenwood Kingdom or even the other two kingdoms. He was looking far, far ahead..."

"Far... Wait. The Demons?!" The king gasped. "Even though all kingdoms are expanding our territories, we still compete with each other. But if he is looking at the demons instead of the four kingdoms, it means that he is trying to increase the level of the four kingdoms by spreading this knowledge in four kingdoms simultaneously.

"Although I don't know the extent of these so-called runes, I can say for sure that the knowledge will surely bring a lot of bloodbaths. And if a monopoly manages to be created, then there will be a lot of civil wars.

"By spreading the knowledge simultaneously, he prevents all the bloodbaths while raising his prestige. Is this seriously a plan made by a young man?" The king couldn't help but smirk. He felt overwhelmed and excited at the same time. "If only that young man is still alive, he can achieve a lot more..."

The Prime Minister glanced at the king and noticed the calm expression on Raincart's face. "I think you are incorrect, Your Majesty. If he can come up with such a plan at that young age, it's unlikely for such a person to die so easily. I'm assuming that this guy is still alive. He might be hiding his identity or hiding somewhere for some time... After all, the knowledge spread a few months after his death..."

"!!!" The king's heart skipped a beat. "If such a person is still alive... he will be a terrifying figure in the future."

He muttered out of reflex, but when he looked at Raincart before him, he realized something. He thought, 'No, wait. Why would Teacher agree to this? I could use this excuse to punish the Ezenholm Family... Don't tell me, Teacher is planning to use our relationship and the two families' relationship to push me into thinking of an alliance...

'If I become this young man's ally, I will be able to get both his support and the Ezenholm Family... He knows about this and comes to the royal palace... So, that's your plan.' The king felt defeated. It was no wonder why Raincart could become his teacher in the past.

The king asked, "Teacher... I have two questions before I can make a decision."

"Please ask anything, Your Majesty. I shall answer them to the best of my ability."

"My first question. Is it possible to bring him to the Greenwood Kingdom?"

Raincart hesitated for a moment before shaking his head helplessly. "I am afraid not. I have met him in the past... All he thinks about is how to revive his family. So, I don't think he will leave the Muivell Kingdom."

"Then, the second question... If I betroth one of my princesses... No, the brightest among them, the second princess... Will you help me?"

Raincart shook his head, not because he didn't want to help, but because he didn't agree with the question. "I think you should ask the other princes and princesses whether they will let him live peacefully or not. My grandson will never attack someone without a cause, so..."

Raincart didn't continue since it might cause some problems. However, the meaning was clear.

The other princes and princesses that were aiming for the throne would surely try to either befriend him or kill him.

"Still, it'll be hard to handle the Muivell Kingdom for this..." The king muttered, falling into deep thought. It seemed that the two answers were enough.

He suddenly rose from his throne and declared his decision. "One year. Do everything you can to form a friendly relationship with him. Don't let any princes and princesses learn about his existence.

"If we end up having friction between us, depending on the grudge, we will decide whether we will fix the relationship or eliminate him. Remember, the time limit is one year!"

Chapter 594 Return

The other two kingdoms also had a similar talk. But because they couldn't understand why Noel wanted to spread this knowledge in their territory, they were a bit more careful than the Greenwood Kingdom and the Muivell Kingdom. Even if they did something, it would be far later than those two Kingdoms.

The Greenwood Kingdom was considering a peaceful and beneficial relationship. Meanwhile, the Muivell Kingdom was looking at Noel's name as plague.

Still, the knowledge was already out and no one could stop them from spreading anymore. Even if they had the ability, they wouldn't do it, considering the other kingdoms also had it. It would only cause their kingdom to be weaker than the rest, so even a foolish king wouldn't do it.

The one who felt relieved the most was Countess Christina.

She was sitting in her office with a radiant smile. She was reading the report about everything that happened after she spread the knowledge.

"To think everything is going according to his plan... Count Leinberd and Marquis Walford have died. And there is no successor to their families, which means they will be a neutral territory under the royal family's jurisdiction for the time being.

"This way, I don't have to fear any threats around my territory. Even the royal family wouldn't investigate me since they have their hands full with the problems the two families caused.

"As for the Third Prince, he hadn't come back to me to interrogate me. As that guy said, I have done my job, so there's no need to get involved anymore.

"The kingdom will have a big headache with this matter, which will cause them to slow down for a bit. Meanwhile, Noel could take this chance to grow his strength.

"Though I'm more worried about his safety now. He told me there were two possibilities that the Third Prince would bring. First, he will try to keep him alive. After all, Noel is the author of that book. His extensive knowledge will be useful in researching more about the runes. So, the Third Prince might ask him to continue with the research and try to save him whenever someone tries to kill him.

"Even the Royal Family has to think twice before killing Noel. After all, Noel is the most talented person that can research this power.

"But because he spreads this knowledge to all kingdoms, it will cause a lot of people to research this new knowledge. All those people are older and more experienced than him, so their words look more credible than his words.

"So, the Third Prince might kill Noel to avoid future trouble. Although the progress will be a bit slower, the runes will still be developed. Even I can somehow research the runes. So..."

Countess Christina closed her eyes for a while. She sighed. "I guess the Third Prince will choose the former. After all, the Ardagan Family was loyal to him, even if he tried to deliver the book through me... The Third Prince might doubt Noel, but it didn't change the fact that he didn't have enough proof that everything was his plan."

Countess Christina couldn't help but shake her head, feeling defeated. "To think the one who came up with this plan was a young boy... I wonder what kind of terrifying existence he would become in one or two decades. Though, he has to stay alive until then."

Yes. Noel had predicted everything due to his father's teaching. As a merchant, one had to look at their customer's options and abilities, allowing them to suggest something that would suit all their conditions. That was the reason why the customers would follow their suggestion and buy it.

Noel simply applied that lesson in this scenario. He understood what the Third Prince wanted and what kind of price he would pay. He utilized it to kill the two nobles and cause this ruckus. He also considered Count Leinberd, Marquis Walford, and the royal family.

That was why everything went according to plan. Still, the biggest factor that allowed the plan to succeed was none other than the brothel.

The brothel had helped him with a lot of information. They were the ones allowing him to measure people's options and abilities, after all.

Although they couldn't accompany Noel all the time, they could assist him whenever Noel went to the brothel to ask for help. Unfortunately, Anna didn't enjoy the same benefits.

After this cooperation, the brothel would recognize Anna, but they wouldn't help her. After all, the brothel was not her or her family's possession. They stemmed from Ardagan.

As for this Ardagan, who caused all this mess... he was actually sitting on a bench outside the house provided by the Demon Relief Squad.

After returning to the Demon Relief Squad's headquarters, he took some time to let his body rest. He had overworked himself for the last few days by utilizing his power all the time to understand more about the new techniques. There were a lot of techniques, after all.

He was resting his body so that he could complete the next mission, which was the Third Prince's mission.

It seemed that he and Rose were the first ones to return. They had to wait for the others to return before they received the next mission.

And with the recent problem, the Supreme Devil Organization would focus on the runes instead of him. In addition, they had rested for a few months, so the matters should have already been buried in the first place.

Hence, their new start should come with a fresh beginning. As long as they didn't provoke the Supreme Devil Organization directly, they wouldn't have any problems for a while.

Not long after, the rest of the Demon Relief Squad's members returned to the headquarters. And it was time for them to receive the mission from Clara.

When they reached her office, the atmosphere suddenly became tense as Clara glared at them with a dark expression.

She opened her mouth, stunning everyone.

"Your next mission... might be more dangerous than you think."

Chapter 595 New Mission

"..." No one reacted to her words. They all had grim expressions as if they had prepared themselves.

Clara was satisfied with their expressions and finally revealed the mission.

"A request came to us a month ago. And it was a serious request because it involved a lot of people. Even the matter itself was something that I couldn't believe."

"May we know the matter, Captain? I think it's better to explain everything first instead of leaving us in this suspense," asked Paul. "We all have rested enough, so we should be able to go without any problems."

"The request came from the Demon Extermination Squad, specifically their Captain, Shale. He requests us to assist him in killing some demons and restoring a certain facility."

"Facility?" They were confused. Although they were good at construction, they had to understand what the facility was before doing any construction. If they couldn't understand it, they wouldn't take the job.

And with Clara saying it in this way, they couldn't help but think the facility was something beyond their ability.

Clara sighed. "That's the problem. We are going to work together with the Tower Association. It seems the facility is related to the mysterious facility outside the border."

"Currently, the Demon Extermination Squad and two Elders from the Tower Association have been stationed there, waiting for further action."

"What?" Paul widened his eyes as he immediately asked for confirmation. "Outside the border... Are you telling us that the facility we are going to work with is the mysterious facility left by the previous civilization?!"

"Yes. We still don't know anything about the facility and its purpose, so we can only go there first to confirm it."

"If that's the case, aren't we supposed to work with more experts?" Paul narrowed his eyes.

This was Noel's first experience with the mysterious facility, so he didn't know what he should say.

Seeing Noel's confusion behind his mask, Rose explained, "We once took a mission like this in the past. Back then, Jonathan, Ben, and I were still not in the Zero Squad. Even Captain Clara was still the Vice Captain back then.

"But that mysterious facility was basically a demon den. When we explored the facility to learn more, we were ambushed by a lot of demons. The previous captain was severely injured and was forced to retire. Four members of the Zero Squad died."

"!!!" Noel widened his eyes in shock. He never thought that the facility was that dangerous. It seemed that due to that accident, Clara was forced to become the captain of the Demon Relief Squad. That loss must have devastated her to the point she became this strong.

Even Paul, who was a new member at that time, trained tirelessly until he reached his current position.

That was why they couldn't underestimate this mysterious facility.

They are working with the Tower Association and the Demon Extermination Squad this time. The Demon Extermination Squad might be good at killing demons, but there was a chance that they wouldn't find any ambush hiding nearby. And that ambush would attack the people at the rear.

This was why they didn't know whether they should take this mission or not. On the one hand, the mysterious facility was a huge discovery. On the other hand, if they didn't move carefully, they would incur a massive loss.

Noel looked down, wondering if he could get a mission from Ardagan.

It seemed that there was not enough information to create a mission. So, he wondered if Anna knew anything about this.

'Now that I think about it...' Noel fell silent as if he had realized something.

After a while, Noel asked, "Captain... Are you going with us?"

"Of course. The mysterious facility and the joint operation require a lot of experts. I have to go there personally... So yeah, we are going to move together this time."

"If that's the case, can we know who the Tower Association sent this time? Will the noble faction get involved as well?"

Clara shook her head. "The nobles won't get involved in this. Unless we find something they can't ignore, they will wait from the sidelines. As for the Elders from the Tower Association... they seem to be sending the Plant Lord and Stone Lord."

"!!!" Noel widened his eyes in shock. He couldn't help but remember the three names that the Water Lord thought to be involved with the Supreme Devil Organization.

The Fire Lord was related to Countess Christina. In fact, he chose Countess Christina because he knew the Countess would inform her teacher. If he was involved, the Supreme Devil Organization would surely get involved.

Although he didn't get the proof yet, he suspected that the Fire Lord was indeed cooperating with the Supreme Devil Organization.



And this time, he would work together with the Plant Lord. He had to see whether the Plant Lord was involved with them or not. He once solved a problem related to an extinct plant, so he still believed that the Plant Lord was an enemy.

The fact that there would be a spy among them made Noel frown. After all, the entire mission would surely become extremely dangerous.

With how the Supreme Devil Organization was trying to exterminate their squad, it wouldn't be weird if those people tried to wipe out the Demon Relief Squad in this operation.

Noel looked down for a moment, falling into deep thought. He asked, "I know that it's not my place to ask this. But can we receive more reinforcement? At the very least, the Demon Beholder Squad and their captain have to be involved..."

Clara frowned before glancing at Paul. Paul said, "He was often like this and his prediction was usually right. I think we can believe him."

Clara thought for a moment. "Well, this is a mysterious facility. To avoid a loss like the last expedition, it's better to involve Septa and his squad to search for ambushes or hidden items. I can try requesting their help. Are there more requests, ladre... No, I think all the people here already know... So, Noel, what do you want?"

Chapter 596 Requests

"So, Noel, what do you want?"

"..." Noel was silent for a while. He was glancing to the left and right, seeing no change of expression.

That action was enough to tell him that everyone had realized his identity. Though, it wasn't that hard to deduce if they paid close attention to how he acted this whole time. Even Stella, who usually ended up reacting to the revelation, was silent.

It seemed that the expedition this time would be extremely dangerous.

Hence, Noel thought for a moment and said, "To be honest, this is my first time going on an expedition like this. Even I have a hard time thinking about possibilities that might occur there. However, I do have two more requests and one question."

"Let's start with the question," Clara replied without hesitation.

"Alright. The question is simple. May I know the exact location of that place? Is it near a good destination where people usually go for vacation?"

Clara frowned. The question looked weird, but since she agreed to cooperate with him, Clara said, "The location of the ruin is in the north of this kingdom, specifically near a Baron's territory. Because the baron is newly appointed due to the expansion, we shouldn't expect much from this baron."

"Also, if I have to name a good destination, then it's probably the Hot Spring."

"A Hot Spring?" Noel frowned. "What kind of Hot Spring?"

"That kind of Hot Spring where you can relax your body and mind. The area is not that far from a volcano. That's the reason why Stone Lord and Plant Lord are cooperating with us. Since the volcano is making the land fertile, the Plant Lord is to check the possibility of plant demons that are hiding inside the facility. As for the Stone Lord, he's the one taking care of stone samples."

"We have to prepare for everything, after all. Even the Fire Lord is joining this expedition... Though, he is going to the volcano instead of the facility. So, I don't include him."

"Hmm..." Noel looked down for a moment.

Rose seemed to notice Noel's intention in asking that question. She thought, 'Is he trying to delay the expedition? Anna told him to meet her father so that they could talk. And with how Anna always brought some weird information... I'm afraid that he is planning to extract some information if possible... And depending on how the conversation is going, Noel might be planning to involve the marquis. This way, the expedition will become safer.'

As Rose thought, Noel also muttered a similar thing. "I see. Then, the two requests remain unchanged. Since it's going to be a big expedition that involves a lot of parties, I think we should be a bit more careful. When do we go there? In a month?"

"No. Next week."

"Next week? Are you sure it's enough time to prepare?"

"We have been preparing a lot of things in the past two months. So, we're only waiting for all of you to return before we can move."

Noel closed his eyes for a moment before sighing. "In that case, can I ask you to mobilize a few more squads from the Demon Relief Squad? At least five more squads. Looking at the size of the expedition, we have to bring a lot more resources."

"Did you not hear about what happened to the squad when we went on an expedition?" Clara asked with a frown. "If we involved more squad, they might die. Noel... Are you trying to sacrifice them?"

"No. I can assure you that I'm not going to tell them to explore the mysterious building. I just want them to remain in the rear and erect a small base. This base has to be able to defend against a number of demons... Basically, their task is to create a small fort to be used against the demons." Noel shook his head, explaining his reason.

Even Clara had to consider this suggestion. It did make a lot of sense. The base could become a temporary home for them. As long as they fortified it a little, the people would feel safe.

Meanwhile, their Zero Squad would handle the mysterious building's investigation. This way, they had enough people to take care of the people inside the fort and handle the investigation.

Clara considered it for a moment and said, "Paul. I need you to send the message. Tell the First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Squads to come to the location within a month. Since it's a dangerous mission, they have a long time limit. Make sure they have enough preparation, or they might lose their lives."

"Understood." Paul nodded with a serious expression.

Noel smiled inwardly. He managed to hold back the investigation for a month. Noel and Anna had agreed, but they didn't state the specific date. After all, it was hard to make an appointment with the current situation. Even Anna needed some time to return and tell her father about the meeting. So, Noel had to buy as much time as possible.

After some careful consideration, Noel stated his second request. "Then, can we get some say during the expedition? I mean, we are there only to check the building and understand it, right? If possible, recreate or repair the facility... But if this is the case, it means we will be there only for the labor. The command will lie in the Demon Extermination Squad's hands..."

"It's impossible. We are there to assist, not to lead, Noel." Clara shook her head without hesitation.

Noel knew about it already. So, he changed his words. "I'm just asking for a little bit... Is it possible that we can suggest some plans and have them consider them carefully?"

It wasn't a big request when Noel reworded it. Clara was also one of the strongest captains, so her words had a lot of weight on them. Forcing Shale to agree to such a condition wasn't that big of a problem.

So, Clara nodded her head. "Alright. I'll tell Shale about it. Does he know about your identity?"

"Yes."

"That's easy to make him agree then. Though, I don't think the Tower Association knows, right? We can only make some deals under the table..."

"That's fine." Noel nodded.

"Alright. I can agree to your request. For now, make your preparation before heading there."

#### Chapter 597 A Secret Mission

They immediately sent the words to other squads. Luckily, two of them were staying inside the headquarters, so they could move together later. But because of the sudden notice, they had to wait for them to finish their preparation, which would extend the time of departure by one week.

Noel was satisfied with the result, so he immediately made his own preparations. The first thing he did was not pack his luggage but go to the city.

He didn't plan to look around the city. Instead, he was waiting for someone to approach him.

The first day he did it, there was no one coming. The second day he walked around, no one approached him.

It was only on the fifth day that he got a visitor when he was walking on the street.

After buying some apples for the group, Noel walked on the street like usual. But this time, a woman with round black glasses suddenly slipped and fell onto him.

"Kyaaa..."

Noel instantly caught her with his reflex. It wasn't that big of a deal now that he had become a Spirit Master.

But once he caught the woman, the latter immediately smiled. "You are so strong, Mister... Thank you very much for catching me. Do you think it's possible to thank you?"

"There's no need to do that, Young Lady." Noel smiled gently, rejecting her invitation.

But the woman suddenly grabbed his hand and asked desperately, "Please... I don't want to owe someone... It's just going to be a meal..."

παῖδα Ἰὸν ἐλπίσιν, còM Noel paused for a moment before nodding his head. "I understand."

The lady immediately held his arm as if she was trying to prevent him from escaping. She then led her to a restaurant fifty meters from their location. It was a small but neat restaurant. Since there were a lot of open spaces and customers, it would be hard to hear a conversation as long as they picked the right spot.

And the lady dragged him to a table far away from other customers.

She gently smiled while waiting for the waiter to come. But in Noel's eyes, that gentle smile was just a facade. Her real intention was to watch him.

Although it was faint, Noel felt the extraordinary Spiritual Energy hiding in her body. With his current identity, it would be hard for him to run away from her.

Suddenly, a young man approached their table. The man had long blond hair, and he seemed to be not much older than Noel. He asked politely, "Hello, why are you sitting far away from others?"

"We like to enjoy our food in silence, so it's better this way. You can join if you want." The woman smiled.

"In that case..." The man nodded and took a seat next to Noel.

Noel wanted to roll his eyes since their acting wouldn't fool anyone. It felt a bit forced. But since they wanted him to notice their identities, he understood why their acting was this bad.

Noel politely nodded to him and said in a low voice. "Your Highness..."

The man suddenly smiled. Since Noel had acknowledged him, he immediately asked the question that had puzzled him the most after the incident. "Why did you give Countess Christina those books?"

"Your Highness has done a great favor to our family. So, I wanted to make sure that the books I gave you would work well and be safe for others to use without my supervision. And Countess Christina has the best understanding of Spirits among the people with a close relationship with my father. That's the reason."

The Third Prince already knew about this, but he still asked the second question. "Then, why did the Countess plan to give it to her teacher?"

"I don't know anything about it. I told her that I wanted her to give the books to you after she finished checking them. Actually, this is my first time hearing about it..."

"..." The Third Prince frowned. On the one hand, the Countess seemed to make a mistake by trying to send the books to her teacher. On the other hand, her teacher was better than her, so it might just be one of the processes before she delivered the books to him. Hence, the Third Prince couldn't blame her entirely.

At first, the Third Prince was trying to extract the information from Noel directly since the plan to acquire the books had failed. But since the knowledge had been spread and the books could be acquired more easily, he chose to hide the fact that he had failed to avoid Noel looking down on him.

Still, the Third Prince wondered if Noel was just a fool or not. After all, it looked like Noel was too inexperienced and not smart enough to consider such a thing to happen. The intention was good, but the execution was questionable.

The Third Prince clicked his tongue. "As much as I want to punish you for making a questionable plan, you still follow my request. So, I will forgive you this time."

"I'll give you a mission so you can make up for it."

Noel immediately nodded. "I understand. It seems that I have made a huge mistake. I will not disappoint you like my father this time."

"Uhm." The Third Prince nodded. He wanted to give him this mission last time, but the circumstances had changed. The Third Prince decided to give him a different task. "Alright. The Demon Relief Squad is planning to investigate a mysterious facility, right?"

"I want you to remember every single detail inside the building and make a blueprint about that building."

Noel tilted his head, asking innocently, "How do I take that note? I mean, if I do it, I'm afraid that the others will suspect me."

The Third Prince gritted his teeth. His voice mixed with anger as he said, "You should take a mental note first and draw it after you come back to your own room. You are good at drawing since you've drawn many patterns in the rune book, right? You should be able to do something like this, right?"

Noel nodded furiously as if he was afraid of angering the Third Prince. "I understand. I'll not disappoint the Third Prince."

"Good." The Third Prince sighed and asked the waiter to bring out the dishes. At least they had to eat first so that they wouldn't be suspicious.

Unbeknownst to the Third Prince, Noel was actually smiling inwardly, thinking, 'I am a fool. That must be your opinion of the current me, right? If I'm a fool, I'm not a threat. You have to drop your suspicion about the mastermind of the book incident. And it seems that the Third Prince doesn't have a lot of connections in other kingdoms.'

'I guess I have to earn some trust first to get more information about the Third Prince.'

Chapter 598 Dangerous Expedition?

Noel started packing his luggage for the upcoming expedition. This was the first time he participated in one, but with all the scary stories he heard from the squad, he knew that the expedition would surely cause a lot of deaths.

On the one hand, he was trying to find a way to preserve everyone's lives. He was a simple man in this regard. He was a member of the Demon Relief Squad's Zero Squad, so of course, he wanted his team to survive, since they had bonded pretty well.



On the other hand, he couldn't even guarantee his own life, so how could he even help them?

After some thought, Noel decided to leave the city by using the cover of darkness. He knew that he shouldn't rely on Dimitri, but Dimitri was a former captain, so he should have some experiences or stories about an expedition like this.

"Young Master." Dimitri politely bowed to him, greeting him. He thought the young master wanted to let him know about his target since he had lost his bet. But he was wrong.

Noel looked at him with a serious expression. "Dimitri. I want to ask you a question... I'm planning to go on an expedition to explore a mysterious facility. Do you have any experience there?"

"Huh? An expedition to explore a mysterious facility? Do you mean the unknown facility outside the border?" Dimitri looked shocked, as if he couldn't believe what he'd just heard.

Noel confirmed it with a nod, making Dimitri look worried.

Dimitri gritted his teeth. "Is there a way for you to back out, Young Master?"

"I don't think so. That's why I want to guarantee my own life first with all kinds of information before trying to help others..."

Dimitri fell silent, falling into deep thought. It seemed he had gone on multiple expeditions in the past. So, he was considering which one he should tell Noel.

"To be honest, the mysterious facility has a lot of possibilities. It can be a safe haven where there is not a single demon hiding inside. Or it can be a demon den... and a very strong one on top of that."

"I have gone on three expeditions like this in the past. One of them was quite safe, but the other two were horrible. Back then, I was in charge of assassinating any demons that were going to ambush the exploration team."

"But in the end, the demons managed to outnumber and overwhelm us. In the second expedition, I got the worst result. Half of my team died, and a third was forced to retire."

"That bad?" Noel frowned.

"Yeah." Dimitri nodded. "I think I should tell you about the worst that might come so that you can prepare for the worst and be thankful if it's not the case. The second expedition is to explore a certain facility..."

"I'm not sure what it's called, but the people considered it as a living complex. It's a huge building with a lot of rooms that can be filled with at least a hundred families inside."

"We had to face a huge amount of demons coming from small holes. We didn't know how many, but it felt like a never ending demon swarm."

"There were at least a hundred Peak Level Demons inside and more than five Superior Demons."

"What? A hundred Peak Level Demons and five Superior Demons? How could there be so many demons inside? Even so, how could they even stay in the same area together? Aren't demons supposed to have their own territory?" Noel couldn't help but interject, because he couldn't believe what he had just heard.

"That was what I thought, but the reality was different. That building was near a volcano. It seemed that the previous civilization managed to extract the heat from the volcano and the system still worked even after a long time."

"In the end, the system allowed the demons to have a good environment to increase their strength. I'm afraid that the Five Superior Demons didn't come there. Instead, the Five Superior Demons grew from there. That was why it was the worst. We could only flee before mobilizing a lot of people to subjugate that facility."

"The people have been trying to extract the energy from the volcano, but none of them have succeeded yet."

Noel looked down while frowning. "I'm afraid that I have to experience a similar expedition... After all, the area is near a volcano... Well, I can't say it's near, but it's not far either."

"..." Dimitri's face became pale. "Is there really no other way for you to back down from this expedition, Young Master?"

Noel couldn't answer it. He truly wanted to leave, but he still had to ask one more question. "And what did you gain from this place?"

Dimitri frowned, thinking Noel wanted to see the opportunity hidden in that danger. If he thought it wasn't worth it, he would probably back off. He thought for a moment and said, "For me personally, I got a lot of recommendations and points. There are some weird items from that mysterious facility, so they could be pawned as well since not all of them were brought back by the army."

"All Demon Crystals were given to those who participated as well. And I found a weird thing inside it that gave me the inspiration for two techniques that I'm still using even now. If you paid a closer look and tried to find a new perspective, it could certainly give you inspiration."

"Though, you had to consider your Spirit and element as well. I heard a few of them felt the environment was perfect for training their body. Though, I don't know much more than that since I was too occupied with my squad."

Noel looked down for a while. On the one hand, the reward seemed to be worth it. On the other hand, the risk was far too great, especially since he had some suspicion about the Plant Lord and Fire Lord.

So, he wondered if he should take on the mission or not.

Chapter 599 Coaxing

After some careful consideration, Noel made his decision. "I'm going."

"Young Master..." Dimitri frowned. He was worried about Noel's life, considering the place was extremely dangerous.

Noel shook his head and said, "I'm going to assemble all the best fighters I can get. At the very least, we should be able to withstand their onslaught."

"I—" Dimitri wanted to say something, but Noel immediately corrected him. "You are going to have a different mission. Your task is not to protect me, but to investigate the Plant Lord."

Dimitri was stunned because he couldn't accept this task over his young master's safety. After all, Dimitri had acknowledged Noel as his master, but because of the last test, he was still forbidden to refer to him as such. So, there was no way he could agree if his master wanted to go to a dangerous place without his protection.

"Don't worry. If everything is right, then we will have Captain Clara, Captain Shale, Captain Septa as well as the Stone Lord. What I want you to do is investigate the Plant Lord since he might be a spy from the Supreme Devil Organization. You should remember about the plants that were supposed to be extinct, right? Yeah, that mission might be related to him."

"What?!" Dimitri widened his eyes in shock. It looked like the protection was enough with four people like them. But there was no way the Plant Lord would stay still if he was indeed a spy, tilting the balance to the demon's favor.

"Well, I'm planning to find a way to meet Marquis Stargaze, my father's best friend. So, I might be able to cooperate with him, making the expedition a bit safer. But who knows if I can draw him out or not." Noel sighed.

"Although it would be good for me to investigate that person, I'm still an assassin, Young Master. I exist to kill, not to investigate. Instead of me, you should have Septa investigate the Plant Lord."

"I did consider that option. But no matter how I tried to convince him, Septa would suspect me instead. After all, there was no way a person with no connection like me could get such information."

Dimitri thought for a moment. "In that case, I will inform the previous captain of his squad. Although he has retired, Septa should still listen to him. I'm going to let him tell Septa to investigate the Plant Lord. This way, he will trust the information and not know that the information comes from you. But are you sure about it, Young Master?"

"The information came from the Water Lord. What do you think?"

Dimitri paused, finding all the information he had about the Water Lord. After a while, Dimitri nodded. "Alright. I could convey it to that person. Septa will investigate the Plant Lord and I shall take care of your safety, Young Master. I might have to force you to back off from the expedition if you can't agree to this condition."

"You sure are a worrywart." Noel shook his head helplessly. Knowing that Dimitri wouldn't back down, he could only accept it. Of course, Dimitri wasn't trying to be annoying or dictating. He was just worried because the danger from the expedition far surpassed anything he had faced so far.

After agreeing to Dimitri's request, Noel continued his preparation. He also came up with a few scenarios and plans to deal with the enemies.

Dimitri had told him a few things that might be useful in an expedition, so he started working on them to ensure the safety of his group.

After two weeks, Noel finally left the headquarters, heading straight to the expedition camp.

...

His action was watched by a few parties. Among them were the Third Prince and Anna.

As soon as Anna received the news about the expedition, she couldn't help but gasp.

"Huh, expedition... I don't think the Demon Relief Squad took any expedition back then..." Anna looked down, horrified. "That's right. The Demon Relief Squad was too weak back then. The one who was

supposed to go was the Demon Bearer Group. But if I'm not wrong, the expedition led to a disastrous defeat."

"There were a lot of strong demons inside the facility. No, wait... The facility was abandoned for a while, but before they realized it, the Supreme Devil Organization had taken over the facility... Don't tell me, they were involved in that expedition and forced them to leave? There must be something useful for them..."

Anna fell into deep thought. She had just returned to her family before she got a letter concerning Noel via bird.

After some consideration, she realized that she might have to participate in the expedition in one way or another.

However, the expedition would be extremely dangerous since even if they combined their strength, both of them were still no match against a Superior Demon.

So, Anna thought of another thing.

παῖδα Ἰὼνέ|,còM It didn't take too long for her to decide to meet her father.

\*Knock!\*

\*Knock!\*

"Father, it's me, Anna." She knocked on the door that led to her father's office. It seemed that her father had sensed her presence before she came as the door immediately opened.

'The Spiritual Energy is opening the door?' Anna thought while observing what was happening. Though, she soon focused on her father, who was working with a lot of documents.

"Sorry, but your father is a bit busy. If you don't mind, can we talk while I'm working like this?"

"Yes. I know you are very busy, Father. That's why I hope that you can spare some time so that we can take a vacation together. I don't want you to be too tired, Father. After all, I have caused a lot of problems for you. The least I can do is to accompany you like this..." Anna made a big smile, trying to coax her father.

Even Marquis Stargaze had to drop his pen as if he felt weird from the persuasion. He looked at Anna and asked, "I know you have changed, but I didn't think you would change this much. You have become a bit too cunning after joining the organization for more than six months. As much as I want to follow the suggestion, I can't do it without any proper reason..."

His expression turned serious as he asked with a strict tone, expecting her not to lie to him. "Give me a reason."

Chapter 600 Fear

"Hmm..." Clara nonchalantly stretched her body after coming out of the carriage. She yawned while asking, "Have we arrived?"

"Yes, Ma'am," Jonathan answered while pointing forward. "That's the camp."

"Alright." Clara nodded and took a peek at the camp. Fifty meters from them stood a lot of tents, big and small. There were a lot of people going back and forth.

It seemed that two soldiers had spotted them and immediately approached them.

The two soldiers were only Spirit Apprentices. It was clear that they were only there as a guard who handled the chores. They wouldn't participate in the exploration directly.

"Sir. May we ask from which units you are?" One of the soldiers asked politely.

Stella took out her badge and stated, "We are from the Zero Squad, First Squad, and Fourth Squad of the Demon Relief Squad. Our captain is also with us."

"!!!" The two soldiers froze for a moment and immediately changed their tones. "Please excuse us. We—"

"It's fine. Just tell us where we are supposed to erect our tents and where we can bring our carriages."

"Please follow me." One of the soldiers stepped up and immediately guided them to their area.

As soon as they arrived in their respective area, Noel came out of the carriage and took a look at their surroundings.

There were a pair of boys who noticed his gaze and waved their hands. Their expressions were filled with a smile. They came from the Fourth Squad.

Since the journey took quite some time, they ended up bonding a little bit. Noel also had the chance to show his skill and the fact that he had become a Spirit Master. In the end, no one complained about Noel's position in the Zero Squad, even though many members of the First Squad felt jealous.

While he was scanning the area, he noticed Clara waving her hand at him, calling him. Noel immediately came to her to know the situation. "Is there anything I can help you with, Captain?"

"Noel. Call Paul and follow me to meet other leaders. We are going to discuss the placement as well as the base." Clara stated while signing the documents presented by a soldier.

"Alright." Noel nodded and immediately went to find Paul. He was confused at first since he couldn't find Paul, but it turned out Paul was still sitting inside the carriage.

His expression was dark and his body was tense. He was clenching both hands as if he was thinking something.

Noel knew that Paul felt a lot of responsibility for the group's safety. And due to the last expedition, the pressure became overwhelming. He was afraid that he wasn't strong enough to help his friends again.



Because Noel knew this, he said something first before calling his name. "The pressure of being a leader... I know very well what kind of pressure to have everyone's lives in your hands."

Paul was startled as he looked at Noel with a shocked face.

Noel smiled. "Because I know that I can't show it on my face. If I look empty, people will be confused. If I look scared, they will panic. That's why we can't show our worry. If you have any worries, you can tell me about them. But at other times..."

"I have to be strong." Paul nodded with a serious expression. Having someone sharing the same worry and understanding his burden was indeed reassuring. Paul calmed down a bit and tried to smile. Even though it was forced, it was a good first step.

"The captain is calling us. We're going to meet other leaders."

Paul took a few deep breaths before gradually leaving the carriage. He couldn't help but pat Noel's shoulders. "Thanks."

"Feel relaxed a bit?"

"Thanks to you." Paul nodded. "Let's go."

Noel nodded back as they began to walk to Clara. The meeting tent was located in the middle of the army.

Noel didn't have to enter to feel the energy coming from the tent. He couldn't help but tense up, feeling the overwhelming pressure. He never thought that having to meet these people would be this hard.

Paul stepped forward as if trying to shield him from the pressure. He said with a serious expression. "It seems that the conversation isn't going well. Can you bear the pressure?"

"Psychological pressure is the heaviest. I can withstand the physical pressure all the time." Noel smirked. He didn't feel afraid at all since he knew that Paul and Clara were reliable. They would surely protect him.

Paul nodded but still walked in front of Noel to resist some pressure.

Clara didn't bother to look at them. But without them knowing, Clara was smiling the whole time as if she was happy with the bond the Demon Relief Squad had.

She gently pushed the tent's cover while stating coldly, "Oi, oi, oi... What's all this? Do you think using your Spiritual Energy to create pressure can allow you to win an argument?"

There were four people inside. Noel could easily recognize Shale and Septa since he had met them in the past.

Though, there were two more people sitting with them. The first one was a middle-aged man with a pale face. He looked like Jonathan as if happiness and life had been deprived of his life.

However, that gloominess, coupled with the aura he was excluding, made one feel a chill down their spine. It felt like this person would do anything to achieve his objective.

As for the fourth person, he was an old man with a long beard. His eyes opened only a little as if his eyelids were too heavy. He gently stroked his long beard while staring at the others like he was too tired of getting involved in an argument. Though, his ferocious energy told them otherwise.

All of them were hot-headed and Clara came to de-escalate the situation.

It seemed her appearance was enough, as all four of them stopped for a moment to check Clara and the two people that came with her.