

S vs Rebirth 601

Chapter 601 Three Things

"Demon Relief Squad Captain..." The gloomy middle-aged man stared at her face for a while. Clara wasn't afraid of him as she stared back.

Despite the aura the gloomy middle-aged man was excluding, Clara didn't bother to release hers as if trying to pick a fight with him.

In the end, the gloomy middle-aged man closed his eyes as if he had lost the motivation to fight.

Meanwhile, Shale glanced at Noel, who was standing behind Clara. Noel's existence was more important than Clara's for him. After all, he managed to pique his interest but dared to reject his invitation.

Whether it was a grudge or something else, it didn't change the fact that Shale was interested in him, especially with the fact that Noel could become a Spirit Master within a short time.

'Interesting.' Shale thought while putting away his aura. Just for his sake, he wouldn't act childish since the aura might affect Noel.

Septa was confused, but he didn't realize Shale was focused on Noel. Septa thought Shale was scared of Clara or just respected her, so he followed suit. After all, there was no need for the people of the Demon Banner Army to fight among themselves.

Since all of them had stopped, it would be childish if he kept releasing his Spiritual Energy. So, he retracted everything. It seemed the one with the heaviest Spiritual Energy was the Stone Lord since half of the pressure was gone as soon as he retracted his energy.

Although it would be good to have a talk with them, Noel still acted as ladre. ladre didn't know any of them except for Shale, so he tried to check the people who came with them.

It turned out they were the only ones that came with two attendants. Shale came with a woman in her thirties. Even though her appearance looked gentle, there was no telling whether it was her real self or not since she came from the Demon Extermination Squad.

As for the one accompanying Septa, he was the Vice Captain of the Demon Beholder Squad. He had seen him on a mission back then, so he immediately shifted his focus to the other two.

The Plant Lord brought a young man. His face and the atmosphere around him were the exact opposite of the Plant Lord. However, he might not be the brightest since Noel could see a few blue and black spots on his arms. They didn't seem to be bruises, so it might be related to whatever he was dealing with.

Meanwhile, the Stone Lord was accompanied by a middle-aged woman. Her age seemed to be similar to Clara, but there was a badge with a stone symbol imprinted on it. The badge signified her identity as the Stone Lord's disciple. Unlike the Demon Banner Army, both elders brought their disciples since their second-in-command had to take care of the matters while they were away.

Clara nodded her head, politely greeting them.

"Thank you for your consideration. And thank you for gathering here today. Since we might have an argument again if we talk too much, let me give you a brief explanation about what I'm planning to do before the exploration then." please visit

Clara paused for a moment as if trying to see whether there was an objection or not. Since no one raised their hand, Clara began her explanation. "Before the exploration, I'm planning to do three things."

"First, I'm going to erect a small fort here. It's fine if we use the woods, we just want to form a basic fort to make defending an easier task."

"Second, we will leave the scouting to Septa's squad since it's your specialty. We will provide the supply as well as everything you need. Even if your equipment breaks, we have someone who can repair it."

"Third, due to the unknown possibility, we are going to assume the worst. So, we'll be more careful than anyone else, including the fact that we're going to carefully examine each room and protect everything we can find from the mysterious facility. Is there any objection?"

The first one to raise an objection was the Plant Lord. He asked, "If you're going to protect everything we got, there is a chance that you might smuggle something out. What are you gonna do about it?"

"You can complain to the commander himself. At your rank, he will surely consider your words carefully. But don't forget that my squad will not be holding back if someone plans to steal something and frame us." Clara narrowed her eyes, not scared of the threat from the Plant Lord.

Even the Plant Lord could only frown. Clara's reputation was good and her strength could back it up. So, pushing her into the corner for something so simple would just make it look like he hated her for no reason.

"In that case, will we split the loot after the expedition?" The Stone Lord asked.

"Yes. I believe all of us have read the contract of our cooperation. The one who found the facility was our Demon Banner Army and we mobilized a lot of our troops. So, the split would be 7 to 3. The split can be discussed after the expedition is completed."

The Stone Lord nodded as if he was satisfied with the answer. He came only for the loot after all.

"How about the fort? Isn't it hard to build?" Septa asked.

"I'm sure you've heard a lot of reports regarding the expedition. Since we're considering the worst possibility, we are going to make a basic fortification to make this place a bit safer. Though, we have made some parts on the way, so it won't take more than a week to build a simple fort. I might need a bit more manpower from all of you."

"During that time, Septa will lead his group to scout the area to make sure everything is safe. And try to figure out if there are any monsters inside."

Everyone thought for a moment and nodded their heads, agreeing to her suggestion.

Chapter 602 Fortification

After declaring their intention, Clara began to discuss the details about them. As expected, there were a lot of arguments due to the long discussion.

But because Clara had mentioned all the important points, even if they didn't agree, they were moving in that direction.

Noel remained silent the whole time. It wasn't his place to interfere, and he personally was interested in how they operated.

It seemed that the Tower Association and the Demon Banner Army didn't really like each other.

The Demon Banner Army was a soldier who protected this country, so of course, they were a bit skeptical of the people from the Tower Association who did nothing but focus on their research.

The Tower Association didn't like that view as well. Though, they couldn't deny that they were focusing on their research. Some were related to their personal interest and gain. But some were trying to improve the quality of life of the people or help the people on the frontline.

So, they might be able to berate the Demon Banner Army, but they couldn't justify their actions as well.

In the end, they ended up arguing by picking up a simple matter.

Noel didn't seem to have any interest in the meeting itself. However, it was just a facade for him to listen to their argument, especially the Plant Lord. He might be a threat, so he had to make sure that they didn't fall for his trick.

The Stone Lord might look calm and wise, but he was a bit too greedy. Though he was greedy, it was toward knowledge instead of money. He wanted a lot of things to research, as if he didn't have any retirement plan.

Meanwhile, the Plant Lord was extremely cautious and systematic. He always came up with two or three reasons when he rebuked someone's argument. It made him look smart but petty at the same time.

Noel couldn't really find any other clue in the Plant Lord's words. Even though he was a bit skeptical, he couldn't find anything other than suspicion.

So, Noel had to drop the matter for the time being.

After three hours, the meeting reached an agreement and Clara immediately returned to the group.

She started instructing her people to build a wall. They even fortified it with some ditches to make it hard for the monsters to surpass it.

Of course, the walls were made of wood and there was no Spirit Enchantment that could reinforce it.

But they had prepared this time.

Clara gathered Rose and Noel in her tent and commanded them, "Noel, Rose. The knowledge about the Runes has been spread for more than a month. I think it's fine for you to use it to reinforce the wall. What do you think?"

Noel thought for a moment. "I don't really mind. Even if they try to investigate us, they will know that the books originated from us sooner or later. Though, I hope that you can pin all the blame on me... I mean, my original identity." please visit

"I don't mind. I can even act like I'm saddened over your death or something since I'm requesting a lot from you." The Spirit Enchantment wasn't a simple matter. Even a Master Blacksmith wouldn't easily reinforce the wall of other cities.

When they did it, they would be paid heavily. So, Clara knew that she asked Noel not only to reveal his secret but also to do something expensive for free. That was why she tried to accommodate all his requests.

Noel added one more thing while pointing his finger at Rose. "Also, the one who will be reinforcing the wall is Rose, not me."

"Huh?" Both Rose and Clara were startled by that statement.

Noel smiled as if he had expected this reaction and began explaining the reason for his statement. "If I use it, people will doubt me, considering I and Rose have the same gender. But if it's Rose, there's no way people will think Rose is Noel, right?"

Rose narrowed her eyes. She agreed with him, but she felt something was wrong. She wanted to ask about it, but Noel was the lord she had recognized, so she didn't want to say something unnecessary.

Though, Clara was different. She didn't care and asked without hesitation. "You are planning something, aren't you? There's no way that's the only reason why you refuse to do it."

"..." Noel scratched the back of his head helplessly. "I guess I can't hide it from you. Yes, I'm planning to leave the camp for approximately three to four days."

"I don't really mind, but you are one of our Zero Squad's members, so I need to know the reason. Don't forget that you are a Spirit Master right now. Although it's the same as your peers, the Spirit Master is treated differently compared to the stage below it."

Noel thought for a moment and explained, "I need to go somewhere. The reason is simple, and I think it's fine to tell you this."

"The Water Lord once gave me a few names that might be related to the Supreme Devil Organization."

"The Plant Lord is one of them. That's why I'm afraid that something will happen in this expedition."

"So, we have to watch our back while handling the expedition, which makes this expedition harder than we originally thought. Hence, I'm leaving this place so that I can call for more reinforcement."

"Are you planning to bring another Captain into the mix?" Clara narrowed her eyes. She didn't question anything about Noel's information since it wasn't necessary. Although a part of her couldn't believe Noel, she didn't have any reason not to trust him as well.

"No. A Captain or even a squad will be a bit too eye-catching. We might end up alerting the Plant Lord at this rate. That's why I'm planning to invite another person... not from the Tower Association and the Demon Banner Army."

"!!!" Clara widened her eyes in surprise. "If not from those two, then from where? Do you have more connections outside the two places?"

Noel answered her with a smile.

Chapter 603 Hot Spring

The next day.

Noel looked up, staring at the gigantic wall. The air was quite cold, so this tall wall would usually make someone shiver. It looked sturdy and tall, making anyone that planned to attack it lose any hope.

"So, this is the city that is famous for its hot spring..." Noel muttered. "If I remember correctly, the hot spring comes from the volcano's activity. It doesn't smell that nice, but it's enjoyable and relaxing. It can even help heal one's injury, since the heat has been mixed with Spiritual Energy.

"Though, I'm here to meet someone if that person is planning to go here, that is." Noel didn't know whether the marquis was in this city or not. The marquis might not even bother visiting this place, so Noel could only search for him in this city for a whole day.

Unfortunately, the city was quite big due to the size of the visitors. The street was brimming with people and it was hard to find the marquis among these people.

He even wondered how Anna could find him among the people like this.

In the end, he had to use one of his abilities that allowed him to differentiate people. The Charm Medal.

He used the Charm Medal to see everyone's name and didn't bother with the affection since most of them were the same.

Though, he surely could see a lot of people's reaction when he stared at them.

He roamed the street and even went to a high building to get a better view. But no matter the method, he couldn't find any trace of the marquis.

Noel started thinking the marquis wasn't here. There was even a possibility that the marquis had yet to reach this city or had finished visiting the city and returned home.

Even so, Noel was still determined to find the marquis within the time limit. He could think of something else after that.

Sadly, the effort didn't pay off. The sky had turned dark and the street became a bit emptier.

Noel knew that the possibility of him meeting the marquis had decreased. He even became a bit frustrated since the plan didn't work this time.

"I guess I shouldn't have expected too much. After all, Anna told me to come to a good destination if we wanted to meet. She only guaranteed that she would do her best to bring her father. There was even a chance that the marquis didn't accept her invitation.

"In that case, I can only work with the people who are involved in this..." Noel thought for a moment while wandering around.

Surprisingly, Noel felt slightly disturbed by the light that shone brightly from the side. It stopped his train of thought, forcing him to raise his head.

"Hmm?" Noel frowned as he saw the sign of the store.

"Recess Hot Spring."

"Maybe I should relax my body and mind for once so that I can get a better grip on my memory? I'm a bit tired as well..." Noel thought it wasn't a bad idea, so he immediately entered the store.

This was the first time he had experienced a hot spring since he had never paid any visit to a place like this when his parents were still alive. please visit

After paying the entrance fee, he immediately entered the bath. Of course, Noel didn't plan to take off the masquerade.

He surely became the weirdo inside, but he didn't bother with them. His only purpose in visiting this place was to soak in the relaxing hot water.

The warm temperature immediately enveloped his body. The sensation was far different from anything he had experienced so far.

When he was a noble, He had soaked his body in warm water a lot of times since the maid often boiled water for him.

But this hot spring was different. The water was rich in Spiritual Energy. It might be due to the hot water, but the Spiritual Energy felt like it was sipping inside his body and flushing anything in his vein.

"Hmm?" Noel frowned since even Ardagan told him something.

[The water is rich in Spiritual Energy. I'm circulating the energy around your veins and taking advantage of the water property to help your body. Check your Spirit Heart and test circulating the Spiritual Energy from there.]

Noel never expected Ardagan to do something. But he followed the instructions and instantly felt something different.

'This is...' Noel looked down, falling into deep thought. 'The energy movement feels so smooth like flowing water.'

[Do you remember the Body Strengthening Liquid?]

'Yes. Is the water similar to it?'

[Because it's not in the concentrated form like the Body Strengthening Liquid, it still carries a similar characteristic. But because you have soaked in the Body Strengthening Liquid, the effect becomes less effective.]

[Though, there is something that we can use from the current state. The Body Strengthening Liquid has that kind of effect because the Spiritual Energy is concentrated in the water itself. It will be best if you use the water itself to refine your body.]

[But this water doesn't have that kind of concentration, meaning I can absorb a portion of that Spiritual Energy to strengthen your veins along with the Spirit Heart.]

'You can do all that?' Noel was surprised since this was the first time Ardagan was so eager to do something for him.

Before Ardagan could say something, someone actually entered the bath and seemed to be trying to sit next to him.

"Sorry, Young Man. Can I sit here?"

"Sure. No one is there, so feel free." Noel answered nonchalantly while looking down as if he was thinking about something. After all, he couldn't stare at the empty air since people would either feel something amiss or think he was crazy.

Meanwhile, he heard the guy gradually sit down next to him while letting out a gentle moan as though he was feeling good after soaking his body in the hot spring. It was at that time the guy suddenly said something that shocked him.

"To think my daughter would invite me to this place so that I can meet you..."

Chapter 604 Kevin Stargaze

"To think my daughter would invite me to this place so that I can meet you..."

"!!!" Noel widened his eyes in shock and immediately turned around, finding a middle-aged man sitting next to him. The middle-aged man had blond hair and a pair of purple eyes like Anna.

Although he'd never seen the marquis, he knew that there was only one person who would talk to him like that.

In other words, the man before him was none other than his father's best friend, Kevin Stargaze.

Noel didn't know how to act in a situation like this. On the one hand, he didn't know whether Kevin was still his father's best friend. On the other hand, he couldn't be rude to him either since he couldn't prove otherwise.

Kevin raised his hand as if he was trying to calm Noel down. "Don't worry. I'm here not as your enemy. I've heard from my daughter that you want to talk to me, so let's have a chat, shall we?"

Noel glanced to the side, wondering if there were people listening to their conversation.

But Kevin added, "Don't worry. It seems that you don't know about my reputation as well as my power. My title as an Arbiter is Fleeting. I can cause distortion so that it looks like we just sit next to each other for a short time despite talking for five minutes. So, you don't have to worry about the people around us."

"..." Noel bit his lips, never thinking that the gap between them was this big. Not only did he fail to recognize the Spiritual Energy Kevin used, but he also failed to feel the threat around him.

If Kevin wanted to kill him, he wouldn't know how he died.

Kevin looked at Noel with a smile as if he remembered something. "You truly look like Luke and Leysha. Your hair, brain, and eyes look like him. Your boldness is like Leysha's.

"Even when your father calls me his best friend, I'm only at the receiving end. That's why I'm here to talk to you. I wonder what you have prepared for me."

"..." Noel bit his lips. Kevin looked like he had gotten used to this kind of situation and immediately took the lead in their conversation.

But everything Noel wanted to say required him to be the one leading this conversation. And he wouldn't be able to do it rashly.

He took a deep breath first and said, "I'm Noel Ardagan. I greet Marquis Stargaze."

"You should have known about the relationship between your parents and me. So, you don't have to be this formal. Even though we haven't met, I have heard a lot of things about you from your father. Just think of me as an uncle who lives next to you." Kevin smirked. He noticed what Noel planned to do and pushed him back, not letting him lead the conversation. This was a simple test to see Noel's capability.

Noel shook his head. "Unfortunately, I couldn't do that, Marquis. After all, I don't know you personally. It feels like I'm taking advantage of my father's connection as well as my family name. If I become reliant on them, I won't be able to do anything."

Kevin's eyebrows twitched. He closed his eyes for a moment before smiling. "It seems that Luke's son has become a good man."

"You overpraise. I'm nothing but an ant compared to those people." Noel shook his head.

Kevin knew that he indirectly implied the people who schemed everything, including his father and the royal family. He was aware that he had been manipulated by them the whole time.

But the fact that he acknowledged it meant Noel prepared to regain his control and pave his own path.

Kevin couldn't help but smile and say, "Alright. I shall surrender this time. It's good to see you like this, Noel. I'll listen to what you have to say, but I have one condition." please visit

"May I know what it is?"

"It's simple. Just call me Uncle Kevin."

"..." Noel's eyebrows twitched. Both of them knew it was a hard thing to do even though the misunderstanding had been cleared.

But Noel considered for a moment before opening his mouth. "In that case, can we talk... Uncle Kevin?"

"Sure." Kevin smiled and grabbed the necklace hanging on his neck. He took it off and handed it to Noel. "Since you call me Uncle, I have to give you a gift for the first meeting, right?"

"..." Noel looked at the necklace with a serious expression. He had a hard time taking it.

Though, Kevin added with a playful tone. "Take it. Your father entrusted it to me before. He wanted me to give this to you when you knew about the truth. This necklace is special. I'll tell you about its effect after our conversation."

"..." Noel, albeit hesitant, still took the necklace. "Thank you."

"No problem." Kevin smirked.

Noel was a bit overwhelmed by how Kevin acted. Although they never met, he had learned a bit of Marquis Stargaze's reputation.

Marquis Stargaze was a strict man who didn't hesitate to fight his enemy. His ability was also exceptional to the point everyone feared him.

So, it was a bit confusing when such a man acted this friendly to him. It felt like the man before him wasn't the marquis himself.

However, Noel couldn't lie to himself. No, the marquis couldn't lie to the system, specifically the Affection Medal.

Name: Kevin Stargaze

Affection: Supportive (90/100)

Description: Someone who is very supportive of you and your entire family. He will agree to almost everything.

Noel got the second shock in his life. Despite all the revelations he had encountered so far, this one would be among the top.

This was the first time he met the 'supposed enemy' of his family. Yet, Kevin Stargaze was extremely supportive of him.

It immediately cleared up all the misunderstanding since he realized that Kevin Stargaze was only playing along with his father's plan.

"..." Noel took a deep breath, wondering what he had to say.

Chapter 605 Target?

Noel closed his eyes for a moment and said, "Uncle... Is it possible for you to reveal anything to me?"

"If you are talking about your father's location, I know where, but I don't think I can tell you. They are alive and well... That's for sure. But that's the extent of it."

"If you want to ask me about his plan, it's better for you to figure it out yourself. After all, the situation might change if I tell you about it."

"If it's about my daughter's hand in marriage, you are the only one who can change my daughter for the better. So, ask her instead. I agree if she agrees."

"But if you want to know about the Supreme Devil Organization, all I can say is that I'm going to cooperate fully, especially this time. The Plant Lord is preparing something. I don't know what it is, but I know that it will be able to cause a lot of problems for two Spirit Grandmasters. The rest shall be handled by the demons..."

"Huh?" Noel's eyebrows twitched as if he had just heard something disturbing. "I think I misheard it..."

"Haha." There was no need for Noel to continue. The marquis added, "To be honest, I have been planning to change my daughter. She has been brainwashed by her teacher and the royal family. It is perfect to become a cover, but there's no way I want my daughter to be that way forever.

"I knew that you were going to know the truth and find me eventually. At first, I thought about allowing you to reform her. As long as she didn't die, I could let you do whatever you wanted with her. After all, you were the most affected by the entire scheme.

"Though, I don't know when it started, but it seems that you have managed to reform her... Maybe after joining the Demon Banner Army? Either way, I'm grateful for what you've done. As for what I mean... To be fair, I don't really care who she is going to end up with. Even if she's going to marry a commoner, I'll allow it. I simply have to beat her husband and train him to become someone who won't be underestimated. So, you don't have to worry or misinterpret my words."

"..." Noel was speechless, but after that explanation, there was no need to talk about it anymore.

Noel pinched the bridge of his nose first and asked, "Before that, how do you know me?"

"I was involved in the creation of that mask. To be precise, the one who created that mask was my acquaintance... So, your father created that mask through my connection."

"I guess it's impossible for me to know about the whole truth and scheme. There is one last question before returning to the topic. How far are you planning to go?"

Kevin's expression suddenly changed. "Until the Supreme Devil Organization disappears from this world."

'There is no shred of doubt in that statement...' Noel gasped inwardly. He turned serious and said, "Since I have got the confirmation, let's return to the matter at hand. May I know what you are going to do with the current matter?"

"To be honest, I can't really do much in the current situation. If someone knows me making a move, the royal family will take advantage of it to do something to me, Anna, or even my family.

"So, I'm planning to sabotage them in one way or another while I'm here. Instead of my plan, I should be the one asking you. If you get my cooperation after understanding my circumstances, what do you want me to do?"

Noel looked down for a moment, contemplating. The circumstances made him adjust his plan a bit.

After two minutes, Noel said, "What if we allow him to do whatever he wants?"

"Hmm?" Kevin narrowed his eyes. "So, you're saying that we should walk into traps?" please visit

"Yes. No matter what, it's hard to prove his involvement with the Supreme Devil Organization. Or do you have any evidence to prove it?"

"No." Kevin shook his head.

"Exactly. Instead of prosecuting him or sabotaging him, we should let him expose himself." Noel smiled.

"Hmm? But how are you planning to do that?"

"Septa is going to cooperate with me. He is going to watch over the Plant Lord."

"Even so, the Plant Lord has reached the area before Septa. He might have hidden something before his arrival."

"That's why I'm there." Noel smirked. "If you think about it, the Demon Relief Squad was targeted back then because we foiled the organization's plan multiple times. The Demon Extermination Squad found this place and the Plant Lord came before anyone else... You should be able to see the connection, right?"

"So, the Plant Lord was the one recommending the Demon Relief Squad? I see... It seems that the organization is still planning to crush your squad..."

"Yes." Noel nodded. "That's why the entire squad shall become bait... No, I will become the bait."

"Hmm? You? Why not the entire squad? Are you sure they're targeting you?"

"The Plant Lord should be targeting the squad, but the organization might be targeting me." Noel raised his hand and formed a rune in front of him.

"Is this the rumored rune that everyone is talking about?"

"Yes. The organization, specifically my father's younger brother, should be able to figure out that ladre is only an alias. After all, I've learned Runes far before anyone else.

"It won't be hard to see that I'm Noel. That's why I'm sure that they are planning to get me..."

Kevin fell silent. On the one hand, it felt like Noel was overestimating himself. On the other hand, he couldn't deny that possibility.

After all, Noel's uncle was indeed targeting the Ardagan Family for the sake of the inheritance. He wanted everything that the Ardagan Family's ancestors left behind. When he got his hand upon the inheritance, he was afraid that a new Spirit King would be born.

Kevin thought for a moment before asking with a serious expression. "What do you want me to do then?"

An evil smile appeared on Noel's face.

Chapter 606 Telescope

A few days later.

Noel finally returned to their camp. Everything had changed drastically since the last time he was here.

There was a huge area that had been covered with wooden walls. There were even two layers of ditches that had been filled up with water by using the people who had Water Spirit.

Each huge trunk that was used as the wall had been enhanced by the Harden Rune. Unless there was a powerful Advanced Level Demon that concentrated their attacks on the wall, the wooden wall wouldn't break that easily.

There were a few towers as well. They would place a lot of people who focused on using their barriers to intercept the incoming attacks from the demons.

The fort might not be as sturdy as other forts, but this was only a temporary fort. It should be enough to serve its purpose.

After observing this fort, Noel finally returned to his teammates, wondering if they had prepared for everything.

Clara knew about some of Noel's plans. So, the moment she heard about Noel's return, she immediately summoned him.

"So, how is it?" Clara asked with a serious expression.

Noel nodded. "You don't have to worry. I can't guarantee that everyone will be safe, but I can say that our survival has increased by another twenty percent."

"So, how high is our chance of survival in your head?"

"Hmm, I'm not being overconfident... So, seventy percent?"

"Seventy percent, huh... It's not that good, but not that bad either." Clara closed her eyes. In the past, half of the zero squads died or retired. This time, Noel thought there was a seventy percent chance that everyone would survive. It was bigger than she expected, considering there was a possible spy among them.

"That's, of course, my prediction without completely understanding your ability, Captain Clara. After all, this is the first time we fought together."

"..." Clara pinched the bridge of her nose and asked another question. "Is there any other way to increase our survival?"

Noel shook his head. "I have been thinking about it this whole time, but I don't think it's possible. After all, I'm still fearing the unknown."

"The unknown, huh..." Clara paused for a moment. "In that case, do you want to look at the mysterious facility from afar?"

"Is it possible? Isn't it dangerous since we might end up alerting the enemies?"

"Septa has created the perimeter. And I have reserved a good spot to observe that building."

"If that's the case, then I would like to go." Noel nodded.

"Then follow me." please visit

Clara rose from her seat and immediately left the tent. Noel followed her without hesitation.

They were not far away from the volcano, so the land was extremely fertile. There were a lot of trees and a slope that could hide their presence and body. It was perfect for scouting.

However, this kind of environment was also good for demons. They could see a few trees had fallen and even been destroyed. There was some blood splattered on the ground.

It was clear that Septa and Shale's groups had been killing all the demons in the area to make it a bit safer.

They arrived at a small hill not far from the area. Clara jumped onto the tree and waved her hand to Noel, telling him to catch up.

When Noel arrived at the top of the tree, the vision was cleared a bit, but he still had a hard time looking at the building.

It was then Clara grabbed a cylinder that had been attached to the tree. It seemed they had been using this spot a lot to observe the building.

Noel frowned, trying to see the building without it.

The building was gigantic. The length was more than three hundred meters and the width wasn't that different. The height reached as high as twenty meters.

"There are a total of five floors inside that building. It's not tall, but it's certainly huge. There will surely be a lot of monsters inside and we might be able to find a lot of new things." Clara explained.

"Hmm?" Noel frowned. "Although I can see that there will be a lot of demons residing inside that building, I can picture thousands of them staying in that place..."

"Of course. The demons usually take advantage of the terrain and create an underground tunnel. The Superior Demon is smart enough to order the lower level demons to do that. In other words, we might have to expect an area a few times bigger than the building we see right now underground."

"..." Noel was speechless after hearing that explanation. Though, he still frowned, thinking it shouldn't be the extent of it. Even though it would cause a huge outbreak, it wasn't enough to completely decimate their people.

Seeing Noel's expression, Clara pointed at a tall building not far from the gigantic building. "Look at the tower not far from the building."

"Hmm?" Noel turned around.

"There are a lot of buildings in this area. There are even houses in the vicinity. If you add the demons hiding in this slope and the area near it, you should be able to see the extent of the danger, right?"

"I see..." Noel nodded in understanding. "Still, our objective is that giant building, not the tower, right?"

"Well, we'll go there eventually. We have recognized that tower since it's similar to what has been found in the past. So, what we want right now is to enter something no one has entered before and map the building. After all, we can kind of expect what we will get from the tower."

"I understand." Noel looked down for a moment, contemplating. He wanted to figure out a few things to see if there was a new way to increase their survival.

Suddenly, Clara tapped his shoulder and presented the cylinder to him. "Put your eyes in front of this and try to look at them. This is one of the items found in the past. The Tower Association manages to recreate it with our own technology. According to the record, this thing is called Telescope. It allows us to see something from afar."

Chapter 607 Begin

Noel was curious and followed the instruction.

"Wha—!" Noel was shocked in an instant as he somehow managed to look out the window along with the demon that stood inside the building.

He almost dropped the item due to the shock. Luckily, Clara had expected something like this and immediately helped Noel hold the telescope. "How is it?"

"I could somehow see the window of that building, including the demon standing inside the building. It's not aware of our location yet." Noel gasped while looking at this al item called 'Telescope.'

"Haha, surprising, isn't it? When I tried it for the first time, I had a similar reaction."

"Yeah. To think such a al item exists." Noel shook his head helplessly. He didn't know how to react once he got his hand on it.

"This is the biggest reason why we're expanding our border. We want to continue exploring mysterious facilities like this."

"We can find more and more mysterious items and our people will try to replicate it. We don't know much about the previous civilization, but one thing is clear. The previous civilization was an extremely advanced civilization."

"They can live harmoniously without the Spiritual Energy. We don't know how they do it, but it seems to be related to Lightning Element."

"Our civilization has been chasing after the previous civilization, trying to apply our unique civilization, specifically the Spiritual Energy, into the technology."

"This is one of the examples. What do you think?" Clara smiled.

Noel made a genuine smile. "It's truly fascinating. I have always thought this world is extremely big. However, the four kingdoms can only occupy a portion of it due to the danger that lies beyond the border. That's why I'm wondering how good it is to explore the entire world..."

"There might be a new mysterious item that we can't explain. There might be new terrain that we can't describe. There might even be survivors from the previous civilization. Though, I know one thing that won't change. You can't venture out there without supreme strength. That's why it's a shame." Noel shook his head helplessly, feeling disappointed.

Clara patted his shoulder. "The previous civilization was surely amazing. Their building is sturdier than ours due to a special material. Even when we try to analyze it, we can't recreate it. There are windows and other things that we recreate from the previous civilization. So, I'm suggesting that you should do whatever you want.

"I know for sure your talent is something rarely seen in this world. It might take some time, but I have no doubt that you will reach a point where you can do that. I can't do it, but I can say this for sure... When we go out of the border, there will be an endless adventure."

"Indeed." Noel nodded. "Though, I have to survive from this expedition first. Is there anything I can use to check the building?"

"We don't have much, but Septa's squad should have prepared a few spots to observe the building. We can go check other spots to see the building from all directions."

"Fair enough." Noel nodded.

After a simple talk, Noel continued to observe the building, trying to find anything that could be used to their advantage.

They even tried a few other spots that Septa's squad had created for them. Unfortunately, it was hard to find any useful information through the window alone.

They could see some cracks, but it seemed the demons didn't destroy the building. There was no part that collapsed, so they truly lacked information.

Noel wanted to know the purpose of this place.

From what he could see from the window, those windows were coming from many rooms. It might look like a small room where people usually used to live, but Noel couldn't find anything related to people's living space.

Only the bed was visible, but there were a few weird things that were spotted inside, which didn't seem to be useful for a living space.

So, Noel thought the building was a place that could host a lot of people. But the people that went to this building weren't there for the sake of living. Instead, they seemed to be planning to rest there for a while and return home.

Unfortunately, that was the only thing they could find other than the weird machines inside the room. In the end, they had to enter to confirm the purpose of the building.

...

The night before the departure.

All captains and elders gathered again in one tent to discuss their plans. Their roles were pretty clear since there was a reason why they were invited to this place.

Shale immediately declared, "I have brought Five Squads of Demon Extermination Squad. The three squads shall be led by my vice captain to kill the demons around the vicinity. The other two squads will follow me inside."

Septa nodded and said, "I have four squads with me. Two squads shall go around to maintain the information for the people outside, including the ones inside this fort. The other two squads will follow me inside to connect all the people inside the building as well as find any trace of demons. If possible, we have to find the hidden nest where the demons reside."

The Plant Lord raised his hand. "I have investigated the plants nearby. Nature has taken the building back from humans. So, there might be a lot of plants that make their way inside. They might contain poison or something, so I'll be there to check the plants. My disciple will stay here, so we can bring anyone poisoned here to be treated."

The Stone Lord smiled. "As for me, I'm planning to enter. I'm curious about the structure, so I'm planning to check every material they use inside. Don't worry, the terrain is sturdy enough, so it should be easier to find a hiding place..."

Clara explained her role last. "In that case, only the Zero Squad will enter here while the rest remain here to support everyone in case of emergency. The Zero Squad will try to identify the building as well as its purpose. We'll do our best to create a map of the building as soon as possible."

Everyone looked at each other with a smile. They seemed to have reached an agreement.

And finally, this expedition could officially start.

The next day.

All related parties had stood in front of the fort, ready to explore the mysterious building. All of them had grim expressions on their faces, fully knowing the danger that was looming inside.

"Let's begin our exploration."

Chapter 608 Entering The Mysterious Facility

Roar!

Roar!

Roar!

A series of roars immediately livened up the area.

The group consisted of the elites from multiple squads who immediately looked at each other.

Shale focused on his vice captain. She was the woman that stood behind Shale during the meeting.

"Rhane. I'll leave those demons to you. Do the usual!"

Rhane, the vice captain of the Demon Extermination Squad, nodded her head. She then turned around, looking at the people in the squads that would follow her.

Everyone seemed to be excited as they were made for the purpose of exterminating the demons. Since they could kill a lot of demons, they were pretty eager to do it.

However, Rhane suddenly opened her mouth, saying with a genuine yet serious tone. "I believe in you guys."

"..." The words didn't seem to have any hidden meaning. Even Noel was confused about why she said such a thing.

But to everyone's surprise, the expressions of those people completely changed. They all became serious as if they remembered their original purpose.

They might be exterminating the monsters, but they did it in order to protect these people. And with Rhane saying those words without any other meaning, it showed how much she truly believed in them. They shouldn't betray that trust.

"Let's—" Before Rhane commanded the squads, there were multiple demons that managed to sniff their scents and reach their position.

"Four demons spotted!" One of the Demon Beholder Squad's members informed them out loud.

At the same time, a few more members of the squad suddenly appeared on top of the monsters, killing those monsters before they could inform the other monsters.

"Targets have been neutralized." The Demon Beholder Squad's member confirmed it again.

But it seemed that they had made a bit too much noise when informing them. There were a few roars coming to their position as if they were following the human's voice from earlier.

In that instant, Rhane pulled out her sword and started moving forward. She didn't forget to leave behind a message. "Leave the front to us. We'll escort you."

In that instant, the squads that followed Rhane followed her. They spread a bit, but their strength was completely overwhelming the enemies.

This might be the first time Noel saw the overwhelming power of the top squad of the Demon Banner Army.

Rhane was swinging her sword once, but suddenly, a few demons got their head cut. Even other members easily killed the demons in their path. Even two Advanced Demons couldn't hold a candle as they were easily overpowered by two members with their unique cooperation.

They were extremely versatile when killing demons. This was the Demon Extermination Squad.

Noel was observing them carefully, trying to learn their movement and cooperation. However, he couldn't really focus on them since the rest of the group began to move toward the mysterious facility.

After a while, Septa's squad began to separate themselves to act as the ears and eyes for the Demon Extermination Squad outside the building, leaving only a small number of elites in the exploration team.

There were only twelve people from the Demon Extermination Squad, eight people from the Demon Relief Squad, five people from the Demon Beholder Squad, and two elders from the association.

It might look like a lot, but considering there might be hundreds if not thousands of demons inside the mysterious facility, they were truly a small group.

It didn't take too long for them to reach the mysterious facility. All demons had been killed by the Demon Extermination Squad.

As expected, the more the demons came, the harder to silence all of them. In the end, a few demons managed to share their location and caused more and more demons to come to their position.

Luckily, they moved quickly. They reached the building before they were surrounded by the demons.

Once they stood in front of the building, they could finally experience how big the building was compared to them.

Septa immediately stopped them while pointing to the side as if telling them to hide behind the walls.

They didn't know what was going on, but they followed Septa's instructions.

"Spread into two groups and enter through the windows. Immediately lock yourself in and don't make any sound," said Septa with a serious expression. He kept staring at the entrance that was made of glass.

They immediately followed Septa's instructions. Clara and Paul split up as each of them brought three people.

Noel ended up under Clara while Rose was with Paul. They didn't know what was going on, but they felt it was something big.

Still, Septa didn't have any hesitation in his movement. As soon as they reached the window, he took a peek inside before pointing at the door.

Shale nodded and waved his hand, utilizing his wind ability to close the door quietly. He did the same thing to the other room.

As soon as the doors were closed, they sneaked in through the windows.

Noel didn't expect that he would end up in the same room as Clara, Shale, and Septa. Meanwhile, the other rooms had two elders from the association.

Still, the room he entered wasn't big.

It was only six meters wide and four meters long. With thirteen people inside the room, it felt cramped immediately. In addition, there were a lot of mysterious items inside the room, so they couldn't move carelessly.

Noel took a quick scan of the room. There was one bed on the right side of the room, followed by a few chairs. There was a weird machine next to the bed. With all the cables looping around, it was easy to know that this machine was used by whoever slept on that bed.

There was a giant round lamp above them. Although it wasn't on, they could imagine how bright it would be.

Still, the lamp wasn't a candle or Demon Crystal, so Noel couldn't help but wonder how they worked.

On the opposite side of the room, there was a big empty space as though it was used as a waiting area.

Though, the one thing that piqued Noel's interest was the shelf on the corner.

'Hmm?'

Chapter 609 Demons

'Hmm?' Noel frowned. Although he wanted to check the shelf, there were already too many people in that area. Trying to go that way would end up causing some ruckus, so he restrained himself.

Noel glanced at Clara and asked as quietly as possible, "What do you think?"

"I can't deduce anything with just this room alone. It's like a residential area, but I have never seen this piece of machine." Clara shook her head helplessly.

Before they continued discussing further, Shale and Septa came to them.

Septa was covering his mouth with a finger as if telling them to keep quiet. He even pointed at the outside.

Noel and the others couldn't understand it at first, but everything changed when there was a huge roar that shook the entire building.

Roooooaaaarrr!

"!!!" All of them widened their eyes as their bodies became tense. The roar was followed by multiple roars and howls.

They began to hear footsteps outside their room. This must be the reason why Septa wanted Shale to close the door immediately.

He knew that the demons were about to come out, so they wanted to block this room to become their hiding spot.

A few loud bangs immediately filled the entire building. The glass shattered, the wall crumbled, and the ground shook. Demons were rushing to the outside to chase after their prey.

'A hundred? No, a few hundred... It might even reach a thousand...' Noel sucked a cold breath, realizing how dangerous it was to explore the building.

He also understood that the people outside were bait to lure these demons away. On the one hand, it looked heartless. On the other hand, the opportunity that came after it was truly something they couldn't pass on.

Luckily, they had erected a fort that could help them resist the demons, but those people obviously planned to stay around for a while so that they could lure as many demons as possible.

While waiting for them to come out, Septa nodded to Shale as if telling him to use his ability. Shale didn't hesitate to stretch out his palm.

The air around him began to move and expand, matching its shape to the room.

After that, Shale said, "I have isolated the room with my wind. The wind should keep our voices inside. So, it should be fine for the time being..."

"The output of your Spiritual Energy..."

"I have made it to the minimum. It should be able to fool weak demons. But a Peak Level Demon will come out soon, so we don't have much time." Shale nodded his head, assuring them.

Septa then turned to the other people. "Alright. From my sense, I can feel at least six hundred demons residing in the building alone, not accounting for the demons that just come out, as well as the hidden nest."

"This might be harder than we originally thought, but it's alright for the time being."

"I will be moving ahead of you guys and trying to find all the demons. Shale and his squad will be killing those demons. Make sure to keep the noise as low as possible. If it's not possible, then split up even further and check all the rooms, especially with any human remains. We don't need the human remains, but having someone living inside the room means there will be more items we can take out."

"The member of my squad should be informing the same thing to the other half. So, we'll proceed first."

"What will you do, Clara?" Septa asked.

"I'll conserve my energy by staying on the back. During that time, I'll try to gather all the unique items that we can bring. Zion and Ben will be taking care of the luggage, while Iadre shall handle the mapping. If you have any request, we're willing to do it."

Septa and Shale exchanged looks before shaking their heads.

"Alright." Septa nodded. "We'll be moving when most of the demons have left the building. Meanwhile, keep our heads down so that the demons don't see us from the outside. I'll give you the signal."

They agreed to Septa's decision. While waiting, Noel moved around to make a simple measurement of the room before drawing a rectangle on his note. He even gave a few notes inside the room itself. Of course, Noel wouldn't take a note like this when they were in danger.

Meanwhile, Clara came to the shelf and found a few pieces of equipment. There was a long white coat and a big cylinder made of glass. She had seen the cylinder, but the white coat was something unique.

Although it was a normal coat without any protective enchantment, this was the first time there was a coat like this. She didn't even know what they used it for.

She immediately wrapped it and tossed it to Zion while searching for other things they could bring out in the initial expedition.

After a while, the voice of the demons started to decrease. Septa kept maintaining his focus on the demons outside the door.

Suddenly, Septa said, "Three Low Level Demons on our right, two Mid Level Demons on our left. We are near the corner, so we have to be careful. I'm going to erect an invisible wall to make them think we're not coming out of the room. During that time, we'll proceed to the hallway and find a good place as our temporary base."

Shale nodded and ordered his subordinates, "You two kill the Low Level Demons. I'll handle the Mid Level Demons. The rest will check and clear the hallway while waiting for us."

As soon as they reached an agreement, Septa closed his eyes before clasping his hands.

The hallway outside their room was quite long. Although there were demons near them, there were also demons that stood on the opposite side of the hallway. These demons would surely find them when they came out if not for Septa.

Suddenly, an invisible wall appeared and replicated everything behind it. This way, the demons would only see the replica while the demons behind the replica would die.

"Go!"

Chapter 610 Door

"Go!"

Shale instantly opened the door and headed straight to the left while the other two members went in the opposite direction.

The demons who were standing in the hallway as if they were waiting for the incoming attackers from the outside were completely dumbfounded by the sneak attack. They didn't expect that the humans had entered the building without them knowing it.

And with their intelligence, they only used their instinct to react. They tried to attack Shale to buy some time to react, but their opponent was simply too strong.

With a single wave of his hand, a violent gale came forth. The wind enveloped the entire room and cut everything inside.

It instantly left a lot of sword marks on the floor, the ceiling, and the walls. When it reached the demons, the wind cut them into pieces without having the chance to fight back.

Shale just showed them why he was the captain of the Demon Extermination Squad as well as his reputation as one of the top fighters in the Demon Banner Army.

Noel seemed to focus too much on Shale that he didn't realize that the other two members had also taken out the Low Level Demons.

"..." Noel sucked a cold breath. 'So, this is the Demon Extermination Squad. Their power is overwhelming and their speed is quick. But why does Shale use that excess Spiritual Energy to cut the wall? Or is it because his power is so violent that it ends up that way? Someone as powerful as Shale should have taken care of the problem with waste movement, so... it might be the latter.'

Noel took a deep breath to calm his excited heart down. He wanted to become that powerful in the future. But for now, they had a mission to complete.

As soon as the demons died, Septa immediately came out of the room and went to the corner of the hallway. He used his own sense to calculate the distance of the hallway as well as the demons residing in it.

Septa pointed three fingers toward them. Each of them was heading towards a person. The first one was Shale since he focused on dealing with the demons. The second one was Clara, who had come out since the demon had been taken care of. The last one was Noel.

The two captains had understood how Septa worked, so they didn't hesitate to come to him. Meanwhile, Noel's reaction was a bit late. It took him half a second before he realized he was being called.

He hurriedly chased after the two to understand what was going on.

Septa looked at Noel and pointed at his back, as if telling Noel to remember the hallway for his note. After that, Septa said, "There are stairs going to the second floor. It seems to be blocked by a door, so I don't know if we can open it or not.

"I'm going to blind the opponents this time and check the door, if possible, opening it. I want Shale to handle the demons. As for Clara, you'll help with the movement of the two groups. We're going to the second floor since there are fewer demons."

"Got it." The two nodded while Noel started looking around, remembering the shape of the hallway and the number of doors. Although he was curious about where the doors led him, he focused on drawing the map and putting some notes on each room.

Although it wasn't good enough to be called a map, he could take his time when they got back to put everything on a single piece of paper.

Still, Septa's power was a bit shocking, even for Noel. It could even fool the demons, since the Spiritual Energy used was almost nonexistent.

Unless the demons had an extreme sense or were near the wall, they wouldn't have realized the wall at all. This might be the reason why Septa could become a Captain despite his age.

As soon as they reached an agreement, Septa immediately erected another barrier and said, "Go."

Without hesitation, Shale came out of the corner and headed straight to the demons standing in the hallway. He did the same thing as earlier and killed the demons.

Meanwhile, Clara had gone back to the room and instructed the people on how they were going to move. Then, she opened the room next door and found the rest of the people waiting for her the whole time. It seemed that Septa's group had explained to them about their operation.

That was why they looked relieved when Clara opened the door. After all, the mission could still continue.

Last but not least, Septa had traversed to a green door not far from them. It seemed there was another entrance near the door, but because it was covered by the trees, Septa and the others didn't find it or else, they would have used this entrance instead.

Septa tried to open the door. Sadly, it was locked.

"Tsk." Septa clicked his tongue and immediately looked at the keyhole while furrowing his eyebrows. He used his Spiritual Energy to check the shape of the keyhole and the mechanism before forming another barrier at the tip of his fingertip.

It turned out Septa's power was something related to Barrier. He could manipulate a barrier to fool the demons and even lock picking. It was a versatile power for someone with his line of job.

Septa tried to open the door for a few seconds while adjusting the barrier inside the keyhole. In just a few seconds, the door was unlocked.

He quietly opened it and entered. The door actually led to a small passage with only stairs inside.

Looking at the structure, the stairs seemed to be leading to the top. So, Shale was called to form the same barrier so that they could talk inside.

Meanwhile, Clara guided the people to enter the passage so that they could discuss their movement.

Noel entered the room along with the rest of the people. But he noticed the green sign on top of the door.

He couldn't understand the words as the language was different from what he knew.

'How do we read that sign? I'll memorize it first and see if someone knows the meaning.'

Noel didn't realize that he was actually writing two words, and it was something necessary for every big and tall building.

The two words he wrote were, 'Emergency Exit.'