

S vs Rebirth 681

Chapter 681 Realization

"You... are like a Spirit Ability Thrower instead of a true Spirit Master."

"Huh?" Noel raised his eyebrows, confused. "What do you mean?"

When he saw Noel's face, Damian rearranged his words. Without context, his words were an insult. There was no way Noel would take it lightly.

Noel was a genius that was hard to come by. Such a genius usually had a kind of pride that would be hurt when someone insulted them.

However, when Noel heard his words, there wasn't a single trace of pride. He was purely confused. Let alone pride, all that he wanted was a way to get stronger.

So, he had to rearrange his words to match his personality. He thought he would beat Noel with his words, but since there wasn't a need for it, he cut straight to the case.

"Literally. You have a lot of powerful abilities. Although I haven't seen everything about you, I have witnessed a few of your abilities."

"I can say that your abilities are top notch, but that's all there is to it. It feels like you are utilizing them according to the textbook."

"A textbook?" Noel frowned, looking down and falling into deep thought.

He had felt something different whenever Damian utilized his ability. But this was the first time he heard someone telling him like this.

Seeing Noel's confused look, Damian continued, "For example, this Enhance Forward Rune you're going to give me. It can move an item forward, right?"

"Yes." Noel nodded with a serious expression. That was what the rune was all about after all.

However, Damian added, "In that case, what would happen if I draw this rune in reverse? Doesn't that mean it's not forward anymore?"

Noel widened his eyes. With his brain, it was easy for Noel to understand what he wanted to say.

And it completely dumbstruck him. He had never thought about it.

It was true that he could use the rune with different weapons and items, changing the purpose of the runes or his approaches.

However, he never thought about drawing the rune in reverse.

He imagined himself turning his body around and drawing the Enhance Forward Rune normally. But before activating it, he turned around again so that the Enhance Forward Rune was aimed in his direction instead of the other way around like it was supposed to be.

What if he could draw the rune in reverse so that he didn't have to turn around to draw it in reverse? That would mean the Enhance Forward Rune could become the 'Enhance Backward Rune.'

However, his thinking was still limited since he could actually draw it sideways, changing its direction again.

This might be what Damian meant by Spirit Ability Thrower instead of a Spirit Master.

He covered his face with his hands as if he had just got the shock of his life.

'I see. What Damian means by Spirit Ability Thrower is that I have been using my ability too literally. If it's Enhance Forward Rune, I have always thought about making an item go forward instead of the direction of the rune itself.'

'Now that I think about it, I have been using everything too literally. The Ice Ability, the Fire Ability, and even the Runes...'

'In that case, the Enhance Forward Rune can easily become the Falling Rune if I want it. How come I never thought about this?'

'No, wait.' Noel suddenly took a deep breath as if he had just realized a big problem. 'Since when... Yeah, since when did I rely too much on Ardagan and Heisk?'

After that realization, Noel noticed how much he relied on his spirits. It was true that he should rely on his spirit, but the spirit would always be his supporter and he would always have the initiative.

Ardagan and Heisk had already told him that they would always support him. They gave a lot of abilities and the system allowed him to work on his ability swiftly just by taking advantage of the system's Honor Points and Skill Points.

When he wasn't that reliant on Ardagan, he managed to create a lot of original things with the help of knowledge that he attained. He could form his own Swordsmanship with the help of the Ardagan Swordsmanship. He could make the Sword Fall make a parabolic movement instead of a simple falling movement.

But after getting stronger and stronger, he realized that he had a bit too reliant on the system. He took advantage of the system and his overwhelming abilities to win in every battle, but he had stopped thinking about what he could do to make that technique an original ability. His personality was the one that made things unique after all.

'This...' Noel's body shook. 'Now that I think about it, can I use the Flame Scale on an object that is connected to me as long as I think it's my own body? Can I use the Ice Mirror on a shield or something to strengthen its foundation?'

'There are a lot of things I can do...' Once he realized everything, it seemed that the door that led him to a completely new world was opened for him. 'An infinite combination... an infinite number of possibilities... Since when did I limit myself? Ardagan and Heisk have told me that they are going to support me, so I, as the head, should take the initiative to choose the direction. I'm a fool...'

Noel gritted his teeth. He never thought he would be this angry and disappointed in himself.

Damian saw that change of expression and closed his eyes. It seemed that he didn't have to tell him everything since he could figure it out himself.

Damian only added two more things. "It seems that you have realized what I'm talking about. That's actually one of the possibilities of becoming a Spirit Grandmaster. I don't know if someone has told you or not, but a Spirit Grandmaster is like a different world. That's because of what I told you earlier."

Chapter 682 New Vision

"The Spirit Grandmaster is the realm of Fusion. There is a reason why it's called a fusion..." Damian pointed at his head. "The one thing that you will refine when you become a Spirit Grandmaster is your brain."

"The brain is in control of everything, so once you have refined your brain, you are going to achieve fusion."

"What does the fusion mean? Well, it's basically the way you use your Spirit Abilities. For example..." Damian formed an ice sword. It was identical to the sword on his waist. "This is my ability, Ice Sword. As the name implies, I can only create an Ice Sword with it. I can't use it to form a hammer or anything."

"However, a Sword can be anything. A double-edged sword, a one-edged sword, a two-handed big sword, or even a thin sword like rapier. A bow is the same... There are Short Bow, Long Bow, Composite Bow, Crossbow or a lot more."

"What I have seen for you is your ability to throw your Spirit Ability at your opponent. It's true that your approach is unique, but you haven't utilized a hundred percent of your abilities."

"That's why you are just a thrower, not a master. On the other hand, what I have done is mastering my own technique. My spirit once told me that it would give me its ability without telling me how to use it. He would observe how I use my ability because my answer might not be the same as his."

"I don't know about the standard of this kingdom, but in the Greenwood Kingdom, all Spirit Masters are attempting to fully utilize their abilities like this. It is surely hard, but this is the foundation for the Spirit Grandmaster stage."

"Once you refine the Spirit Mind, you can easily control your Spiritual Energy. Even if you fail or can utilize a new way even a little bit, when you become a Spirit Grandmaster, you might be able to fully utilize it all of a sudden."

"That's why Spirit Masters usually draw the concept when they are at this stage, trying to master at least one or two techniques. When they reach the Spirit Grandmasters, they will master all their abilities."

"I believe I have answered your question with this." Damian smiled and took a step back.

Noel nodded with a serious expression. He could only answer him with his action because his mind was thinking a lot of things.

He soon pinched the bridge of his nose while closing his eyes.

There were three reasons why Damian told him about all this. The first reason was his potential.

By telling him about this, Damian could measure Noel's talent. After all, Noel was the grandson of their former royal ian, Raincart Ezenholm.

The second reason was related to his judgment. Even though he had a smart head, it felt like he had always been burdened by something that made him reliant.

It might be his spirit, but he had never heard a case where the spirits tried to take over their hosts. In other words, his spirit might be a special case since Noel could use two elements.

He wanted to see Noel's current state so that he could see Noel's potential.

Last but not least, they were in a business relationship. By telling more than Noel expected, he could create an image that he was generous. With this, Noel wouldn't hesitate to make a deal with him. Basically, he was doing the same thing that Noel did.

Noel took a deep breath. Although he had a lot of things to sort in his mind, he couldn't do it while Damian was standing in front of him.

He looked at Damian with a serious expression and politely bowed his head. "Thank you, Sir Damian."

"I'm just fulfilling my part of the deal." Damian humbly said.

Noel let out a long sigh and formed another rune in front of him. This time, he used the Rune Sword, but he applied Damian's advice from earlier.

He turned the sword into a double-handed sword while saying, "This is the second concept. What do you think?"

"!!!" Damian widened his eyes in shock. The rune looked like his Ice Sword ability. Noel might even have more forms and everything could be mastered like the Spirit Grandmaster.

There was also one thing that shocked him the most. It seemed that Noel was able to change the form with ease. He didn't know how easy it was, but it seemed that mastering a Rune was easier than mastering a Spirit Ability.

In the future, there might come a day when the rune completely overwhelmed a Spirit Ability. At that time, humans might become independent from the presence of Spirits.

He let out a long sigh, feeling defeated once again. He clapped his hands a few times as if praising Noel.
"It's very good, Mr. Noel."

Of course, Damian understood the reason behind Noel's action. He wanted to let him know that as long as he worked hard, he could get both the Rune Engineering and the Rune Spell.

All he needed to do was to show his sincerity and work hard for it. Even though Noel was still overwhelmed, he was still as shrewd as ever.

"It seems that we will have a productive one year together." Damian smiled. That smile was sharp as if telling him, 'I would make you broke.'

Noel made a big smile since he knew another way to utilize Damian. He wasn't scared of his threat. In fact, he threatened him back with that smile, indirectly telling him, 'You might end up spilling your country's top secrets to me...'

Noel and Damian extended their hands at the same time, shaking each other's hands.

But it seemed that Noel couldn't have a peaceful time. Ardagan might have seen his change and started supporting him in a different way. That was why he suddenly showed him a mission.

A blue panel appeared in front of him.

[Mission: Survive an Attack.]

[Description: The Supreme Devil Organization will launch an attack. Survive for one day.]

[Reward: 5 Random Rune Scrolls and Ardagan Swordsmanship +2 Levels.]

[Pentaly: Death.]

Chapter 683 Trying To Be Different

Noel was stunned by the sudden mission, but he couldn't show it to Damian, lest he became suspicious.

On the one hand, he had just learned he shouldn't become too dependent on the system and the spirits. On the other hand, they actually offered him the best support that couldn't be refused.

After all, from the way Ardagan worded it, Laufey seemed to be planning to attack them. And if they couldn't survive it, they would die. The attack would probably last for one day.

There were a few reasons why it only lasted for a day such as the reinforcement as well as the other city. Either way, he had to find a solution.

Noel looked at Damian with a poker face, but his brain was revolving crazily.

"..." Noel's head surprisingly lowered as if his mood suddenly shifted.

"Hmm? What's wrong?" Damian was confused by Noel's action. He narrowed his eyes, trying to see why Noel became like this. If there was something suspicious, he would have to find out about it later.

Noel scratched the back of his head while looking away. He said with an awkward tone. "Actually, now that we have reached an agreement, we have one more problem. Well, you can say that I have realized now that my mind is more open..."

"A problem?" Damian tilted his head in confusion.

"Yeah. You should know the group that is chasing after us, right?"

"Don't tell me..." Damian's expression turned grim. "Are they going to attack us?"

"If my calculation is not wrong." Noel nodded with a serious expression. He couldn't help but recall what Damian said earlier.

'If I can't completely rely on Ardagan, I have to think of a reason for such a thing to happen.' Noel closed his eyes for a moment. A flood of memories rushed through his mind. 'First of all, let's take a look at the current situation.'

'The enemies should have five or six Spirit Grandmasters. Two of them are heavily injured, but they still can't be taken lightly.'

'Laufey will be fighting Damian, but he has to be wary of Dimitri's presence as well. So, there might be someone who is strong enough to stop Damian in his stead? No, I don't think he has prepared that much. In that case, is he planning to use the demon to attack the city? That's the highest probability with his current condition.'

'Then, what about us? We have Paul, who can at least stop a single Spirit Grandmaster. I should probably ask him to take care of that woman who slipped away earlier. That's right. There is also another Spirit Grandmaster here, the Vice Captain of the Demon Barrier Squad. If we can gain his cooperation... But what if he knows that they are here because of us? It will put the squad in a difficult position, right?'

'Then, How do we deal with four or five Spirit Grandmasters in case Damian successfully restricts Laufey?'

Noel leaned back on his chair, experiencing a headache. The previous ambush worked because they managed to split them. But with their combined force, their current strength wouldn't be able to withstand them.

That was why Noel had to think of something to outsmart them once again. But this time, Laufey would be more careful against him.

'Still, we have a big advantage, which is the city. It has been fortified with a lot of Spirit Enchantment. But what if they destroy the city because we are here? Laufey should have the ability to do it. And if the demons enter the city...'

The more he thought about it, the more variables that took place in their situation.

Noel had expected their attack, but it was hard to come up with a solution without sacrificing anything.

In fact, he had a few plans ready, but each plan required them to sacrifice something. So, he wanted to find one more path that could suffer less damage than any others.

Damian remained silent the whole time, interested in what Noel wanted to say. He had a high opinion of him to the point he wanted to kidnap him to their Greenwood Kingdom.

But doing so wouldn't give him his loyalty, so he could only watch over Noel to see everything he had hidden this whole time. Of course, he would make him broke.

Noel was quiet for ten minutes before he uttered a question. "Sir Damian. Can you destroy the city wall with your power?"

"Hmm? I do have the strength to do it, but I wouldn't recklessly follow that kind of plan."

"What if you have the help of the demons?"

That question caused him to contemplate the possibility of such a plan. In fact, he began formulating a plan in his head where he could take down the city as if he was one of the enemies.

"If I have that kind of resource, I surely can destroy the city wall. And I don't know the limit, but if it's possible, I would like one Superior Demon or ten Peak Level Demons to march at the same time. It will cause a huge panic as well as confusion."

"One Superior Demon or ten Peak Level Demons, huh?" Noel let out a long sigh. From that number, it seemed that the Demon Barrier Squad would be occupied with handling the demons. In other words, they had to take care of the Supreme Devil Organization themselves.

'As much as I want to utilize my ability in my own way, it seems that I have to rely on Ardagan and Heisk for the time being. Instead of thinking about how the mission can even take place, I should focus on the solution. I will have to reflect on it at a later date.'

'For now...' Noel took a deep breath. "I have one last question. Can you launch a very powerful attack from a distance? Something that can kill one or two of them, specifically the injured ones?"

Damian was startled by the question, but it also piqued his interest. After some consideration, Damian answered, "I can't promise two of them will die, but killing one of them should be no problem. Though, I prefer not to use my ability in front of everyone... You know, politics."

Chapter 684 Attack

"How is it?" Laufey asked while glaring at Hailfa.

Hailfa had a hard time maintaining her composure since Laufey was already angry because he didn't want the mission to fail. Hailfa said, "They should have reached the city in sixteen hours by now. And among the two cities, this is the one that should receive them. We can see the increase of soldiers on the wall. They should be the injured soldiers that have been healed."

"So, I believe we can safely assume that their carriages are filled with medicine. However, the city has been fortified and has its own source of water. So, it's impossible to cut off their supplies for the time being."

"I know that already. If we wait for too long, the reinforcements from other squads will arrive. We can't wait that long." Laufey's frustration increased. He couldn't afford to wait for so long.

Hailfa gulped down. One wrong word would definitely trigger the eruption of his anger. So, she carefully worded her advice. "We may have a solution. It's true that the fortified city can endure the demons' attack."

"But if we attack the wall and manage to blast it open, we can cause some ruckus inside. With this, the squad only has two options left. They can either remain in the city or leave it. We can enter the city with the help of the demons if they choose the former. Meanwhile, we can simply ambush them with all our strength if they choose the latter."

"According to Sir, there might be another Spirit Grandmaster that could rival that ice spirit user, but if that's the case, we would have perished in the previous ambush. Hence, I believe that person is not there... at the very least, in this situation."

"That's why we still have a chance to turn around the situation. All we need to do is to destroy their wall."

Laufey's rage calmed down for a bit as he couldn't help but consider her opinions.

It might look like Laufey failed as a leader since he couldn't remain calm and use his subordinate to give him the plan, even though he had been the one to devise all their plans.

However, there was another reason for Laufey's rage. That was why people were afraid of angering him since his anger was related to his spirit.

But when they managed to calm him down, Laufey could start working normally again. He considered her plans before saying, "Sure. I will destroy their city. Since they have gone all the way to anger me, it's time to show them what my rage could do to them."

"How many gates does the city have?"

"Three Gates: South, West, and North."

"In that case, we will split up into three. The injured will be with me in the West while you and the pair will hide in the South and North. If we look at their pattern, I don't think they will remain in the city."

"So, once they go out, we will wait for them. Remember, don't engage. We will regroup first before ambushing them. Even if they expect it, we will overwhelm them."

"One more thing you all have to remember. If there is one more Spirit Grandmaster, some of you will probably die. I can survive, but the mission will end up as a failure. When that happens, the Supreme Devil Organization will take this matter even more seriously since they might be using the Demon Relief Squad as bait to lure our strong fighters before killing them."

"In other words, if my theory is correct, they might already be aware of our intentions and try to weaken the organization."

"So, once you spot another Spirit Grandmaster, don't engage and return to our rendezvous point immediately. Understood?"

"Yes, Sir." All Devil Bishops nodded their heads. Just like how they intended to hunt the Demon Relief Squad, the Demon Banner Army might use that chance to weaken them.

Noel hadn't even given such a request to the Demon Banner Army for two reasons. The Supreme Devil Organizations might have infiltrated them like the Tower Association. So, if those spies in Captain Ranks or even Vice Captain Ranks were to know about this plan, the enemies would get the information and rearrange their plans. In addition, Noel didn't know about the Plant Lord's involvement in all those incidents since the reports had just reached the commander.

That was why there was no concrete plan to deal with the Supreme Devil Organization yet.

Still, it didn't really matter. After all, both Laufey and Noel knew that this was the best time to attack.

Twenty two hours after they entered the city, Laufey had created a concrete plan and made sure the information about the city while Noel had gotten enough rest and preparation for the incoming attack.

The sun had risen for two hours and the fight was at its peak. If there was going to be a sneak attack, it would be at this time. Not only would it pummel the soldiers' morale, but it would also give them a lot of time to execute their own plans.

In the city, Noel was staring at his teammates. Worried filled his heart as he said with a grim tone. "I know this is a lot to ask, but I hope that all of you can trust me no matter how weird the request is. Our survival will be relying on our own role. And if I have to die, I'll make sure that I die together with you guys. So, please..."

Noel lowered his head, requesting their cooperation. He knew that if something went wrong, someone might die. It showed how strong the enemies were.

...

While Noel was lowering his head, Laufey was standing not far from the city. The trees covered him, so people couldn't find him unless they were intending to do so.

He was holding his sword with both hands. His body was emitting a fiery red glow. It was calm on the outside, but if one touched it, they would be burned to ashes as if it was a blazing fire.

This was his rage... the rage that he had gathered since the start of the mission.

When the time was ripe, he gradually opened his eyes while waving his sword downwards.

"Madness Fury."

Chapter 685 Destroying The Wall

Laufey, standing between the trees, started releasing his Spiritual Energy. Unlike Noel, whose energy gave an overwhelming feeling, Laufey's blood-red energy emitted an ominous feeling.

Even Gargan and Fil, who were standing next to him, could feel chills down their spine. Anger, hatred, and bloodlust combined into one, boosting the Spiritual Energy.

The more he released his energy, the stronger Laufey clenched his teeth.

Gargan usually overwhelmed his opponent with his supernatural fighting power. But when he was in front of Laufey, he couldn't help but feel so small as though Laufey was standing in front of him, ready to unleash his rage and rip him apart.

'Laufey Ardagan. He was once adopted by the Ardagan Family and became a Captain in the Demon Banner Army. Due to his ambition, he betrayed both of them and joined the Supreme Devil Organization.'

'When he was in the Demon Banner Army, people were afraid of his judgment because he could find any sort of clues from a person by using his own rage. The more they filled his rage, the guiltier they were.'

'People knew him as Raging Storm Laufey. However, after joining the Supreme Devil Organization, he became even more feared because his anger could be unleashed upon the kingdom. And eventually, his nickname changed, Mad Demon Laufey. The person who could use his rage to threaten the organization. So, this is the strength of the Mad Demon.'

After filling up the Spiritual Energy for his attack, Laufey's expression changed. The anger that reflected on his face disappeared without a trace as though all that rage was transferred into this single attack.

He took a step forward while raising his sword, ready to unleash his ability.

As soon as he locked on the target, Laufey waved his sword downwards.

"Madness Fury."

The blood-red Spiritual Energy flew forth and expanded. The raging energy was so powerful that it slightly tainted the Spiritual Energy black.

The overwhelming energy was emitting immense pressure. The ground trembled, the soil cracked, and the demons were obliterated.

It only took a second for the attack to reach the wall.

Whether it was fortunate or unfortunate, the wall had been reinforced with the Spirit Enchantment.

The symbol from the Spirit Enchantment was reacting to the surge of Spiritual Energy, creating a translucent barrier right in front of the wall, pushing all the demons back.

When the 'Madness Fury' hit the translucent barrier, the ground quaked. The soldiers couldn't help but drop to the ground as if the attack pushed the entire wall back.

The blast blew all the demons away as it boosted the strength of the 'Madness Fury' even further.

This Spirit Enchantment originated from the Barrier Rune, Spirit Gathering Rune, and Hardening Rune. Although they were incomplete, the combination of the three could withstand an attack from a Superior Demon easily. This was what a Reinforced City could do.

However, their opponent this time was Laufey. In addition, Laufey had a pent-up rage he had been storing this whole time.

This attack could be considered as his strongest attack that couldn't be used easily.

The raging torrent of Spiritual Energy was rampaging on the barrier's surface. It looked like the barrier could stop it, albeit it seemed that the barrier had worn down for quite a bit after getting attacked by a lot of demons in the past few days.

Crack!

"!!!" The soldiers widened their eyes in shock when they heard the cracking sound. The moment they found out that the barrier they were proud of was going to break, they couldn't help but shout, "Run away. The wall will be hit!"

The soldiers panicked and dispersed. Unfortunately, some of them were too late.

The 'Madness Fury' shattered the barrier and hit the wall. However, it seemed that the barrier managed to block most of its energy, so when it reached the barrier, it only created a small hole compared to the overall wall.

The hole was only three meters wide. Two small demons could enter at a time. However, there was a bigger problem than the hole. Once the barrier shattered, it meant the rune that strengthened the wall had completely worn off.

In other words, there was a high risk that the wall would be crushed by the demons, especially those Advanced and Peak Level Demons.

That was why the Vice Captain of the Demon Barrier Squad, who was in charge of the wall, shouted, "We have to close the wall! Division One, block the wall. Division two, hunt down all the demons that manage to enter the city! Hurry!"

The elite knights, who could use their Spiritual Energy, hurriedly jumped off the wall, heading straight to the hole.

However, a series of roars suddenly erupted when the demons failed to enter the hall.

"Hah?!" The Vice Captain narrowed his eyes, observing the hall. The demons seemed to be stopped by an invisible barrier, preventing them from entering. It turned out Jonathan was near the wall.

With his help, they managed to stop the incoming demons. And the two divisions agreed to block the hole while the rest killed the demons from the top of the wall.

Seeing the attempt was unsuccessful, Gargan couldn't help but ask, "Sir, should we open a bigger hole? With the Demonic Potion, we can reach the wall without being attacked by the demons..."

"No need." Laufey snorted. "We only have to wait. They are currently patching the hole right now, but those people from the Demon Relief Squad will surely leave the city, fully knowing that they are the reason for this attack. As soon as they leave the city, we'll attack them. But if they are a coward, we'll be creating another hole before attacking the city with the demons."

Since Laufey had decided, Gargan stopped talking. He observed the city carefully, wondering when Noel and the group would leave the city.

It seemed Noel did what Laufey had predicted.

Thirty minutes after the attack that destroyed the wall, a city gate was opened. However, it was the North City Gate.

"Sir!" Fil pointed at the north, seeing a huge movement as well as a carriage that broke through from the demon's ranks.

Chapter 686 Traps

As soon as they spotted the carriage, Fil immediately raised his hand, shooting out a white-colored ball. The ball burst open, scattering the white particles in the air.

This was the signal that the Demon Relief Squad had left the city.

Those in the opposite direction would immediately loop around the city to regroup with the rest of the group before ambushing them.

Laufey, Gargan, and Fil also rushed to the north. It seemed that they were quite lucky, considering the serpent, the fastest among them, was in the south. This way, they could regroup far faster than any other city gate.

Laufey saw two carriages floating. There were no horses, only carriages. However, he could see a figure on top of the carriage.

When he became close enough, he recognized the person. After all, the only one who could bring the carriages like this was Jonathan.

"It's them!" Laufey stated with a cold voice. He believed those people were inside the carriages and used Jonathan to hide their tracks first. They would definitely find a way to lose them when they reached the woods.

However, the signal the Supreme Devil Organization had used couldn't help but make Jonathan hesitate.

On the one hand, they knew they would be ambushed if they kept going. So, there was a thought to return to defeat them with the help of the city wall. On the other hand, it seemed that they couldn't return no matter what because the Supreme Devil Organization was chasing after them. If they remained in the city, they would only bring danger to them.

That hesitation ended up stopping the carriage for a moment. Luckily, the Demon Barrier Squad helped them defeat the enemies around them. It looked like this was a parting gift. They just wanted the Demon Relief Squad to conserve their energy to take care of their own problems. That was the least they could do for them after receiving the medicine.

That was why Jonathan kept going. Unfortunately for him, the Supreme Devil Organization was faster. They managed to regroup within five minutes and immediately came out of the woods.

The demon pair came out from the north, standing on their way so that Jonathan couldn't enter the woods. Meanwhile, Laufey and the others attacked him from the side. Laufey had even covered his blade with Spiritual Energy, ready to destroy the carriages to expose all of them.

But when they made their appearance, Jonathan's lips curved as he jumped into the air, flying back to the wall.

"Huh?!" Laufey widened his eyes in surprise. His brain was revolving like crazy, trying to understand the reason behind his action.

'Why did he jump? But the carriages are still moving. No, wait... That's...' Laufey saw the runes inside the carriages. It was on the back, so they were easily visible once they passed them. However, the runes were circling around the carriages. With the help of a quilt, it was possible to cover it. He could only find it once he was close enough.

In that instant, Laufey realized they had been had. "Not good! It's a trap!"

Laufey stopped while glancing at the wall.

Suddenly, five ice sunflowers appeared on top of the wall. They were glaring at them as if they were the sun.

And the one who controlled them was none other than Damian. Damian infused his Spiritual Energy into the flower and the head of each flower started charging a huge amount of Spiritual Energy.

"Sunflower Cannon." Damian flicked his fingers.

All five sunflowers released a beam filled with the ice element.

Laufey and the others could react, but they were one step too late. The demon pair couldn't do anything as well since they were stopping the carriages that continued moving with the help of Noel's Enhance Forward Rune.

Laufey leaped into the air, waving his sword. A crescent-shaped energy flew forth and struck two of the beams, splitting them apart.

Hailfa was indeed a serpent. She moved skillfully to the outside, leaving the beam's range. However, the problem was Gargan and Fil.

In fact, it didn't take too long for them to realize that these attacks were targeting them.

Gargan pulled his glaive, ready to swing it to stop the attack. But if he stopped all these beams, he would definitely die.

Gargan smiled. He waved his glaive while glancing at Fil behind him. "Live on, Fil."

But to his surprise, Fil was nowhere to be seen. He was confused for a split second, but the next second, he sensed the fluctuation of energy in front of him.

When he turned around, he could see Fil floating in front of him.

His arms were spread as though he was scattering the distortions in the air. All these distortions were devouring the ice beams.

If Fil were in his normal condition, he would be able to stop all these attacks by himself. Unfortunately, he was severely injured previously.

He managed to deflect a beam and weaken the other. But the last one broke through his defense.

Since he wanted Gargan to stay alive, he used his own body to receive this attack.

"You should live on," said Fil while standing in the beam's path. The ice beam devoured him, covering him in thick ice. Since he was floating earlier, he ended up falling to the ground and the top part of the ice broke apart, splitting Fil's body.

Gargan gritted his teeth as he tried to stop the weakened one, but because Fil messed with his timing, the force still blew him away.

"Gah. Fil." Gargan coughed up some blood as he fell to his knees, looking at his friend who had just died.

When he raised his head, he saw Jonathan using his power to fly on top of the city, bringing Damian with him. And their direction was obvious. They took a straight path to the gate in the opposite direction. With the time they needed to loop around, there was no way Laufey and the others could stop them outside the woods.

They truly had been had.

Chapter 687 Devour

"Fil!" Gargan let out a roar filled with anger. He never thought that he would lose his best friend here.

All he could think was to kill the one who caused all this. But Laufey was the first one to put some sense on him. He struck Gargan's cheek with his fist, smashing him to the ground.

"Shut up! Control your rage if you don't want to cause more mess than this." Laufey gnashed his teeth. He could feel the contempt from the people on top of the wall.

As much as he wanted to destroy them, he had to refrain himself since his priority was Noel, who should have prepared to leave the city from the opposite direction.

'What should I do? If we loop around the city, we can reach the other side within ten minutes. But that would be too late. They would have covered their tracks and set up another ambush when we split up. If we don't split up, we will fall into their trap and fail to kill them.'

'But if we remain careful here, we will be too late. In that case, what should we do to turn around the situation?'

Laufey couldn't find any plans that allowed them to catch up to Noel. However, looking at the raging Gargan gave him some inspiration.

'Wait a minute. They left because they knew they were our targets, right? What if we attacked this city instead? If we destroyed this city, it would be a great blow to the Demon Banner Army.'

'There is a possibility that they would ignore them. But it would surely leave a bad record on them. In addition, even though we couldn't finish our mission, we got another objective.'

'It's said that the Vice Captain of the Demon Barrier Squad is inside. And if we massacre all the people inside the city, the terror of the Supreme Devil Organization would surely resound across the country.'

'It will lead to another implication, but if we do this, there is a chance they will come back. After all, they don't like to have a bad record since it'll make cooperation with other squads more difficult.'

'The time limit is still a day...' Laufey's expression became serious. It seemed that he was thinking about the numerous people they would have to kill inside the city.

This was the only way to lure Noel and the others.

Laufey took a deep breath to calm his heart down before ordering, "Gargan, you want to kill them, right? In that case, go rampage. We'll destroy the city and bury thousands of people with him."

Gargan obviously didn't like the idea. It wasn't that he hated killing people. He just wanted to take his revenge.

Seeing the doubt on Gargan's face, Laufey added, "There is a high possibility that they will return to the city when they realize we're attacking the city instead of them. That's why you can do everything you want, the bigger the better."

When he heard the possibility of revenge, Gargan's eyes brightened. He knew that he had to do it.

Meanwhile, the serpent, who was in charge of their utilities, came to them with a few bottles. The bottles stored a mysterious transparent liquid inside. It looked like water, but its smell was a bit sour.

"This is the Demon Potion. If we're going to attack the city, we should use this to avoid getting attacked by the demons."

They took the potions and started smearing the liquid on their clothes. Since the liquid had been used up, the serpent dropped the bottles to the ground and used her poison to melt the bottles and the remaining liquid.

"Go!" Laufey shouted to Gargan.

Gargan nodded with a serious expression. He could finally unleash his rage.

Without hesitation, he charged at the wall while raising his glaive.

The soldiers on the wall looked shocked. They never thought they would be the target, but it was too late. Gargan was already close enough with the demons and surprisingly, he didn't get attacked by them.

In fact, it looked like the demons thought Gargan was one of them and ignored him.

Gargan took advantage of this to step on the demon's body before launching himself into the air. His jump surpassed the height of the wall.

He could clearly see all the scared soldiers on the wall. But at the same time, he was stunned when he saw Damian standing among them.

"Huh?!" Gargan was too late to react as a huge ice crystal appeared on top of the wall and expanded in his direction, engulfing him. Just like Fil, he was covered in thick ice. Since the demons would be the cushion when he fell, Damian waved his sword, releasing a crescent-shaped sword strike that split Gargan in half.

Damian smiled as they finally managed to gain the balance.

On the other hand, Laufey and the others were stunned when they saw the ice that killed Gargan.

"What? He is still up there?" Laufey gulped down. The group was already near the demons, but they all hesitated because Damian and the Demon Relief Squad might still be there.

Damian stood on top of the wall with a smile on his face as if looking down on them. He couldn't help but recall the conversation they had before this.

"I want Jonathan to stand on top of the carriages so that you look like you're carrying all of us. But once you spot the enemies, you are to disengage and return to the city wall. Of course, you're going to carry Sir Damian as well." Noel explained his plan.

"In that case, are we going to use the gate in the opposite direction to leave? This way, they would have to loop around the city and chase after us. We can employ the previous tactics to defeat some of them." Rose had already thought about the possibility that would appear in Laufey's head.

However, Noel shook his head calmly. "No, have you heard the saying, 'Don't drive your enemies into the corner because they would do the unthinkable in desperation?' That will be the case when we leave

the city. But my father always asked, 'What if we know what they will do in desperation and take advantage of it?' The answer is simple. We can devour them, and that's exactly what we're going to do."

Chapter 688 Target

"Hmm, I still don't quite understand what you mean." Paul frowned.

"Then, I'll turn it into a question. If you are in his position and you lose enough people to make it look like you're going to fail and have your enemies prepare more traps for you, it means you're being pushed into the corner, right?"

Paul thought for a moment and nodded. "Yeah. I would become desperate at that time."

"Then, what would you do?"

"Hmm... If I reach that situation, I might retreat."

"But you have to maintain your dignity. So, you should achieve something so that the mission is not a complete failure."

"Ah!" Paul gasped. "I need to attack this city. After all, the city has the vice-captain of the Demon Barrier Army. In addition, killing all the people would increase the prestige of the Supreme Devil Organization, albeit in a bad way. But this way, the task is not a complete failure."

"Exactly. People always teach you that you can't corner your enemies too much because their desperation will cause a lot of problems. While I agree with a part of it, I still think there is one more possibility. "

"Since we know that they will become desperate and do something reckless, it means we have managed to limit their possible actions, right? All we need to know is what it is and make a plan to completely counter it." Noel explained it with a smile on his face.

There was a long silence after that explanation. Some of them agreed completely with Noel. But some of them felt a bit terrified.

It was true that Noel's talent was monstrous. But the reason why they feared Noel was his intelligence. He didn't only think about what they should do, but what the others would probably do.

And that kind of mind could only be achieved by learning from the master, Luke Ardagan.

"Terrifying..." Stella shook her head helplessly. "The way you can understand how people think and will do... is just... terrifying."

"I know right." Ben chuckled.

"So, I'm still terrifying no matter what?" Noel rolled his eyes.

"Hahaha." Rose laughed, though a bit proud.

Damian listened to the entire plan and couldn't help but ask, "Say... do you have any woman you like?"

"Huh?" Noel's body shook, completely confused by the question. "What's with the question?"

"I am sincerely asking you that question. Or maybe do you have some preferences?"

Noel's eyebrows twitched. Though, he could understand why Damian asked this question. He must be thinking it was more beneficial if they could tie him down to the Greenwood Kingdom, especially with marriage.

He had asked it once. Noel might've chosen a different option back then, but he never denied he wasn't interested in it.

Though, it would be annoying if Damian was going to push it further. And the more he rejected it, the more adamant Damian would become.

So, he thought about someone who would become the biggest hurdle for it to the point of making it impossible.

Noel said with a smile. "Maybe someone like Anna... Anna Stargaze."

"..." There was an awkward silence when he heard about it. The entire group knew that Anna and Noel had a good relationship and even cooperated with each other. But Damian still believed that Anna was the one who killed his parents.

So, he thought Noel considered Anna an annoyance. By giving him this chance, he could create an opportunity for Damian.

Of course, Noel didn't plan to harm Anna by stating her name. That was why he added while looking up as if he was recounting something. "Though, my father once said that the best way to take revenge is to show them that you're living a good life."

"!!!" With that statement alone, Noel managed to shift Damian's thoughts.

Damian looked down, contemplating the potential people. 'I see. He wants someone as strong and as beautiful Anna Stargaze. This way, he can show Anna Stargaze that his wife is more excellent than her, who took everything from him. But we shouldn't cause too many problems or the grudge between them will escalate to a whole new level.'

This statement was used only to stop Damian from thinking about killing him.

And Noel had achieved it. To avoid causing more misunderstanding, Noel said, "Since all of you have understood your assignment. Let's proceed with our plan, shall we?"

All of them nodded their heads.

And this was the plan Noel had prepared to defeat Laufey with limited people.

There were nine people standing on top of the wall. Seven of them were the Demon Relief Squad's Zero Squad, including Noel. The other two were Damian as well as the vice-captain of the Demon Barrier Squad.

With this, they had three Spirit Grandmasters and six Spirit Masters. In the opposite direction, there was Laufey, the demon pair and the serpent. They had four Spirit Grandmasters.

They might be outnumbered, but it was still impossible to defeat a Spirit Grandmaster with only six Spirit Masters. That was why they still took advantage of the wall.

This was a chance for Laufey to turn around the situation. But if he failed after all this, he could do nothing but retreat.

Though, Noel noticed something. He couldn't help but whisper to the Demon Barrier Squad's vice-captain.

"Did you see the bottle they used before coming here?"

"Yeah. What's wrong with it?"

"I'm assuming that's the bottle that confuses the demon's senses... the one they use to make normal people like bandits or their own people to control the demons."

"Ah!" The Vice-Captain frowned, understanding the importance of those bottles.

"Two of them died before taking it, so if possible, we would like to procure the remaining bottles and bring them back to the headquarters. I want your people to send the information as well via bird and try to find the reinforcement to help us. We'll stall them here."

The Vice-Captain agreed with him. He immediately moved to one of his subordinates and whispered the order to him.

With this, the preparation was finished. All that was left was the clash between the Supreme Devil Organization and the Demon Banner Army.

Chapter 689 Recognizing The Enemy

Seeing Noel and the others on top of the wall, Laufey had a dilemma. Obviously, he didn't want this mission to be over easily. However, there was still a chance that Dimitri was among them, waiting until they thought he wasn't there.

When that happens, there would be another casualty from their side.

At the same time, if he retreated from this place, there would be a lot of pressure when he returned to the base.

That was why Laufey realized there was one more thing they could do.

'We can't continue here. It'll be troublesome if we attack them in this situation. And Dimitri might be there, waiting for us to lower our guard.'

'In that case, should I just accept the defeat? No, there is one more thing I can do. I just have to lure them away. Still, we can't ambush them on the way since I'm only left with three Spirit Grandmasters.'

Laufey seemed to have made his decision. He glanced to the back while shouting, "We are retreating!"

"!!!" Noel widened his eyes when he heard that instruction. He thought Laufey would be more reckless, but it seemed that he managed to maintain his composure after all this.

Noel glanced to the side. "We have to attack them right now. Don't let them escape. We have to buy more time! And ask the Captain of the Demon Barrier Squad to come here if possible!"

"What are you talking about? Aren't we safe now?" Paul frowned, feeling something bad from Noel's excessive worry. Noel wasn't someone that would overreact like this, so there might be another consequence that was hidden inside that message.

"They are going to attack other cities. One city might not be enough!" Noel clicked his tongue.

From his intention alone, it was clear that the Demon Relief Squad wouldn't be related to this anymore. They could abandon the Demon Barrier Squad. Even if Laufey massacred another city, the Demon Banner Army wouldn't be able to do anything. But because they came for them, they had a certain responsibility to stop Laufey from killing the others.

This was a trap to lure them out. But he knew that Laufey wouldn't attack them if they chose to move to a different city. But it would mean that they would be losing Laufey, which could cause a lot of problems. Just like them, the one who had the initiative right now was Laufey's group.

That was why Noel wanted to keep them here for as long as possible even if it meant walking into his traps.

Noel didn't wait for another second as he jumped off the wall.

He used the Enhance Forward Rune on himself so that he would fly for a bit longer and escape from the numerous demons near the wall.

The Rune felt like there was a mysterious force that grabbed his whole body, pushing him forward.

But Noel had to ignore that feeling for now and focus on the current objective.

As soon as he landed on the ground, he formed a pair of black-colored wings on his back.

Undying Fire Feathers.

A few of the feathers flew forth, bombarding them with the undying flame. His action managed to stop them, but it seemed that Laufey wanted to take advantage of the split second he had to capture Noel.

After all, the rest of the group had a late reaction due to their shock and confusion.

'He is risking his life to keep the enemy here? Not good.' Damian clicked his tongue while gathering a huge amount of Spiritual Energy behind them. 'Kh. I won't make it.'

Laufey was only ten meters away from Noel. Even if Damian utilized his ability, he couldn't cover that much gap in an instant.

That was why Laufey thought he was the winner until Noel smiled.

Yes, Noel actually smiled in front of the danger. That smile contained no meaning to him, but it was a different case for Laufey.

"!!!" Laufey's body shook when he saw that smile. Since he was in front of Noel, he could see every detail of his movement, including the slight glance to the left.

In that instant, his instinct and mind thought the same thing. Noel was waiting for this moment.

Dimitri, who had been hiding this whole time, would finally make his move to hit him.

Without hesitation, Laufey stopped his momentum while raising his sword to the side, preparing for an attack. He even thought, 'What a foolish young man. To think you would be revealing your secret plan. You are still too inexperienced. Take this as a lesson.'

Laufey's eyes turned slightly to the side, anticipating the attack. But to his surprise, there was nothing that came to him.

Instead, there was a fluctuation of Spiritual Energy that came from Noel.

"Huh?" Laufey turned back and found the Undying Phoenix flying toward him. He gritted his teeth and waved his sword, slashing the phoenix. There was a red-colored Spiritual Energy that covered his sword and they dispersed the overbearing Undying Flame that made the phoenix so that his sword would remain intact.

At the same time, Damian had activated his ability. Since Laufey stopped for a second, he could finally use his ability on time.

A huge ice spear appeared on top of Laufey. When it was about to fall down, the spear turned into numerous smaller spears and attacked Laufey from all directions.

Laufey gritted his teeth as his anger erupted once again, releasing a sphere of raging Spiritual Energy and deflecting all the ice spears.

He kept glaring at Noel the whole time. At first, he thought Noel was a fool for making that slight gesture that would cause his ambush to fail.

But when he took another look at it, Noel must have realized that he was wary of Dimitri's presence. He took advantage of it and made him hesitate.

In other words, Noel had just fooled him. He might only be able to use this type of trick once since Laufey would know Dimitri wasn't with them, but this was enough since the rest of the team had gone down, ready to face them.

Chapter 690 Surrounded

Laufey never thought he would be outsmarted by a brat multiple times. But it was clear that Noel truly had a similar brain as his father, Luke Ardagan.

This made him extremely dangerous, especially since Luke had no talent for fighting.

Laufey wanted to shout, but Damian stomped the ground, creating a fence made of ice to isolate Laufey from the rest.

Damian said, "You go to your respective opponent. I will hold this man here."

Laufey furrowed his eyebrows. He always felt something weird about this man. As someone who was pretty highly ranked in the Supreme Devil Organization, he had learned a lot of information.

But this was the first time he saw someone this strong, especially with an Ice Spirit.

Laufey asked, "Who are you? I have never heard of you in the Muivell Kingdom. You must be someone from another kingdom. How bold of him to invite an expert of your level to this kingdom. I'm afraid that the royal family will be surprised when they hear about it."

Damian narrowed his eyes. He had covered his appearance, but still, there weren't many people who were at his level with an ice spirit.

Laufey wasn't that foolish either, so it wasn't that hard to recognize his origin. Though, he had some confidence that Laufey wouldn't do something like that.

The Supreme Devil Organization should have some connection that could inform the Royal Family about his existence. But doing so would surely bring a lot of attention from the Royal Family.

There was a chance that they would discover ladre was Noel. And with the author of the Rune Books revealed to the world, the other kingdoms would definitely make their move.

And there was a big chance that Noel would become theirs instead of the Royal Family or the Supreme Devil Organization.

He had observed Laufey's movement as well. It seemed that Laufey only wanted to capture Noel, so it was clear that he wouldn't do something that might kill Noel, at least for the time being.

"You don't have to know my identity. All you have to know is that you are going to stay here with me the entire time." Damian began circulating his Spiritual Energy. Though, he knew he never had the chance to win against someone like him. But it wouldn't be much of a problem for him to last for a long time.

The demon pair immediately approached the fence from two directions, trying to crush it.

But Paul and the Vice Captain of the Demon Barrier Squad appeared in front of them. Paul struck the Spirit Grandmaster with his warhammer while the latter formed a translucent barrier, blocking the strike. After that, he kicked the Devil Bishop, launching him away.

Meanwhile, the rest of the group moved to the back, planning to surround the serpent.

The serpent knew that she wouldn't be able to help the others if she got surrounded. So, she moved to the side, trying to leave the vicinity. This way, the enemies would be confused and there would be a chance to ambush them sooner or later.

Unfortunately for her, Rose and Noel could easily recognize her plan.

That was why Rose and Noel split up. Whether it was fortunate or unfortunate, Hailfa moved in Rose's direction.

"!!!" Hailfa suddenly looked down as the ground trembled. A huge crack appeared in the soil, causing Hailfa to fall.

'This... must be an illusion!' Hailfa instantly recognized the illusion after reading the information about all the people in the Demon Relief Squad. Only Rose could do something like this. And recognizing the illusion would make it easier for them to escape from this illusion.

She released a huge amount of Spiritual Energy infused with her poison. The poison would melt the ground that was the core of the illusion. The slight change in the ground broke the illusion.

"Tsk. As expected of a Devil Bishop, she could escape my illusion in a split second." Rose clicked her tongue. "But that's enough."

Hailfa could hear her voice, which ended up confusing her. But when she raised her head, there was a huge phoenix diving down, ready to hit her.

Hailfa hurriedly jumped to the side, avoiding the bird. The Undying Flame burned and melted the ground, giving some degree of fear in her heart.

However, it didn't change her objective. She had to get away, albeit Noel and Rose had bought enough time for their fastest fighter to arrive in front of her.

Hailfa waved her knife to the side out of reflex, causing a clicking sound.

When glancing to the side, she found Zion striking her from above to pin her to the ground. The wind caused by his momentum even fell on top of her. In addition to his own weight, he created a small crater underneath her feet.

After that, Stella approached from the side while waving her sword.

The wind energy flew forth, trying to knock her down. Ben and Jonathan came from different directions, but they were a bit slower and more careful, making sure that no one would be injured when fighting against her.

Hailfa clicked her tongue, knowing why the Demon Relief Squad could survive and ruin their plan this whole time.

Her body started emitting a ridiculous amount of Spiritual Energy. Even Zion instinctively leaped off her to get away from this energy. Unlike normal Spiritual Energy, hers had a slight poison on it. Even the ground slightly melted when it made contact with the Spiritual Energy.

In addition, the Spiritual Energy gradually rose into the air and formed a shape.

"Hmm? That's... a snake?" Noel frowned. The Spiritual Energy formed a green snake with bloodshot eyes on top of her. But because Hailfa exerted Spiritual Energy from her feet as well, the body of the snake continued circling around Hailfa's body until it touched the ground.

The length of the snake seemed to exceed twenty meters and its mouth could swallow them with ease. It wouldn't be easy for them to stop this kind of snake, especially knowing it contained a powerful poison.

Noel said, "Be careful of her poison. We also have our own objective."