

## **S vs Rebirth 741**

### Chapter 741 Retaliation

The group chose to tread the safer path even though they lost a lot of time. Noel had been defeated twice, so there was no need to take unnecessary risks when proceeding. It wasn't like he found retreating shameful.

Hence, the group used five days to take a detour. And it seemed that a lot had happened in these five days.

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Muivell Kingdom.

In one of its remote villages, a man was surrounded by more than a hundred people.

"Attack him!" Those people charged forward with their respective weapons. Some of them even reached Spirit Wielder and Spirit Master. There were two people leading these people, which happened to be Spirit Grandmasters.

They were planning to exhaust this mysterious man first before making a move personally.

But the moment the people of the village approached the man, the latter opened his mouth, saying, "Scatter!"

In that instant, invisible energy struck all the people within a few meters radius, blowing them away.

"Gah!"

"Ah!"

Those below Spirit Wielders actually got severely injured as though they had just been rammed by a powerful demon. The Spirit Wielders managed to block it, but the power was so strong that they suffered some internal injuries. Only the Spirit Masters managed to block it completely.

However, what the man did terrified these villagers.

"What did he do?"

"He just said a word and we almost died?"

"The ability to control everything in the world by commanding them..."

"Don't tell me, he is the commander of the Demon Banner Army, Oscar?"

"What?"

The people seemed to be confused as to why Oscar actually attacked them. But the latter didn't plan to let them think about it.

He jumped toward one of the Spirit Masters.

A few people tried to protect the Spirit Master, but the commander actually ordered them again.  
"Move!"

Those few people were blown away again. Some of them even died because of the force.

The moment the commander arrived in front of the Spirit Master, the latter tried to swing his weapon while running away. Unfortunately for him, the commander had given the command. And that command was so absurd that one couldn't believe it.

"Die!"

"Gah!" In that instant, the Spirit Master spat a mouthful of blood as he clutched his chest, albeit finding it extremely soft as if there were nothing inside. Even the bones seemed to have been pulverized, let alone his heart.

The Spirit Master ended up falling to the ground lifelessly.

"!!!" The Spirit Grandmasters and other Spirit Masters gasped, wondering what they should do. They never thought that the commander would come to ambush them.

"We have to—" The Spirit Grandmaster tried to make them disperse to increase their chance of survival and inform the headquarters, but the commander had given another command. "Shut up!"

The area suddenly became silent as the Spirit Grandmaster couldn't move his jaw.

The commander reached him and said the same thing. "Die."

"Gah!" The Spirit Grandmaster gritted his teeth. He felt like his heart was being ripped apart. However, he was still a Spirit Grandmaster. He used all his strength to block it, but he could feel a few ribs were broken and there were a lot of internal injuries from the command.

The commander took this chance to grab his head and crack the skull with his bare hands, ultimately killing the Spirit Grandmaster.

When they saw the commander treating a Spirit Grandmaster like he was trash, they knew that no matter what they did, they wouldn't be able to land a hit on the commander.

"Run!"

"We have to run!"

The enemies hurriedly escaped, trying to survive this ordeal.

Unfortunately for them, the moment they exited the village, they would find themselves surrounded by knights from the Demon Banner Army.

The commander wasn't worried about them as he continued killing the Spirit Masters and Spirit Grandmasters to weaken the enemies.

It took the commander ten minutes before he wiped them out. The commander was standing in the middle of the corpses while looking around coldly.

"Bastards from the Supreme Devil Organization. You think you could provoke us without suffering any consequences?" The commander clicked his tongue before coughing. Surprisingly, blood seemed to come out from his cough.

His ability was so powerful that it could kill someone just by commanding them. However, it didn't come without a price.

The commander felt his body was being torn apart the more he used his power.

"Tsk. This is getting troublesome. I have killed around five hundred people from the Supreme Devil Organizations, but I didn't find a single Devil Saint... It seems that they are hiding in their headquarters, which still remains a mystery."

The commander found a young man coming toward him with a letter in his hand.

"Sir, I've brought you a letter."

The young man didn't explain the origin of the letter, nor did he specify the sender, causing the commander to be cautious.

He grabbed the letter and opened it, ready to use his Spiritual Energy to crush any scheme that hid within the letter.

However, there was no trick played in the letter. It was just a normal message.

The commander said, "Alright. You're dismissed."

The young man politely bowed before returning to his position.

The commander took a look at the letter that immediately caused him to frown.

"This is..." The commander couldn't believe what he saw. After all, he recognized the handwriting. It was the Third Prince.

"Commander Oscar. You should cease your activities. The Supreme Devil Organization seems to be planning something. So, it'll be bad if you get ambushed by them, since who knows what they're planning to do."

Oscar was never afraid of this kind of challenge, considering he had enough power to completely crush all traps.

However, the Supreme Devil Organization had multiple saints and someone who could defeat him, so it wouldn't be wise to proceed recklessly.

"I have destroyed four of their bases, I guess that should be enough for retaliation... I'll plan out another attempt to crush them." The commander sighed.

Chapter 742 Stronger

The commander ended up returning to the base, thinking the situation had become too dangerous. At the same time, the Royal Family and the Tower Association had also learned about his action.

"What is this? Did the commander do something this big without even consulting us?"

"Is he planning to rebel?"

The ministers were berating the commander's action in front of the king, trying to pin the blame on the commander. However, it didn't change the fact that the commander was killing the bad guys, which was the Supreme Devil Organization.

For these nobles, the fact that the commander moved without consulting them was a bigger problem. After all, this could be seen as insubordination. Even if the Demon Banner Army was an independent army in charge of demons, it didn't change the fact that it still belonged to the Muivell Kingdom.

They could easily give a lot of reasons why they should punish the commander, such as the Supreme Devil Organization could retaliate back by wreaking havoc in multiple cities or they would be terrorized by the Supreme Devil Organization since those higher ranking people in the organization wanted to make their move.

They had been pushing this matter to their king, wanting him to punish the commander.

However, the king remained silent the whole time. He had been watching their debates with a cold face.

He thought, 'These fools... Did they not realize that Oscar wiped out the bad guys? If I punished him, there would be a loss of trust in the citizens' hearts. I can't let myself be seen as a tyrant since it'll cause many problems in the economy.'

'Besides, the commander has enough reason to justify his operation, considering he has suffered a lot of defeats against the organization.'

'Still, I've been utilizing the Arbiters a bit too much recently. If I continue using them, there will be a crack appearing within the system itself.'

'It seems that I can't make my move for the time being. However, we have to keep the commander in check so that his popularity is not growing to the level of the royal family.'

The king was assessing the situation carefully. He didn't care whether the commander beat the organization or not. He never planned to punish the commander from the beginning.

What the king actually cared about was his public image. He had to maintain a certain public image to lead the kingdom. And if the commander gained a lot of popularity because of this action, it would diminish his power.

So, he decided, "Tell Commander Oscar to come to the palace. Give my message to other arbiters that they are to remain stand by for the time being."

"Your Majesty." The people didn't expect that the king would decide to let the commander go. Even if he called the commander here, it would only be a formality to appease the citizens. There wouldn't be any setbacks the commander would face.

Of course, the king had another plan. He turned to the prime minister that was standing next to him and whispered, "I want you to send a message to the Tower Association. Incite their anger regarding the Plant Lord."

The prime minister nodded with a serious expression.

The political war between the three big influences in the kingdom was about to begin. The royal family wanted to retain their power as the absolute ruler, the commander wanted to use his power to not bother with politics so that he could focus on his enemies, and the Tower Association was desperate to rebuild its reputation after the Plant Lord incident.

Obviously, as an Arbiter as well as a high ranking noble, Marquis Stargaze could see the storm brewing in the Muivell Kingdom.

He let out a long sigh and looked at the sky, "It seems that there will be a huge civil war sooner or later. And the Supreme Devil Organization will be taking advantage of this situation to weaken our kingdom.

"Just like what you said, Luke... the Ardagan Family has been stretching their hand toward the three influences not because they are greedy for power, but because they want to balance their power to reach a peace between the three influences."

"Now that the Ardagan Family is out of the picture, there is no one keeping everyone in check anymore."

"What will you do, my friend? Will you finally make your appearance or will you remain in the shadows? But if you make your appearance, it will be clear that those nobles will use it against you. You're supposed to have died from execution after all."

"There is also the young Ardagan, Noel Ardagan. It seems that my daughter is interested in him. Nevertheless, if he doesn't grow stronger, he will be swallowed by this storm. The same applies to my daughter, who seems to have run away from this kingdom."

"I hope that they can reach the Spirit Grandmaster stage as quickly as possible..."

Marquis Stargaze fell silent for a moment before shouting, "Butler Lin!"

"Yes, Sir?" A butler entered the room with a serious expression.

"How is the preparation?"

"It's almost completed."

"The secrecy?"

"No one knows about it yet."

Marquis Stargaze nodded. "Good. Complete it. It's time for us to cause a mess with the other arbiters... We'll have my daughter defeat an arbiter and become one herself. We don't have much time left."



"Understood. But who will we attack this time?"

Kevin squinted his eyes while tossing a piece of paper with a name on it.

The butler was surprised but immediately acknowledged the order. "I shall complete the preparation."

"I'll leave it to you." Kevin waved his hand, dismissing the butler from his room. "I have done all I can for you, Anna. Become a Spirit Grandmaster as soon as possible."

...

As he wished, Anna and Noel had been proceeding with their trip quickly.

They were about to arrive at their destination.

"To reach the location, we have to cross this valley. As much as I don't like it, it seems that we have to fight against Superior Demons and a lot of Peak Level Demons." Nicole pointed at the map.

#### Chapter 743 A Challenge

Upon hearing Nicole's information, Noel immediately made a decision. "We'll go through the demons. What's the width of the valley?"

"That is the problem. The valley is pinched by two tall cliffs. So, the size is about twenty meters at most. If we have to go through the valley, we might have to kill almost all the demons."

"Cliffs?" Noel frowned. "Can't we cross the area from the top?"

"That's not possible." Nicole shook her head while taking out the map again, pointing at the cross mark. The cross mark looked like it was on top of the mountain. However, there was something different from the usual. "If you take a look at this, you will realize that our target is at the peak of this mountain."

"However, there is something weird about this map. It turns out there is no mountain."

"No Mountain?" Noel and the others were shocked. The map they had been using this whole time was accurate. Yet, the last part was not. It would surely confuse them.

Nicole nodded and said, "When I reached the place, there was nothing but a huge cliff. At the end of the cliff, I could see an entrance leading to a cave."

"Don't tell me..." Noel gasped.

"Yes. I'm afraid that our destination is within the cave. Hence, we have to kill most, if not all, monsters before proceeding if we don't want to get buried inside the cave. I don't know where this cave will lead us, but this is the only way. I can't find anything useful when I try to scout the area."

Noel looked down for a moment, thinking, 'This is weird. Ardagan's information should be accurate, but the fact that the map is different... It seems that the map Ardagan uses for this reward is a map from one thousand years ago. It was used either by my ancestor or the previous civilization. There was a chance that within one thousand years, something big happened and caused this massive change.'

Noel knew that the information was accurate, so he didn't doubt Ardagan even if there was something different.

He glanced to the side and asked, "What should we do with the Superior Demons?"

"We can only cut them. If the Superior Demons are only at the level of normal captains of the army, then I can kill one of them within a few minutes. I mean, that is only possible if I utilize my identity as an assassin to the fullest." Dimitri explained.

"In that case, I will be the bait." Damian nodded. He never expected they would reach this far. Since the destination was right before their eyes, Damian didn't mind sacrificing himself a bit. He asked Nicole, "How many Superior Demons did you find?"

"Three Superior Demons: a Giant Lizard, a Spider, and a Snake. There are approximately fifty Peak Level Demons and numerous Advanced Level Demons and below. The valley is about twenty meters wide and one kilometer long. If we advance carefully, we can take care of a few demons at a time." Nicole explained.

"I see. How about crossing the valley from the top of the cliff and jumping down?" Noel asked.

"There are a lot of flying demons in the sky. If we disturb them, I'm afraid the entire population of demons in this area will chase after us. And by the time we jump down, the demons below will destroy us."

"But won't it be the same if those demons order those flying beasts to attack us?"

"Not necessarily." Nicole shook her head. "If we follow the route, the top part of the cliffs are not that far apart. This will result in a huge loss of the sounds we produce underneath it. Hence, there is a high chance that the flying beasts won't realize it as they are in the sky."

"And the cliffs are about seventy meters tall. Normal demons will die if they try to jump. Only people like us who can use rope and other things would survive. So, following the normal route is the only way."

Noel sighed. It seemed that they had no choice.

Noel made a decision. "Dimitri will remain hidden and Damian will take the vanguard role. Anna and I will take care of the Advanced Level Demons while Nicole handles the Peak Level Demons. If possible, we'll also help you deal with the rest of the Peak Level Demons."

"Got it." Anna and the others nodded their heads.

But before they left, Damian asked Dimitri, "Should we use our True Spirit Body?"

Instead of Dimitri, Noel was the one answering him. "No. It's better if you don't use it. Although it's true that our target is right before us, we don't know if he is hostile or not.

"After all, the target is not a human. There is a chance that he misunderstands us and attacks us crazily. During the misunderstanding, we will need our trump card to at least gain some time until he calms down. So, make sure you save your trump cards. If needed, I'll ask Anna to take care of the situations, of course, without the True Spirit Body." Noel explained with a serious expression.

He didn't want to be reckless anymore, especially when meeting someone so powerful. According to Anna, the hermit was mysterious, considering the Sword Saint's disciple had been under his tutelage the whole time. Hence, his strength shouldn't be any lower than Dimitri's. That was the only reason why they could live in this dangerous area.

In fact, the hermit might not think a Superior Demon was that big of a deal.

Now that they reached a conclusion, they immediately prepared for a breakthrough or elimination, depending on their needs.

They followed Nicole and reached the said valley. As Nicole explained earlier, the top parts were expanding toward each other, creating a pseudo roof that would protect them from anything above.

The wall was also tall enough. Without a doubt, the only way to reach the cave was through this valley.

Noel looked at the horizon filled with demons. "Let's go, shall we?"

Chapter 744 Fighting Six Peak Level Demons

"Noel!" Anna shouted.

"Alright!" Noel jumped forth and struck a demon's neck, killing it. After that, he formed the Enhance Forward Rune on the demon's body, launching it to the side.

The demon's body crashed into another demon, causing both of them to fall. Then, Anna jumped on top of them and fell like a lightning strike, killing both of them.

They had been killing a lot of demons ever since coming into this valley. But their mission had yet to finish as Noel and Anna pointed forward, specifically at the lizard that was lying down next to the wall.

Damian nodded and stepped forward. With a single wave of his hand, the ground was covered in ice, lowering the temperature of the area.

The lizard felt the decrease in temperature and looked around, trying to find the cause.

\*Shaa!\*

The lizard stuck out its tongue when it saw Damian and the others. It released a voice that alarmed the nearby demons.

There were approximately a hundred demons coming toward them.

Noel could see at least six Peak Level Demons leading the charge. Considering there were still a lot of demons left at the bottom of the valley, he believed this should be the time he completed his mission.

'We never encountered a lot of Peak Level Demons on the way, no, there was once instance, but there were simply too many demons around, so we didn't proceed. Since the chance has appeared, it's time to complete my mission.' Noel thought.

Before fighting those demons, Noel asked Anna, "Can we trust her?"

Anna was confused for a moment but soon nodded her head. It seemed that he still couldn't completely trust Nicole. "Don't worry. You can do anything. I'll guarantee she is keeping it a secret."

"I see..." Noel took a deep breath and commanded, "Dimitri and Damian will handle the Superior Demon. Anna and Nicole shall take care of the rest of the demons. Leave the six Peak Level Demons to me."

"Huh?" Nicole was surprised, but Noel didn't wait for her. He had jumped forth, challenging those demons.

Damian was already aware of Noel's identity, while Dimitri and Anna had witnessed everything about Noel. So, those three were already aware of Noel's two elements. The only one that had been keeping him from going all out was Nicole.

He had been assessing her character and finally asked Anna for confirmation. Now that he deemed Nicole to be a qualified person to keep his secret, Noel could finally go all out.

Suddenly, Noel spread his arms.

"Huh?" Nicole dropped her jaw, staring at Noel in disbelief. After all, on Noel's left hand, a huge ice lotus was formed. On his right hand, a fireball appeared. This was the first time she saw someone with two elements, except for the one in the legend.

"Go!" Noel waved both hands simultaneously. The ice lotus released all five petals while the fireball turned into a phoenix.

The six Peak Level Demons sensed danger from these attacks.

A Peak Level Demon who seemed to have infected a chicken increased its speed. It flapped its wings a few times, shooting its feathers.

"Why are you the first one to step up? Even though you are a chicken." Noel clicked his tongue while controlling his phoenix.

\*Cry!\*

The phoenix let out a cry as it increased its speed. The fire flared up and devoured the feathers. The fire was so strong that the feathers were reduced to nothing.

The second, third, and fourth Peak Level Demons came forth and shot their respective abilities to stop the phoenix.

As expected of a Peak Level Demon, even with the full power of the Undying Fire, they managed to fork out something equal, causing the phoenix to explode.

Meanwhile, the other two demons tried to shoot down the ice petals. Unfortunately for them, Noel had prepared a trick in these petals.

Once they released their attacks, Noel activated the runes he planted on these petals. Two lotus got Enhance Forward Rune in the opposite directions, another petal got the Falling Rune, and the last two got the Floating Rune.

Because the five petals scattered, the demons had no choice but to pick only two of them.

\*Boom!\*

\*Boom!\*

The ice petals on the side exploded. Seeing their superiors were in danger, a few Advanced Level Demons tried to protect them.

Unfortunately for them, the ice petals overwhelmed their abilities, freezing their attacks before they could even hit the petals. In the end, they used their bodies to become a meat shield, causing the petals to hit their bodies. There was a huge ice crystal that came out upon contact before it shattered into pieces together with the demons inside it.

Still, one petal managed to get through. It was supposed to reach the demons if not because of the chicken.

Yes, the chicken suddenly stood in the petal's way and spread its wings, using them to stop the ice petal. Surprisingly, the wing was cladded in black as though it had turned into metal. It was no wonder why the chicken was confident.

\*Boom!\*

The ice petal exploded and covered the chicken's right wing in ice.

However, Noel took this chance to appear before the chicken. He utilized the explosions from both the phoenix and ice petals to cover his movement.

"Kooo?!" The chicken was surprised, finding Noel before him.

"Too late!" Noel snorted and struck the frozen wing.

Instead of a clicking sound that was supposed to be heard when a metal hit the ice, the valley was filled with a chicken's wailing voice.

"Kooo!"

It turned out Noel's blade had been covered with the Undying Flame. The Undying Flame melted the ice and the sudden change in the temperature caused the metal wing to become brittle.

Noel used his Anger Emotion in his Everchanging Emotion Sword Style to create the sharpest blade. He struck the wing and severed it.

He tried to hit the chicken's body afterward, but as expected, the chicken had completely turned into metal. Without the change of temperature, his sword wasn't enough to slice the body apart.

"Tsk." Noel clicked his tongue as he used the momentum to launch the chicken away. He stood in front of the Peak Level Demons without any fear. He had gotten stronger since the last time he fought multiple Peak Level Demons and he planned to show it by defeating these demons.



## Chapter 745 Killing The Peak Level Demons

Noel took a deep breath, observing the movements of these demons.

The other demons had caught up and tried to surround Noel. However, Nicole and Anna had also reached Noel's position and struck them.

Nicole waved her hands, sending more than ten needles. The needles were small, yet, each needle could pierce through the defense of the demons. The energy within them erupted and created a hole in their bodies, ultimately killing the demons.

Meanwhile, Anna used her lightning to improve her speed. She skillfully maneuvered through these demons while slicing them one by one.

"We'll take care of the other demons. You can focus on defeating the Peak Level Demons.." Anna shouted with a serious expression.

Nicole couldn't say anything because she was too shocked. She didn't know Noel was this strong. It was no wonder he hid his power and identity. She didn't follow Noel's news, so she didn't know the masked man was Noel.

Nicole nodded to him, implying her intention. She then rushed forth, taking care of the other demons.

There was a reason why Noel wanted to kill Peak Level Demons by himself. It was none other than his mission.

The mission reward was the Union of Sword, Spiritual Step, and Elite Medal. Since the Elite Medal was the upgraded version of the Newbie Medal, it was clear how useful it would be for future use.

Meanwhile, the Spiritual Step and the Union of Sword were crucial for his future development. It was true that he had Split Step that allowed him to form a shadow that looked like him to avoid the enemies,

but he had a feeling that from the name that this Split Step would give him a foundation of footwork. As for the Union of Sword, he knew it would be something great for his weapon.

That was why he wanted these rewards to strengthen him before meeting the hermit.

With that thought in mind, Noel had no reason to hold back.

A pair of black wings appeared on his back. The Peak Level Demons wanted to help the other demons to stop Anna and Nicole, but Noel flapped his wings, sending forth multiple fire feathers.

The feathers exploded beside them, forcing them to focus on him.

Noel was glaring at the demons as if telling them they should fight him or they would die.

Three Peak Level Demons decided to come forward, trying to overwhelm him so that the others could attack Anna and Nicole.

Unfortunately for them, Noel had been preparing for this the whole time.

Ice Mirror.

A few ice blocks suddenly appeared all around Noel like that of a shield. With a single wave of his hand, the ice blocks started floating in front of him, blocking the demons' path.

Obviously, the demons had their pride as Peak Level Demons. They gathered their energy in their claws and smashed the Ice Mirrors.

Unfortunately for them, this was what Noel wanted them to do. What greeted him behind the Ice Mirrors were multiple abilities.

Noel attacked the right demon with his Ice Lotus, sending forth multiple ice petals to the demon. The left demon received multiple Fire Feathers that soon engulfed the demon with Undying Fire. Meanwhile, the middle demon was impaled by three giant Swords.

\*Roar!\*

The demons tried to stop Noel's abilities. The right demon swung its tail and struck all the ice petals, causing its tail to be covered with thick ice. However, he managed to save his life.

Meanwhile, the left demon got swallowed by the Undying Flame. It tried to fight back, but the demon had a hard time extinguishing it.

On the other hand, the last demon had a hard scale. Even the Sword Fall could only penetrate two centimeters of its flesh before stopping.

It was clear which one had to be targeted. Without hesitation, Noel jumped to the left demon and struck him with his sword.

\*Roar!\*

The demon was screaming in pain while doing his best to stop the blade. But Noel abruptly stopped, meeting the demon's paw head-on.

A rune appeared on Noel's upper arm as he ducked down, causing the paw to hit the rune. It was an Arm Guard Rune that allowed him to create artificial equipment with Spiritual Energy.

He used this Arm Guard to block the paw while twisting his body to slip past the demon's defense.

Noel cut the demon's hand at first before spinning his body and striking the demon from the side.

He even applied the Extension Rune so that his sword was long enough to cut the demon into two.

"Die." Noel snorted, slashing the demon. "That's one."

"!!!" The Peak Level Demons were shocked by Noel's prowess. They had underestimated Noel. No, it was because they underestimated him that Noel took one of them out in an instant.

The other two demons couldn't move because of Noel's previous attack. Hence, the three demons from the back chose to kill Noel first before helping the other demons.

The chicken was at the very front even though one of its wings had been sliced by Noel. He challenged Noel with his other wing.

Surprisingly, Noel didn't amplify his sword with his abilities and just took the wing head-on.

\*Cling!\*

The wing had turned into metal, so Noel couldn't cut it. Meanwhile, the other two demons approached him from both sides. This was what the demons wanted and... also what Noel needed.

The instant he saw this opportunity, Noel channeled his Ice Element into his blade.

Ice Infusion.

"!!!" The chicken was startled, but it was too late. The Ice Infusion had frozen his last wing.

Seeing this situation made the demons even more determined to kill Noel in this attack. The left side shot a beam at Noel while the other pounced on him.

Noel hurriedly spun to the left and used his Spirit Weaponry to touch the Spiritual Energy instead of cutting it. He then redirected the beam toward the demon approaching from the other side.

"!!!" The demon had to use his claw to block this beam, albeit the power pushed him back.

Seeing its friend getting attacked by his beam made the demon hurriedly stop. Noel took this opportunity to approach this demon and slice it.

"That's two."

Chapter 746 Completing The Mission

"That's two!" Noel glanced to the side. The two demons from earlier had recovered and started approaching him. The chicken demon also wanted to help.

Noel drew the Rune Blast, one of the runes he got from the mission that asked him to survive Laufey's attack. The Rune Blast shone dimly before it began gathering Spiritual Energy on top of the chicken.

"!!!" The chicken widened its eyes, but the rune had gathered enough energy and caused a massive explosion of energy.

\*Bam!\*

The chicken was blasted to the ground. The power was so strong that it shattered the ice on the wing alongside the very wing itself.

The other two demons had arrived and tried to stop him. Noel flapped his wings, blocking their attacks with his Phoenix Wings. Meanwhile, he drew the Rune Arrow and shot it at the chicken.

The chicken tried to change its skin, but the arrow was too quick, piercing through his body.

"That's three," Noel muttered.

The people were quite speechless when they saw Noel's abilities. He managed to utilize his sword, fire, ice, and rune abilities perfectly, keeping the enemies unable to get used to his attack.

'Seriously?' Damian frowned. He kept glancing at Noel since he dared to challenge six Peak Level Demons, worried. But it seemed that his worry was unnecessary.

'How come he becomes so strong with an additional element? Now that I think about it, he rarely uses his sword abilities and even those weird circle abilities are limited to only two... it seems that he has never gone all out this whole time.' Nicole assessed Noel and glanced at Anna, 'It seems that she has seen all this and become interested in him.'

Meanwhile, Anna was getting fired up. Since Noel could handle six Peak Level Demons by himself now that he could use all his abilities, she didn't plan to lose.

There were multiple demons approaching from the front. She stomped the ground and channeled the electricity forward, spreading it so that each demon would be struck by at least one lightning bolt.

\*Roar!\*

\*Roar!\*

\*Roar!\*

The demons were wailing in pain, but Anna shot out a lightning dragon that swallowed and electrocuted all these demons to death.

If Noel could defeat six Peak Level Demons at the same time, she was planning to kill sixty demons by herself.

Seeing the little competition between the two put a smile on Nicole's face. There was such synergy between the two.

Noel continued fighting the remaining three demons. He used his Circular Sword Strike to repel the two demons before jumping to the side, moving to the demon that got hit by the beam before.

"!!!" The demon realized it had become the new target, so it tried to get away. But when he stepped back, his foot suddenly slid on the ground. The demon was startled and tried to check it, finding a thin layer of ice where his foot was standing earlier. It realized Noel had used this ice to prevent him from going away.

\*Roar!\*

The demon chose to step forward, trying to buy time until the other two could help.

Noel didn't plan to prolong the fight, fully knowing that other Superior Demons or Peak Level Demons had a chance to hear the request from these demons.

He used the Split Step to become two, moving in opposite directions.

The demon was confused for a second before its instinct told him there was danger from the right. It turned around, only to find an intense heat breezing its skin. The gale was so hot that it felt like he was being cooked alive.

Noel then shot out the Undying Phoenix to completely cover the demon in flame. The energy from the phoenix truly cooked him alive.

"Two more." Noel turned around, seeing the demons start to be afraid of him. They realized that they were not Noel's match and tried to escape.

Noel sent forth the Undying Fire Feathers on the sides, causing them to get closer to each other.

After that, Noel formed an Ice Vortex to swallow both of them. Since the vortex's speed was faster than theirs, the demons had no choice but to stop and destroy it.

As expected of the Peak Level Demons, they crushed the vortex by combining their power, but their action allowed Noel to reach their position.

Ignition Sword.

Noel struck one of the demons, using the ability to create an explosion upon impact.

The demon managed to block it with its claw, but the blast charred its entire arm. Noel took this opportunity to cut down the fifth Peak Level Demon, allowing him to complete his mission.

As for the sixth one, he used the Ice Mirror to form multiple ice blocks around the demon, blocking its escape route. The demon had no choice but to charge at him, but Noel sent forth his Undying Phoenix to settle the fight.

In the end, the demon was burned completely.

"Huu..." Noel let out a breath of relief after he fulfilled his role. He looked at these demons and said, "I could somehow kill six Peak Level Demons because I didn't let them get used to my power. But this strategy cost me two things.

"I spent a lot of Spiritual Energy just to keep releasing all those powerful abilities. At the same time, I had to choose which abilities were perfect and memorize what I had done in the fight so that I didn't attack them with the same ability or elements. It took a toll on my Spiritual Energy and mind."

Noel knew that this was what he could do the moment he decided to reveal his identity. And that time wouldn't be too long either. Unfortunately, he had to endure it for the time being.

"I'm done for now." Noel checked his reward.

Medal: Elite

Effect: Sword Mastery +5%, Spiritual Energy +5%, Rune Mastery +5%



The reward was simple, but it was extremely useful. At the same time, he also received an influx of knowledge about the Union of Sword and the Spiritual Step.

He couldn't help but say, "With this, we're ready to face the hermit."

#### Chapter 747 Goal

As Noel said, they began marching forward, killing all the demons they could find. There was a reason why they spared no one. Noel deemed it would be troublesome if there was a demon sneaking up on them whether it happened in this valley or when they encountered the hermit. Hence, it was decided to kill all demons even if they looked weak and unable to fight back.

They met the other two Superior Demons. But due to their coordination, they managed to kill them one by one, allowing them to emerge unscathed.

Though, killing all these demons took more than a day because they had to repeatedly recover their Spiritual Energy.

Before going inside the cave, they decided to make a camp where they conditioned themselves to their peak so that they could fight the hermit if it was necessary.

"Are you ready for tomorrow, Noel?" Anna asked while sitting next to him.

"Yeah." Noel nodded.

"How confident are you that the hermit won't attack us?"

"I'm not that confident." Noel shook his head. "There are a lot of reasons for attacking us, especially with the fact that our races are different. Even if we can somehow make a connection with them, it would be impossible for both races to reach a common ground in an instant."

"However, we're pretty lucky since both races are not meeting each other. And I don't have any intention to extend my hand either."

"Hmm? You don't?" Anna tilted her head in confusion. On the one hand, it would be beneficial if they cooperated with them since no one paid attention to the kingdom that was far beyond the border. On the other hand, Anna could understand Noel's worries.

"We have different cultures, boundaries, and egos. Both of us will think ourselves to be superior to the others. And that superiority will be the one that sparks a war between us. I mean, that's basically why humans have four kingdoms instead of a unified one even though we have a common enemy, right?"

"That's true." Anna nodded in agreement.

"Now that I think about it, I've given you a hint about my goal. How about you? Do you have any goals you want to achieve? Considering you manage to awaken your spirit, you should have one, right?" Noel asked.

"Why do you ask this? Don't tell me..." Anna gasped, appearing vigilant.

"It's fine if you don't answer it." Noel shook his head. "I'm telling you my goal so that you know what will happen if you continue mingling with me. You should know that my path will be far more arduous than anyone's imagination, but I don't have any intention to back down. If you have a goal, I can adjust myself to avoid getting in your way."

Anna couldn't help but smile when hearing about the reason. The past Noel wouldn't even think about it. After all, even if the hatred was solved, he didn't like or even trust her.

But this time, Noel trusted her enough to discuss something important.

Anna raised one finger. "I won't tell you my goal. However, I'll give you a hint as well. It's pretty simple to be honest. I want to reach the peak."

"Reach the peak? What kind of peak? Do you mean the Spirit King Stage, the highest stage? Or do you want to become the wealthiest person in the world? No, it's more like the most influential person..." Noel frowned. There were a lot of peaks to climb.

Anna chuckled. "That's the hint. I won't give you any more details. You can guess the rest."

"That's..." Noel let out a sigh, feeling a bit disappointed. That goal was also confusing because if she wanted to reach the peak, she shouldn't think about telling him the information from the alternate world since he could use it better than her, thus standing on her way to climb to the peak.

"Instead of my goal, why don't we discuss our plan for tomorrow?" Anna made an awkward smile. "After meeting the hermit, what should we do if he is hostile toward us?"

"We will, of course, fight him. At the very least, we are going to buy enough time until we have proven that we're not a threat to him and that we want to have a deep conversation."

"That's easier said than done. The hermit is supposed to be extremely powerful since he can live in this dangerous place for a long time, right? Don't you think it's impossible for us to buy a lot of time?" Anna sighed. Although she agreed with Noel's plan, time wasn't simply in their favor.

"Don't worry. I know what I have to say... Hopefully, that is enough to convince him. Nevertheless, I have to consider the situation first since what I can say will change depending on the crisis."

"I see. Then, in the worst case scenario, do you think we can somehow escape death and convince him?"

"I'm not very sure, but we should have a pretty high chance." Noel nodded with confidence.

"Hoh? What are you going to say to the hermit?" Anna asked, curious. But before Noel could reply, another person beat him to it.

"That's what I want to ask too."

Suddenly, an aged voice echoed within the camp. The voice was unfamiliar, yet calm and collected. It felt like he was saying those words, fully knowing that no one could react to him.

"!!!" This voice came from behind Noel and Anna. That was why the pair was the first one to react by turning around their bodies.

"Who—" Noel and Anna gasped. Their reaction was seen by the others as they found out that there was an old man standing near Anna and Noel. Without hesitation, they unsheathed their blades, ready to rush.

However, they couldn't do it because the old man was emitting fighting intent that was telling them if they dared to make a move, Anna and Noel would be dead.

The elderly made a gentle smile and repeated his words. "I want to ask that too. Do you think it's possible for you to convince me?"

Chapter 748 The Hermit

"I want to ask that too. Do you think it's possible for you to convince me?"

"!!!" Noel's body trembled, feeling an indescribable oppression from him. It felt like this invisible pressure wanted him to kneel down.

"Who..." Anna gasped, thinking, 'I didn't sense him at all. How did he sneak up on us? My instinct is telling me that this guy is extremely dangerous. In fact, Dimitri and the others won't hold a candle to him. He must be at least a Spirit Transcendence Stage Expert. No, he might be even stronger. I can't measure it accurately, but his strength is similar to the time when we were at our peaks.'

Anna realized that the hermit turned out to be stronger than they expected. In the previous life, both of them were at the peak of the Spirit Transcendence Stage. It was to the point that no one could stop them anymore. No, it was that they were the only ones that could stop each other from going rampant.

That was probably the reason why Anna and Noel had to be killed. There was simply no one who could control them anymore if they reached the legendary Spirit King Stage.

And this mysterious person actually had a similar strength to them at their peak. It was simply unbelievable.

The old man had a warm smile on his face. His head was bald as though all the hair on his body had fallen. He wore a white robe that covered his entire body.

'Did I just make a mistake by bringing everyone here? But Noel did gain his cooperation in the previous life...' Anna gulped down.

Meanwhile, Noel was frozen as though he couldn't say anything. One wrong answer might result in his death.

"What's wrong? Do you think you can convince me not to kill you for trespassing in my area? I've been listening to your conversation this whole time, so you should know that our races are different. Just for that reason, it's enough for me to kill you." The old man smiled.

Noel wanted to open his mouth, but he couldn't do it due to the suppression. He realized that the old man was preventing him from saying anything. This might be a kind of test from the old man. After all, if he wanted to kill him, there was no need for this farce.

Still, it didn't change the fact that Noel had to find a way to escape from this suppression.

'Ardagan!' Noel called his helper for one reason. He changed his title from a fighting title to the Affection Medal.

Name: Hildlru

Affection: Good (70/100)

Description: Someone who has a deep affinity with you.

Noel was stunned for a different reason. Despite all his words, the affection he had toward him was the exact opposite. It felt like this old man was his long-lost friend who finally reunited with him again.

It might be because of that sense of relief that the corner of his lips began to curve upward.

Even the old man raised his eyebrows, not expecting Noel to smile.

But because of that shock, he subconsciously retracted a bit of the suppression. Noel took that opportunity to open his mouth, saying, "Please don't joke around, Sir Hildlru."

"!!!" All people, including the old man, were shocked. They didn't know how Noel could actually call the old man's name. And judging from his shocked expression, the name was correct.

"How do you know about my name?" The old man asked while squinting his eyes.

However, the affection medal would never lie to him. Even though his actions looked like this, the affection actually increased.

Name: Hildlru

Affection: Excellent (71/100)

Description: Someone who has a deep affinity with you.

Noel was surprised that there would be someone like him. It looked like the old man had already known him before he even came here. And for that reason, he had to understand why, as it would be the key to solving this situation.

Noel took a deep breath and said, "You should already know about me, Sir. If you know me, why can't I do the same?"

"..." The old man fell silent for a moment before stepping forward. He started laughing as his Spiritual Energy began to leak out of his body.

"!!!" Dimitri gritted his teeth and clenched his blade. He opened his mouth, ready to use his True Spirit Body.

But before he could say anything, the old man glared at him and said, "Don't do anything stupid. If you make a single move, we can see who is faster, me killing him or you saving him."

Dimitri bit his lips, having no choice but to lower his blade.

The old man smiled and said, "You made one mistake, brat. You said I know you... That's not true at all. I don't know anything about you, but I do have a little connection with you."

Noel fell silent. He thought the bluff would work, but it turned out to be backfired. However, the old man seemed to give him another chance.

He added, "Humor me with this question... Are you an ally or an enemy?"

The answer was obvious. If he answered, he was an enemy, the old man would definitely kill him. But all of them wondered if the other option was the correct choice.

Surprisingly, Noel had no hesitation in answering him. "None. As of now, we are neither enemies nor allies. We are just two individuals, but there seems to be a deep affinity between us."

'Huh?' Anna didn't expect that answer. Yet, the old man's eyebrows seemed to twitch for a split second. It ended so fast that others might not notice it, but it was certain that Noel's words were affecting the old man.

"Hahaha... Interesting." The old man laughed out loud. "If that's the case, follow me. Since you have gone all the way here just to meet me, I should entertain you a bit. It's been a while since I have met someone after all."

"..." Anna's body slightly shook after hearing the last sentence. They had come here knowing that Noel would meet the Sword Saint's future disciple. Yet, the old man actually told them that he hadn't met anyone.

But that reaction was what the old man was looking for.

"Hoh? It's you, huh?" He glared intensely at Anna.

Anna's body froze, not knowing what he saw on her. But he suddenly whispered low enough so that only she could hear.

"Do you enjoy your second life?"

Chapter 749 Confusion

"Do you enjoy your second life?"

That question struck Anna's heart as she couldn't help but shiver in fear. She looked at the old man with a horrified expression. "You..."

The old man ignored her reaction and simply walked to the cave as though it wasn't important. He asked them, "You come all the way to this place to meet me, right? Are you going to enter?"

"..." They were confused. On the one hand, this would be their only chance to escape. On the other hand, there was completely nothing they could do once they followed him.

That was why Noel instantly made his decision. "You may stop here."



Even though he said those words, the first thing he did was actually step forward, following the old man. At the very least, he knew that the Affection Medal was not lying. Even if he entered, there was a high chance the old man wouldn't kill him.

Dimitri and Damian looked at each other. Dimitri had a clear conscience. Since he was here to protect his master, there was no way he was going to return. Meanwhile, Damian was interested in what it entailed. He had entered so deep that it would be a shame if he retreated.

Hence, both of them followed Noel into the cave.

The only one who remained confused was Nicole. She came here for the sake of Anna. Yet, Anna had a pale expression as if the old man was threatening her.

'Is he going to kill us?' Nicole muttered inwardly, thinking about the danger and Anna's reaction.

Little did she know, she completely misunderstood Anna's reaction.

Anna wasn't scared because the old man wanted to kill her. She was terrified because the old man knew about her secret.

'What did he do? How did he know? I hadn't told him anything. Don't tell me, he has something to do with my reincarnation?'

'Now that I think about it, Noel has received a great power up from this place. No, wait. He told us that he hadn't met someone and I reacted... Is that how he determined the reincarnation? He actually lied to find me?'

'But why? No, that's not important. Instead, I should be asking why Noel did all that. If the old man was related to reincarnation, he should give something to Noel so that the ability could exist.'

'Noel should have been the one to use it. With his talent and brain, if he ever received the memory from his previous life, he would be able to grow exponentially.'

'In fact, Noel should have been far closer to the truth of this kingdom instead of me. He should have figured out the Supreme Devil Organization as well as other problems in this kingdom.'

'Yet, he actually chose me to reincarnate. What did he want me to do with this knowledge? Unlike him, I had no important information other than the fact that I wanted to change him. Why... Why did he sacrifice that great chance for someone like me?'

Anna clutched her head, not knowing what to do. On the one hand, she felt unworthy to receive this much treatment. On the other hand, she might be overthinking this.

She had to get the answer.

Gritting her teeth, Anna began to walk forward, chasing after those people.

"Anna?! Wait. Are you going in? Is the old man going to kill you?" Nicole tried to stop Anna.

Unfortunately for her, Anna's focus remained on the old man and the reason why Noel gave this important chance to her.

"I have to know about the truth," Anna said while entering the cave.

Nicole didn't know what to say. Since the person she wanted to protect had entered, she had no choice but to follow her.

In the end, all five people entered the cave.

The cave was dark and long. They seemed to be moving left and right like a maze.

Luckily, both Anna and Noel had the Moon Blessing, allowing them to see in the dark. However, the old man managed to traverse in the dark without any problems. There wasn't even any fluctuation of Spiritual Energy coming from his body.

"Damian... Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" Dimitri asked while gulping down.

"I think we're thinking the same thing." Damian nodded.

"This old man is far beyond the Spirit Transcendence Stage. That bastard from the Supreme Devil Organization can't hold a candle to him." Dimitri and Damian muttered in a low voice. They never thought that the hermit would be this strong.

In fact, they couldn't tell who would win if this old man fought against the commander of the Demon Banner Army and the strongest Arbiter in the kingdom at the same time.

However, their question was redirected to Noel, the man who knew the information about this old man.

'How did he know about this information? How could he know about someone like him?' Damian asked himself while looking at Noel.

Meanwhile, Dimitri had no explanation other than the famous Ardagan Sword. In fact, he began to change after making contact with the Ardagan Sword.

He was supposed to kill Noel and failed to do it because of Luke Ardagan. But the reason he chose to serve the Ardagan Family was because of Noel.

In the end, he chose to believe in Noel no matter how ridiculous things would become.

'I'm glad that you can become this strong, Master. I hope that you can continue this way and become the strongest person in the kingdom. I shall pave the road for you.' Dimitri took a deep breath as if he had just strengthened his resolve.

Suddenly, their attention was taken by the light at the end of the tunnel. They were about to reach their destination.

Even Noel slightly increased his pace, wondering what kind of place was so bright within this tunnel.

But the moment he exited the tunnel, it felt like the world had changed. Dark tunnel? No, there was a light blue sky in this place. Stone cave? Let alone a rock, this place was surrounded by fertile soil filled with flowers and wheat.

"This is..." Noel gasped.

"Welcome to my humble abode." The old man smiled.

Chapter 750 Small Conversation

"Welcome to my humble abode."

Noel looked around, amazed by the scenery. To think there was a place this beautiful inside the cave. However, the cloud in the sky seemed to be moving, making him realize that this place was connected to the outside.

However, Nicole said earlier that she had checked the area and believed there was no opening that would lead to this place.

"It appears you are confused. Well, it's better to follow me to my house first. We can talk slowly there." The old man pointed at the wooden house at the end of this space.

Noel thought for a moment before hastening his pace to catch up to the old man.

"Sir..."

"I know that it's hard to pronounce my name. In fact, you pronounced it wrong earlier." The old man chuckled.

"I apologize." Noel immediately lowered his head.

"Just call me Old Ru. That's enough."

"That... I can't use such informal language to address you." Noel scratched the back of his head.

"If that's so? The exit is over there." Old Ru smirked while pointing at the cave where they had come out earlier.

"Old Ru." Noel immediately corrected himself.

Old Ru smiled. "So, what do you want to ask me?"

"That's... why do you have a favorable impression on me even though we never met?"

"Didn't you say earlier that we have a good affinity?"

"That's..." Noel looked down, not knowing what to say. After all, that came from the Affection Medal.

"Instead of answering your question, I would prefer it if you could answer my question." Old Ru paused for a moment. "Do you enjoy your life?"

"Do I enjoy my life?" Noel tilted his head. "I am not exactly sure. There are a lot of happy memories, but there are also a lot of things that I want to forget."

"You are not sure? In that case, let me reword my question. When you are on your deathbed, will you be able to say that you have enjoyed your life?"

Noel furrowed his eyebrows, contemplating. "If I manage to achieve my goal, then I would definitely say I've enjoyed it."

"What if you fail to achieve your goal?"

"If I fail..." Noel raised one finger with a smile. "I think I will do it in a way I can enjoy. That way, I at least enjoy a part of it."

Old Ru smiled as though he was looking at a child who proudly told his goal. "Then, humor me with another topic. If you have to choose someone in this world, who do you think is the most important person to you?"

"Huh?" Noel was confused by this question.

Little did he know, Anna was actually reacting to this question. She was curious about it as this might be the answer she had been waiting for. After all, it might be related to the reason why Noel gave her this chance instead of using it himself.

Noel thought, 'Do I have someone like that? The people close to me are my parents, Dimitri, and Anna... Anna?'

Noel raised his eyebrows, never expecting to think about Anna. There were a few people in the Demon Relief Squad he could include in the answer, but he realized that he wasn't that close enough to them. There was Rose, but Dimitri and Rose were similar. So, if he weighed their relationship, he would surely say Dimitri was closer to him.

As for his parents, there was no doubt they would be at the top. Even though they had put a grand scheme like this, it didn't change the fact that he managed to stay alive because of them.

Yet, Anna. He didn't know when Anna had become one of the closest people to him. They had certainly been together a lot, especially during their time in the Demon Banner Army. Even if they had gone their separate ways, they still relied on each other. Even on this trip, they came together.

"It seems that the question is too hard for the current you." Old Ru chuckled while patting Noel's shoulder. "That is fine. You don't have to answer that question for the time being."

Anna looked a bit disappointed because she couldn't hear the answer. At the same time, she felt relieved because she didn't have to get dejected because she wasn't chosen.

Noel made a wry smile. "I'm sorry. There are a lot of options to choose from, so I can't give you a concrete answer."

"It's fine. In that case, I'll ask my last question. What do you wish to achieve in this place?"

"I..." It seemed that the little talk they had earlier made Noel a bit relaxed. He even managed to utter the request. "I am here to get stronger. I came to this place hoping that you can teach me how to get stronger."

"Even though you don't know if I'm that strong or not?"

"I do have a hint, but I'm not sure. So, it's kind of a gamble. Besides, even if I reach this place, I don't know if Old Ru will teach me or not."

"Hahaha!" Old Ru patted his shoulder a few times, satisfied. "Sure. I don't mind teaching you."

"Is that true?" Noel gasped, not believing what he heard.

"Of course. But you have to answer this question correctly."

"I'll do my best." Noel nodded without hesitation, determined to get the correct answer.

"Why do you think I will teach you? No, what can I gain from teaching you?"

"Ah!" Noel looked down. The answer was obvious. There was nothing he would gain from teaching him. So, he had no reason to teach him.

Yet, Noel glanced at Anna, reminding him of the conversation they had back then. The person in the alternate world seemed to have received the approval and returned with the Sword Saint's disciple.

So, the answer might be related to it.

Noel gulped down, not knowing if this was the correct answer or not. However, he still had to muster the courage to answer it, or he wouldn't get anything.

"Because it is related to another person?"

Old Ru looked at him mysteriously before smiling, "You are correct. I'll teach you then."

'That easy?' Noel raised his eyebrows in disbelief.