

## **S vs Rebirth 941**

### Chapter 941 Last Order

Noel noticed another power fluctuating in the sky. Even the people from the organization couldn't help but raise their heads.

In the sky, a woman's silhouette could be seen. The woman was covered in armor. One could still see her fluttering white hair, but her face was covered with a helmet, leaving only her mouth exposed.

There were a pair of angelic wings on her back. When the woman held her sword with both hands and raised it, the wings seemed to multiply.

Instead of one, there were a total of three pairs of angelic wings.

"Who—" The people from the organization were confused, but one of them seemed to recognize the silhouette. "Not good. She is a Paladin!"

Unfortunately for them, she had swung her sword down.

A bright golden circle suddenly formed on the ground. When it shone, it created an enormous light pillar, disintegrating the demons inside it.

It was located next to Noel, which meant that he had a space to move around.

Without hesitation, Noel killed the demons near him before making his way to the empty space.

Noel finally understood why Layla said that this paladin had the strongest explosive power. In a single attack, she killed almost a hundred demons. Though, it was also a foolish move since she exhausted a lot of her energy.

Still, Noel could see what she was capable of.

Once he got some breathing time, Noel pointed in the camp's direction, specifically at Grandell.

The paladin thought he was trying to show her the location of the Saintess. But she knew that the Saintess was probably the hardest person to kill physically. So, she helped Noel instead of Layla.

Unfortunately, she couldn't attack the Supreme Devil Organization even if she wanted to get rid of these pests from society. After all, once she killed them, it would be perceived as the Moon Temple breaking their oath.

No one had attacked the Moon Temple this whole time, but that was also because the Moon Temple didn't attack them as well. Even if they were the Supreme Devil Organization, the Moon Temple had to maintain their integrity.

Thus, the paladin chose to eliminate the demons around Noel to give him breathing time.

But for someone as talented as Noel, there was no way Noel didn't know about the Saintess's capability and the Moon Temple's integrity. Instead of showing the Saintess's location, Noel was actually trying to tell her about his subordinates.

That was right. Since the Paladin couldn't harm the organization, Noel could do it. And there was one thing he needed in this situation: help from his subordinates.

In other words, Noel wanted her to create a path for his subordinates. This way, the Moon Temple could maintain their integrity while Noel defeated the organization.

As soon as she understood this, the paladin landed not far from Noel.

She said with a soft tone, "Be careful."

Noel seemed to have underestimated the Moon Temple's fighting force. To think they would even warn him in this kind of situation.

After giving that one warning, the paladin charged toward the demon. Numerous demons stood in her way.

Despite being surrounded by the demons, the Paladin actually struck a demon down before moving even deeper into their ranks. She killed a demon with every slash.

Unlike the big move she released earlier, she hadn't done anything special. In other words, the Paladin actually pushed through with her swordsmanship alone.

It was only after she was deep enough that she covered her sword with the same golden light and stabbed the ground.

In that instant, the ground exploded and released a bright golden light that once again disintegrated the demons around her.

Some demons from the opposite side still surrounded Noel and pounced on him. All of a sudden, Noel grabbed their heads as a torrential flame burst out.

Hell Blaze.

The flame engulfed the demons and launched them away. The flame once again spread to the demons, the soil, and even the trees.

The table had turned. Noel's wings were still enough to block all kinds of attacks from the Devil Bishops and Inspectors.

He glared at them as if taunting them to come at him since they wanted his life. The only reason he couldn't shout at them was because he still had to kill the other demons that kept charging at him.

But this threat was enough to scare the organization's people away.

'Should we continue? He is at his death door, but that Paladin is creating the path for those soldiers. There is a chance that the Saintess will make her way here.' The Devil Bishop furrowed his eyebrows. He was still attacking Noel, but it was only to stop him from moving.

"My lord!" Grandell and the other soldiers finally pushed through the narrow path the Paladin had created.

And this sealed their decision.

"Continue with the plan and ignore him!" The bishop ordered and chose to turn his back away.

The demons started to move toward the south, trying to avoid being wiped out by Noel and the others.

There was no way Noel would allow them to leave that easily. He summoned the Undying Phoenix again to kill the demons that carried them.

However, a few demons suddenly leaped into the phoenix's way, using their bodies to shield the demons.

"My lord!" Grandell had finally arrived and started killing the demons around Noel.

"We'll chase after them. Clear the way." Noel said, his voice was shaking.

"But you..." Grandell gritted his teeth.

"I won't repeat my order." Noel's tone became stern.

Even if Grandell didn't want to do it, Noel was adamant about going alone. So, rather than stopping his lord, it was better for the soldiers to clear up their way. "All soldiers. We'll kill all the demons in our path. Even if you die, make sure you drag the demon down."

"Oh!" The soldiers hurriedly moved to their position and started killing the demons in their way.

The Supreme Devil Organization would have a problem stopping these soldiers whose hearts had been filled with rage.

With the soldiers clearing up their path, Noel could finally focus on using his Spiritual Energy to kill the monsters around them. He sent Fire Feathers, Fire Gale, and Hell Blaze to kill the demons. He even sent forth the Undying Phoenix and Ice Lotus to attack the people from the organization.

They tried to stop Noel's attack, but the Undying Phoenix was unstoppable and continued mowing the demons down.

Seeing how the demons that carried them died one by one, it was clear that Noel's target was the demons instead of them.

Hence, they abandoned the demons and gave one last order.

"Kill!" Grandell shouted. The soldiers fought like that of a beast. They didn't care about their injuries and continued paving the way for Noel.

However, the demons suddenly changed their approach due to the last order.

A demon pounced on Grandell. Normally, Grandell would cut it down without any problem, but before his blade reached this demon, another demon pounced from behind to save this demon in exchange for its own life.

And the saved demon moved once again and struck Grandell's foot.

"!!!" Grandell managed to maintain his balance since the demon was only a low level one. But it was still quite painful to be hit in the place he didn't protect.

The other soldiers also experienced the same thing. The demons actually sacrificed themselves in order to take down the knights.

This kind of fighting style was so much different from the last one.

If they were humans, Noel could see them slashing through their comrade's body in order to kill their opponent.

Even in human warfare, he would rarely encounter this kind of situation. But with the demons's absolute obedience, it was possible.

This kind of fighting style might be the most important information he got on this expedition. The demon that dug tunnels underground, flying beasts, amphibians, or even the demons slamming their bodies to the wall couldn't be compared to this.

"Madness... the demons are capable of doing something like this?" Noel sucked a cold breath. The most important thing was the fact that they were a demon army. If this kind of fighting style was used against him, even if he could defeat them, the casualties would be extremely high.

In that instant, Noel shouted, "Grandell!"

"I apologize, my lord. Please give me more time to create the path for you!" Grandell shouted back as though he were disappointed in himself.

However, the next word that came out of Noel's mouth shocked him and all the soldiers. "Cease. We'll eliminate the demons and stop chasing after those people."

"Huh?!" Grandell never thought that Noel would change his decision so easily. The latter had already sent multiple fire feathers to kill the demons around them to lessen their burden, showing them the change in his decision.

Instead of explaining, Noel suddenly dropped to the ground and coughed up some more 'blood.'

"My lord?!" Grandell saw all that blood. His confusion turned into worry.

The people from the organization saw Noel's state. They realized that Noel was just showing a strong front this whole time so that they would run away like this. If they turned around, they might be able to fight Noel again, but they had given the last order to the demons, which meant they had to fight Noel without the help of the demons.

And Noel sealed their fate as he began to kill all the demons in the vicinity.

Grandell wanted to kill those people, but Noel's safety was his priority. So, he ordered the men to stop chasing and protect their lord.

Still, the Paladin couldn't see much from the camp. She found it weird when Noel stopped chasing after those guys as though he never had the intention to kill them to begin with.

In fact, she felt slightly annoyed. After all, she opened the path for Grandell and the others so that Noel could kill those pests. To think that Noel would betray that expectation.

"I will leave this area to you," said Noel while clutching his heart. "I'm going to inform the others."

"Yes, Sir." Grandell nodded with a grim expression.

Now that the battle's objective had changed, Noel flew toward the camp and landed next to Layla while saying, "Layla. It's time to eliminate all the demons. You can stop defending the camp."

When she heard that, the wall disappeared, leaving only a small barrier that isolated Layla and Noel.

After that, she formed a few cube-shaped barriers to isolate a lot of demons, allowing the others to take care of the rest.

Since it had an easier shape, Layla could finally speak, "Aurelia. Wipe them out!"

Although she had a lot of questions, Aurelia ended up following Layla's order and the temple knights followed suit.

Layla couldn't help but ask, "What happened? For you to suddenly change our objective."

Chapter 942 Aftermath

"What happened? For you to suddenly change our objective."

Noel looked around and said, "I'll explain it later. They will probably have to know as well."

"So, we will let them go?"

"Yeah. It looks like they're moving toward a village. It's going to be troublesome, but the Supreme Devil Organization will be known from now on. Since we will kill all the demons here, even if they pick up demons along the way, we can shift the blame to them."

"Well, if you let them go with all the demons from this place, they will make it look like it is a demon attack. And it's your failure as the lord to protect your people. But with them having no more demons, the Supreme Devil Organization will have to take the blame." Layla nodded in understanding.

"Yeah. It's most likely that they will change their approach, which is a kind of assassination."

"I see. In that case, it's time to kill these demons. Do you want to have the honor?" Layla smiled.

"Of course." Noel looked at the demons that had been isolated by Layla's barrier.

Undying Phoenix.

He shot the phoenix into the sky before it flew toward the barrier. Layla opened the top part of the barrier, allowing the phoenix to enter and explode, devouring all the demons inside.



But as expected, the fire affected the barrier. A part of it melted and some demons used that hole to escape. Unfortunately, it only saved a few demons while the others were stuck inside and died from the intense blaze.

Layla caught a lot more demons as Noel kept killing them with his fire.

While doing so, Layla couldn't help but say, "This is surprising. Your fire is an extraordinary one... Normally, no one can break through my barrier. But your fire can actually melt my barrier down. It will be troublesome if you are the one attacking me right now."

"Well, you have been dividing your barrier into a lot of smaller ones. If you concentrate on only one barrier, I doubt my fire can do much."

"I am specialized in defense. So, creating a city-sized barrier is normal. And that is still enough to stop the incoming demons." Layla shook her head.

Noel understood it. In fact, her barrier might be able to withstand Qiel's arrow with a lot more enemies. Still, the stronger the opponents, the harder it would take to maintain the barrier. So, he doubted that Layla could last as long as the time they first met.

That was just one of his thoughts. He had a lot of other things to consider, especially the demons that dug the ground.

In the end, he decided to focus on killing the demons first before discussing this matter with Anna and all the pillars in the main city.

Grandell and the soldiers had experienced something that was never taught by Howard. It was their duty to protect their lord.

They had been fighting for Noel and keeping him safe, but earlier, they almost lost Noel due to his poor condition.

Noel's action ended up planting this seed in their minds. Those who were strong would definitely overcome the helplessness and become more refined as soldiers.

The soldiers became more ferocious when killing the demons. Their performance even put the temple knights in awe as they cut down one demon after another like an army of beasts.

The temple knights also helped in killing the demons, but in total, the number of demons they killed was only half of what Grandell and the others achieved.

The paladin instantly became the main part of the subjugation. She single-handedly killed one thousand demons by herself. However, it was clear that she had exhausted a lot of her energy.

Compared to Shale, who was said to have exterminated the same number of demons, she was still a bit weaker.

Noel had killed the same number, but that was all due to his fire that spread around the battlefield as well as Layla's help in isolating a lot of demons for him to kill.

In two hours, the group ultimately killed more than three thousand demons. It was a huge achievement, but the biggest part of their success was the fact that they engaged the enemies with the walls first. It allowed them to conserve most of their stamina while thinning out the enemy numbers.

After they were done, the group returned to the destroyed camp. Obviously, the first one to show dissatisfaction was none other than Aurelia.

She was standing in front of Layla with a cold gaze behind that helmet. "Saintess..."

"!!!" Layla's body tensed up. Layla had a rather playful character despite her brilliance. On the other hand, Aurelia showed an atmosphere of strictness.

"Oh, Aurelia. Thank you for coming here." Layla made a wry smile.

"Is that all you're going to say after dragging me to this place?" Aurelia asked with a cold tone.

"Good work. Also, you're probably going to stay with me for a while as we will visit his city and stay there."

"I've got the news, but not the details. However, how many times do I need to tell you that your playfulness is causing trouble for everyone? I know that you're doing it for the benefits of the Moon Temple, but please think about the people around you."

"I know, I know."

"You are clearly not repentant of your action." Aurelia took a deep breath, trying her best to calm down. "Besides, unless you want to kill yourself, it's not like you're going to die with that ability of yours. But that's not what a lot of people are thinking. Please pay attention to your status."

"I understand, so let's just leave it at that, please?" Layla scratched the back of her head, knowing it wasn't enough to stop her.

To her surprise, Aurelia let out a long sigh as the usual sign of her stopping the argument. "I will spare you with only that for now since we're in the presence of Earl Ardagan. But I'm going to continue tonight."

"Tonight... I need to discuss a lot of things with him." Layla hurriedly made an excuse while pointing at Noel. Layla even looked at Noel. If she didn't have her blindfold, she would have shown puppy eyes that Noel couldn't resist.

On the other hand, Noel said, "She is not wrong."

Layla made a big smile as if she had been saved by Noel, only to be betrayed right after. "But I will make it brief tonight. You can have her after that."

"Thank you very much." Aurelia politely bowed to him. "Please allow me to formally introduce myself. I am Paladin Aurelia from the Moon Temple. Aurelia Leviasta. Though, I have abandoned that name after becoming a Paladin,"

"Leviasta House?"

"Indeed. I'm one of the women lucky enough to have the chance to change my fate from being a political tool to someone independent enough to choose my own fate. Just like your fiancée."

Noel nodded in understanding. Although he didn't know much about Aurelia, her fate was already sealed once she was born into a noble family. And it seemed that she chose a different path by wielding the sword.

"I am Noel Ardagan. Well, the Saintess and I have agreed that you will be accompanying her to visit my main city. So, we'll be meeting quite frequently from now on." Noel smiled while extending his hand for a handshake.

"It's an honor to have the opportunity to learn from you." Aurelia shook his hand firmly, knowing that the younger man in front of her was more talented, knowledgeable, and terrifying than her.

While they were talking, the knights had returned. The temple knights weren't as injured as Noel's soldiers, but they took quite a beating. On the other hand, Grandell and the others looked like they were about to collapse. While he didn't see any missing body parts from them, they had been covered with bandages. Grandell insisted that Noel didn't use his power to heal them until he recovered a bit from his injury.

However, there was one qualitative leap in his soldiers. The intensity of their gaze was much more apparent. In fact, all the soldiers understood that they had failed their duty and wanted to be punished. In exchange, Noel used it to bolster their morale once again.

They could finally be called the true elite knights of the Ardagan Family. They wouldn't hesitate to lay down their lives if it was for the sake of their master. In other words, they were the true sword under Noel's command.

Noel couldn't help but imagine what kind of expression Howard would have when he saw the change in his subordinates.

Even Aurelia was impressed by their change. However, there was one more important matter.

"Although this is a rude thing to ask, may I know the reason for you to stop chasing those people? The temple is not allowed to fight those people, but I think that you and your soldiers can kill those people easily," Aurelia asked.

Grandell frowned as if thinking she was a fool for not being able to see that their lord was injured. But Noel nonchalantly said, "It's impossible. It's not about my condition. Instead, did you notice that the demons became much harder to deal with after that?"

Aurelia recounted what happened earlier and admitted, "Yes. It was a bit harder to fight them earlier."

"Suppose I use us as an analogy. In that case, I want you to think this way. What if you and I fought with our swords? And then, it suddenly changes to using Grandell to stop you as I slash both of you together?"

Aurelia couldn't reply to that question. She truly witnessed such a thing in the fight. If thousands if not tens of thousands of demons used the same technique, they would suffer a massive loss even if they could win. She ended up lowering her head. "I apologize for my rude question earlier."

"It's fine. It's normal to want to kill them, but I think we've completed our original objective, which is to learn how a demon army operates. Now that the demon army has a brain that can make use of them properly, they're going to be more terrifying.

"The underground demons, the flying demons, or even the amphibians are hard enough to repel. We have to close the waterway or plan it carefully. The ground has to be fortified in one way or another. And lastly, we should have weapons to stop those flying demons. If you just think about it, there are a lot of tasks that need to be completed.

"Besides, this won't affect only our territory. Once my Ardagan Family is destroyed by the Supreme Devil Organization, the terror of the organization will spread even more.

"It will become much bigger when the dog has the strength to bite its owner's hand... The entire kingdom will be in chaos, so I will be focusing my attention on that part instead of playing too much politics." Noel glanced at Layla.

Layla couldn't say anything. On the one hand, their duty was just to kill demons and help people. On the other hand, if the demons they had to kill were an army like this, they might experience a series of failures and would lose a lot of people if they were not careful on how to approach it.

Layla understood that the Supreme Devil Organization had finally stepped up their game the moment they could control the demons and turn them into an army. They might even usurp the throne.

"I know. I don't know how much I can do right now, but I'm going to pay close attention to this matter. Do you want me to pull some connections here and there to assist you?"

"No. The Ardagan Family has yet to show its true fang. So, it's enough for the time being."

"Alright. If you need anything, just come to me. I can do a lot of things." Layla smirked.

"Yeah. You're going to talk to her first though." Noel pointed at Aurelia. Even though Layla couldn't see it, she could feel the sharp gaze from Aurelia as if telling her not to cause a lot of mess with all her weird ideas.

Layla only made a wry smile before changing the topic. "So, what are we going to do now? Chase after those people?"

"No. Let's explore the area and eliminate all the demons. If possible, I want to see if they truly make a base or not."

#### Chapter 943 Another Possibility

Before exploring the area, they tried to gather the remaining demon crystals they could get from the demons. Most of the demons that Noel killed didn't have anything left, so they searched for the demons they killed.

They were already quite lucky that they got about three thousand demon crystals with variety grades.

The most important ones would be the twenty peak level crystals and more than a hundred advanced level crystals. There was no Superior Demon this time though. The Supreme Devil Organization might be planning to use it during the actual siege.

After loading everything in the carriage, they rebuilt their camp on the other side of the river to avoid the pungent blood smell.

...

The next day.

Noel and the others continued their journey to the base of the Supreme Devil Organization, only to find it nowhere to be found. That was right.

The base had been destroyed completely with the only clue being the people that fled earlier.

"What should we do?" Layla asked Noel.

Aurelia looked around. "The area has been cleared up and there are traces of footprints. This should be their base, but it has been destroyed, giving the explanation of the visual to Layla."

"We'll chase after them. There is still a possibility that they bring out more demons, so I'll have you accompany me to visit some villages."

"Don't worry. I have some free time. While I can't do anything to those humans even if they attack you, I will keep all the demons away at the very least."

"That's enough." Noel nodded in agreement.

Now that they had made a decision, the group headed to the south, specifically the village to their south. It wasn't supposed to be a big village according to the mayor.

There were only about forty people residing in this village. Their location was not far from the river, but because of the demons, the city couldn't rely on them. In fact, they thought that the people in this village had died because of the demons.

On the way, Noel couldn't help but turn to Grandell. "Say. How far will you follow my order?"

After the transformation earlier, Grandell answered without hesitation. "I will do anything for you, Sir. Even if it means sacrificing my life."

"Is that so? If I were to order you to kill a little kid?"

"That's..." Grandell tensed up. On the one hand, he knew that the lord was a kind man, who wanted to provide the best for his subjects. On the other hand, that kind of order was sickening.

Noel looked like Anna in the past, trying to kill innocent people. However, Noel knew that the Supreme Devil Organization could disguise themselves as a normal person. They might take advantage of that disguise and wait until Noel lowered his guard before killing him.

The other soldiers seemed to understand the dilemma. However, Grandell gritted his teeth as though he had steeled his resolve. "I will follow your order. Should they resent me, I will let them crush me in the afterlife."

"That's enough." Noel nodded. When he thought about Anna and this kind of scenario, Noel couldn't help but think of another thing.

In their previous lives, Anna actually killed innocent people who had saved her. Yet, there was one more hidden scenario that he had never explored before.

The only reason Anna killed those innocent people was because they saved her, right? If that was the case, it also meant Noel was the one who put her in that situation. And Noel should have gotten the



Affection Medal, which allowed him to use the affection as a method to determine if that person was a spy or not.

This point actually opened up a whole new scenario in Noel's head.

'What if the me in the previous life actually chose that specific location? I might not have been reason right in the head in my previous life, but I didn't think I would be able to harm the innocent without any reasons. In that case, would it mean that there was another reason for me to send Anna there?'

The answer to that question was rather obvious when he asked it during this expedition.

'I can't believe this, but the previous me might use Anna to kill those people. They might be spies from the Supreme Devil Organization. When I think about it, the organization has a lot of small bases, but it's hard to find them. What if they are using a village as their base and live like a normal villager?

'It's obvious that no one is going to bother them. In fact, nobles rarely visit villages a bit farther away from their city unless there is danger. In other words, as long as the organization pays the tax and never sends any distress signal, the village will be left alone. That's probably how they are always under our radar the whole time.

'In that case, the previous me might know that Anna wouldn't be harmed by the Supreme Devil Organization. Anna was a precious tool of the Royal Family and her master, Josephine, was kind of shady. There was a high chance that the organization knew they had to protect Anna.

'So, I lured Anna near that village and played a prank on her, causing her to get mad and lose her reason. When that happened, Anna would go berserk and kill the people around, meaning destroying the base of the organization.'

With Anna causing a ruckus in the organization's base, bad blood between them formed. If this scenario were true, it would mean that Anna had never killed the innocent. It was more like Noel tried his best to prevent her from going in that direction.

'This might be possible, but it's only a theory. There is a chance that it's wrong, and it's not like I can prove it. But if Anna remembers the location where she killed those innocent people... I might be able to raid more organization's bases.'

This thought was a wild idea from Noel when he assumed that the previous life Noel was as smart as the current him. With how his previous life had been leading Anna to this place, the chance of the scenario being true was quite high.

'In that case, let's prove that theory later. I don't have time to raid those bases, but I can actually mark all of them first and raid them after we defend the city from the next attack. This should be enough to mess up the Supreme Devil Organization.'

Noel reached the village with this thought.

He could see a lot of people living in this village. They were completely unscathed from the demons.

"There is a visitor?" An old lady couldn't help but squint her eyes, watching Noel and the others walk to the village.

Noel looked at the old lady while Grandell stepped forward and shouted, "The Lord of Lounstein, Earl Ardagan, is in front of you right now."

"Earl Ardagan?" The old lady raised her eyebrows. Never in her wildest dream would a noble visit this village.

Some other villagers who heard it couldn't help but walk toward the entrance as if they wanted to see the noble. They were still confused, wondering if the visitor was truly a noble or not.

The Saintess couldn't help but frown when she looked around the village. There was a weird smell permeating the air. It might not be apparent to normal people, but her heightened senses made her realize that something was indeed going on.

Noel looked at the old lady as well as the rest of the villagers. There were only a total of fifteen people, so the others might still be working at another place.

This was the time Noel gave an order that dumbstruck everyone.

"Grandell."

"Yes, Sir?!" Grandell remained calm, ready to accept the order.

However, that order was something that made him question the sanity of his own lord. After all, Noel instructed, "Off with her head."

'Resent me.' Grandell's expression turned grim as he unsheathed his sword, slicing the woman's neck.

The soldiers couldn't really watch this happen. In fact, they didn't understand why their lord became someone like this. Was the kindness he had shown this whole time a lie?

Fortunately, the answer was revealed right away when the old lady actually avoided that slash.

Grandell's speed was extremely fast, so it would be hard for a Spirit Master to avoid his slash. Yet, the old lady before them was able to dodge that sharp blade. It only meant one thing. She wasn't a normal villager. There was only one other possibility.

And Noel had seen this through the Affection Medal.

Name: Salavia

Affection: Hatred (80/100)

Description: She will definitely kill you if there is a chance.

Noel had a hard time sensing their Spiritual Energy. With the fact that she was strong enough to avoid that blade, it meant she was a Spirit Grandmaster.

A Grandmaster released so much energy that it would be hard to hide them all. Hence, the organization might have another secret medicine that allowed them to hide their strength or there might be a secret technique they knew nothing about.

They might think that wearing a mask earlier so that Noel didn't see their face and turned into a normal villager would be smart but it wasn't enough to fool Noel.

Noel saw that the other villagers had the same level of hatred, which meant they were from the same group.

The moment the old lady avoided the slash, Noel grabbed her face before she could do anything. Without hesitation, Noel released his fire, burning her entire head.

One less grandmaster was extremely welcome after all.

When people witnessed the old lady's reaction, they understood why Noel ordered the execution.

"They are the devils. Kill them all," said Noel with a cold tone.

Grandell clenched his sword tightly as he got angry at being fooled by these people. The other soldiers also unsheathed their swords and started charging.

The disguised villagers immediately backed off as soon as they knew their covers had been blown away.

Noel released his Undying Phoenix to make them disperse.

Seeing that they had no chance to regroup and defeat Noel, they immediately changed their strategy.  
"Run!"

Yeah. Instead of engaging Noel, they would rather preserve their lives and try it again next time.

Noel never wanted to kill all of them though.

"Grandell. Bring your soldiers and chase the people in that direction. Don't go too far because of my condition."

"Yes, my lord." Grandell instantly rallied the soldiers and began their hunt. Noel flew into the sky, providing some support to Grandell. However, he didn't do much so the Supreme Devil Organization believed that Noel was extremely injured.

It was annoying to let these people survive, but if it meant he could defeat the entire organization, he definitely could endure it.

With this, all the people from the Moon Temple were left behind. They couldn't help but look at Layla, who said, "We will wait here. Don't touch those buildings until the Earl has confirmed that no one from the Supreme Devil Organization is left in this village."

"But don't you think it's better to help people eradicate these pests? I mean, if you consider how they can form a demon army, we might get dragged into the conflict in the near future." Aurelia asked.

"I agree with you, but my answer is still no. We will maintain our neutrality here, not because I don't hate them, but because it's not the time yet."

"Not the time yet?" Aurelia's eyebrows twitched, thinking this was another weird idea of hers.

"Yeah. I'm not sure, but the Ardagan's family is one of the oldest families that survives from the creation of the four kingdoms. When he talked to me, it felt like he had always looked at the Supreme Devil Organization as a stepping stone.fatal."

"Underestimating them is going to be fatal..."

"No. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about something more terrifying that can make the Supreme Devil Organization look like a child's play."

"!!!" Aurelia's expression turned grim. As one of the oldest families, the Ardagan Family might really know something even a lot of nobles didn't know.

Chapter 944 Thoughts

"He actually knew that we were not normal villagers? Wasn't the disguise supposed to be perfect?"

The fleeing members of the organization couldn't help but look back at the village.

"We don't know how he is able to do that. Maybe it's that saintess?"

"We have been told not to attack any member of the Moon Temple as long as they don't harm us. The Moon Temple itself might not be much compared to us, but the people have seen them as neutral. Once we attack them, their allies will run straight at us, which will be troublesome.

"Tsk. We don't have any evidence of them attacking us as well."

"Then, we can only report this matter to Madam Qiel. Noel Ardagan has the ability to find out the true nature of this village."

"Yeah. He might have an information network far better than our original expectation."

"Should we inform the others?"

"Tell them to retreat. He will definitely check every village in his territory, so we will just let him waste his time. Either way, we have completed our original objective."

"Indeed. He was so injured that he couldn't chase after us. Still, he was scary. To think that he could do all that in that condition."

"If he recovered, he might be on par against our Devil Saints except for Sir Alexander."

"We also found out how to break through his city, so let's just be satisfied with that. The main attack has yet to be ready."

The people from the organization agreed and hurriedly retreated from the area.

...

Meanwhile, Grandell had returned to Noel's side with several heads.

"I apologize, my lord. We can only kill about eight of them. The rest have escaped too far."

"That's enough." Noel nodded with a serious expression. Finding the fact that the Supreme Devil Organization disguised themselves as villagers was already one of the most important findings in this expedition. "Let's explore the village."

"Yes, Sir." Grandell hurriedly led the team into a few buildings, while Noel entered the biggest building in this village.

All the houses in this village were truly similar to those in a normal village. However, if they took a close look, there were some demon crystals hidden somewhere in the building.

They not only disguised themselves, but they were also strengthening themselves in this peaceful place.

Fortunately, there was no one hiding. Even his Affection Medal didn't find anything.

At first, Noel thought about a demon lair, but surprisingly, the Demon Hunter Medal didn't pick anything even deep underground.

If they created a demon lair in this place, they would be able to ambush him from behind. Even a hundred demons was enough to create a distraction, let alone a few hundred or thousands.

"Maybe after I killed the noble responsible for the demon's farm, they didn't have any other method that proved to be useful for a demon farm?" Noel had ruined their plans a few times. In fact, the Water Lord was supposed to die back then and his territory was taken to supply a lot of herbs for the organization.

There was also the liquid that strengthened one's body. In addition to the Saintess, he truly messed with a lot of their plans.

'I guess it's good to know that they are severely weakened compared to their previous lives,' thought Noel.

In the previous life, he imagined that the Supreme Devil Organization reigned supreme after building up their strength for a long time. Anna also told him that the Demon Banner Army was severely weakened, unable to stop the full advance of the organization.

During that time, he led a rebellion. It was a successful rebellion, but in the end, he let the Third Prince kill him.

'No, wait. The Third Prince should be related to the Supreme Devil Organization. Back then, I was a peak level Grandmaster, but what if... even that strength is not enough to react to the Third Prince? What if the Third Prince has gotten so strong that I couldn't fight against him?

'I don't think I can imagine the reason for me to sacrifice everything I've built just for the sake of rebuilding it, unless it's a hopeless situation. There is also a possibility of a Demon King getting involved.

'If I take everything into consideration, does that mean even with that strength, I still feel hopeless? Well, a Demon King is equal to a Spirit King. I wasn't a Spirit Transcendence back then, let alone a Spirit King.'

Noel furrowed his eyebrows. On the one hand, everything on the surface looked like it had been under his control. On the other hand, he felt there was a bigger secret that they didn't know.



If the rebellion succeeded, it might mean that they weren't that relevant. But the Royal Family still had a Spirit Transcendence, which was the Marshall. There was no way the rebellion would succeed if he didn't take him down.

In other words, there were still some missing pieces he had to find in order to discover the truth of the rebellion as well as Anna's rebirth.

'Seriously... How many things did I consider to determine that the situation was hopeless?'

Noel sighed. The more he dug deeper, the stronger his enemies would become. In fact, he might have to face a lot of Ancient Level Demons in the future.

'Now that I think about it, Anna told me that I didn't reveal a lot of Advanced Level Runes, right? My Rune Mastery was already at max, but the system still only released Intermediate Runes in the shop. Is it related to my job instead? I have gotten used to fighting with runes, but I still haven't completed the mission.

'Well, I already have knowledge of the runes, but learning how to use them is a different matter. It'll take too long for me to learn them, so it's better to use the system.'

Noel fell into deep thought. It seemed that he had to focus on changing his job from this point onward.

He managed to sort out a lot of things during the expedition. One thing was clear to him. The opponent was far stronger than he thought. Unless he grew even faster, he would be crushed.

"In that case, let's set up a target. According to Anna, we should have about four more years. Hence, I have to become a Spirit King within four years. If I only need to absorb Demon Crystals, it won't be hard. But I have to get a lot of Superior Demon and Ancient Demon Crystals, which will be troublesome unless I go outside the border.

"If that's the case, should I involve the demi-human kingdom? But we don't know the conflict that will happen because of it... Besides, we've been progressing much faster, so the enemies might also hasten their progress.

"We might only have less than four years, if not three years. In that case, I have to become a Spirit Transcendence in one year and a Spirit King two years after that."

Noel's expression turned solemn. The challenge looked impossible when Spirit Transcendence was only a dream for many. Even in all four kingdoms, there were less than ten Spirit Transcendences.

But if he didn't take on this challenge, he wouldn't be able to protect everything. Old Ru's shell had already gone, so there was no more chance for them if they messed it up.

"Sword Skill, Fire and Ice Abilities, Runes, as well as my personal Spiritual Energy Reserve... There are a lot of things I have to do." Noel sighed. Aside from his personal development, he had to take care of all outside matters like Rune Academy, Rune City, and even the Supreme Devil Organization's bases.

He tried to calm himself down by looking around the building. After a few minutes, he exited the building, finding Layla and the others waiting for him. It seemed that they also wanted to explore the building, but they didn't want to enter unless Noel confirmed that no one was inside.

"Go on. Everyone from the organization should have vacated the village." Noel pointed at the door.

"That's good. Aurelia." Layla gave a relieved smile.

"Understood."

As soon as Aurelia and the knights entered the building, Layla couldn't help but ask, "What's wrong? You seem to have a lot of things on your mind."

"Let's just say the situation is messier than I thought." Noel sighed.

"Is that so? If it's about demons, will my Moon Temple be able to handle it?"

"Can your temple handle Ancient Demons?"

"..." Layla fell silent. As she expected, an even stronger demon would appear in the near future. An Ancient Demon might be the least of their worries. After all, the organization could control them and turn the demons into a proper army.

And if that Ancient Demon was a plant type Demon, it would definitely become a much harder opponent to beat.

Layla raised one finger. "If an Ancient Demon comes to your city while I'm still there, they can only destroy the city after I die. As I told you earlier, we fight demons and help people... even if that's the last thing we do."

"Thanks." Noel nodded.

They continued the investigation for a few more hours until they determined the village was safe. Although he had to send another group of knights to remove everything related to the organization before he could allow new villagers to take over, it was good to have another village to utilize.

Without hesitation, they continued to the second village, which wasn't that far from their location. It only took them an hour to reach this village, and surprisingly, this village wasn't empty. In fact, they were real villagers.

When they saw the lord, they kneeled down. Some of them even admired Noel, which was shown by the Affection Medal.

Noel also investigated the village a little bit but found nothing extraordinary. It appeared that the organization didn't touch them in order to make their disguise look more real.

After ensuring that the people were not spies or the organization's members, he continued to the next village before the sun was set.

But this time, the village was completely empty. Unlike the first village, the people from the organization had enough time to bring all their belongings and even destroy all the buildings so that Noel couldn't take advantage of it.

In the end, he had to set up a tent to rest for the night.

It was at this night that Anna sneaked out of the city, heading straight to Noel. The Sword Arbiter was watching her figure disappear into the distance from the top of the wall, ensuring that no one attacked her on her trip.

But since they had eliminated all the spies in the city, no one knew that Anna had disappeared.

Anna didn't know that Noel had a big surprise for her.

Chapter 945 Do I Deserve Happiness?

"So, the Supreme Devil Organizations have fully retreated from this area." Noel furrowed his eyebrows while looking at the map next to the fire.

Layla, Aurelia, and Grandell accompanied him as they had to discuss their next destination.

"Looking at the situation, yes. Why don't we end the expedition here?" Layla asked.

"That's possible, but I have to make sure about it first. Besides, there are times where I have to check every single village in order to utilize them in the future." Noel rejected the idea of going home even though they had done enough.

"I have gone to a lot of cities and villages. From my perspective, building a village isn't that hard. In fact, you can just give the villagers the tools and food. They should be able to create some buildings for their own survival."

"Yeah. But that's only going to give them a normal village. I have some other uses, so we have to check them."

It seemed that Noel didn't plan to tell Layla about their uses. But it was clear that he was building something nasty to fortify his territory.

"If that's the case, should we help? Well, we're going to build a headquarters and a branch here, so it doesn't hurt to go around helping those villages, right?" Layla turned to Aurelia.

"Indeed. Though, I have to return to my group first after this to settle everything down. I will definitely return within four days."

"How about returning now? So, by the time you finish, we're about to go to the main city?"

"But..." Aurelia looked unsure. Noel was gravely injured, the knights might have recovered, but they were not strong enough. She was afraid that the previous situation would happen and she had been instructed to protect the Saintess.

"We're done here. And it's not like they're going to attack us anymore. So, I think we will be fine without you."

Aurelia fell silent for a moment before turning around as she felt a presence coming toward them. "Who are you?"

Noel didn't have a change of expression, fully aware of the person who would be coming to this place. "She is my fiancée. You don't have to worry about it."

"Fiancée?" Aurelia squinted her eyes as Anna's figure appeared from the darkness. Of course, she knew Anna. Unlike Aurelia who had to resort to going to the temple in order to avoid political marriage, Anna had a supportive father and the talent to push off that matter.

More importantly, Anna's name had resounded throughout the kingdom as she became the fiancée of Noel Ardagan.

"See? With her, everything should be fine." Layla smiled, reminding Aurelia about the previous discussion.

Aurelia contemplated. On the one hand, she didn't know Anna's state. On the other hand, Anna was an Arbiter and her strength was extremely powerful. She had the True Spirit Body to boot.

After a few minutes, Aurelia finally nodded her head. "I understand. In that case, I will return to my group and head back immediately."

Aurelia looked at Noel and Anna, saying, "Please take care of the Saintess."

Noel nodded while Anna was a bit confused. After getting his acknowledgement, three pairs of angelic wings appeared on her back as she took off into the sky.

"What's going on?" Anna, who had just arrived, asked while tilting her head.

"It's nothing important. Besides, we have fulfilled most of our objectives, so it will be just an easy ride from here on."

"Is that so? Should I go back?"

"No. It's fine. There are also a few things I want to discuss with you. You should be tired after the journey, so why don't you take a rest?" Noel pointed at his tent.

"Since Aurelia is gone, I can finally get some rest without her reprimanding me. I'm going back to my tent." Layla playfully stretched her body, leaving both of them alone.

Grandell didn't even bother to say anything as he used his full speed to disappear, not wanting to get in between them.

"..." Anna didn't know what they had experienced, but it seemed that she was missing something important.

Noel scratched the back of his head. "Well, it seems that it's fine to rest early tonight. Let's go. I have something important that I want you to know."

Anna still hadn't regained her composure, but she still followed Noel to the tent.

Noel's expression turned serious as he sat down. Anna couldn't help but get tense. It was rare for Noel to be this serious. Even when giving important information, Noel usually just said it in a nonchalant way so that the matter looked easy.

"What's wrong, Noel? You're making me scared right now."

Noel took a deep breath. It wasn't an easy matter to discuss, and it was hard to prove it as well. Besides, this memory had been haunting Anna the whole time, so reminding her of this would definitely impact her heart.

"Before I tell you about it, I hope that you can listen to everything first because it will cause a lot of misunderstandings if you don't."

"I understand." Anna accepted without hesitation.

"It's not like I'm picking your fault, especially after telling you that let's think about the future instead of the past."

"Noel, please." Anna's expression turned solemn. With Noel's warning, she knew that it would be extremely important and that it might hurt her. She just wanted to show him that she was ready to hear it.

"In that case, let's start with a question. Do you remember the places where you murdered all the people that helped you?"

Anna's body shook. Even though she had steeled her resolve, she didn't expect that Noel wanted to discuss this one.

A lot of memories rushed into her head. The images that she wanted to forget started haunting her again even though she hadn't done anything to them in this life.

However, Noel's expression showed a bit of anxiety. He must know that she would react this way, so she tried her best to calm down, answering, "I remember. I keep seeing those memories from time to time, knowing that I have to live on with my own mistakes."

"Do you remember all the places? Or just some of it?"

"Not all, but I think I remember most of them."

"If I ask you to point those locations on the map, can you do it?"

Anna fell silent for a moment. "Tell me about the reason first."

Noel scratched the back of his head. "Well, I don't have concrete proof, but from our experience in the past few days, the chance is quite high. So, when we visited the first village, we found out that the Supreme Devil Organization had used it as a normal village.

"In other words, their members acted like normal villager. I don't know the method, but they seal their Spiritual Energy completely, making them look like normal commoners. The buildings are the same, with hidden demon crystals and other stuff that can be used by people like us.

"After thinking about it, I wonder if I actually sent you to those places because I wanted you to slaughter them."

"Huh? What do you mean?" Anna was a bit confused. Noel was a good and kind person. He might be a little selfish, but he always avoided harming innocent people.

"What I want to say is, those places where I trapped you... They might be the bases of the Supreme Devil Organizations. Just like how they created a village to disguise themselves, those places might be the same. With your connection to the Royal Family, which was familiar with the organization, you wouldn't be killed by them.

"In fact, they would heal you. Knowing your personality, you would kill those people after receiving their help. This way, I could somehow train you while eliminating people from the organization."



"!!!" Anna trembled. She never thought about this possibility.

In the past, she had been avoiding this memory because it was her gravest sin. She often looked at her hands covered in blood and a few faces that constantly appeared, reminding her of the massacre.

And this time, Noel came up with the possibility that the people she killed might not be innocent.

"I mean, if you have to describe my actions, shouldn't it look like I was training you and protecting you? After all, there were a lot of opportunities for me to kill you."

"I can't deny it." Anna furiously nodded. Her voice was shaking as she couldn't believe it.

"That's why, if possible, I want you to give me their locations. While we're currently busy and have no way to visit those places to prove this theory, we can go there in a few months. The only way to confirm that theory is through my medal."

Anna looked down. She couldn't help but look at her hands. The memories had affected her sight, making her look at her clean hands as though they were covered in blood.

A few skeletal hands emerged from the grounds as skulls were showing their faces, reminding her that she had killed them even though they had helped her.

And Noel said that it might not be true and her hands might be cleaner than she expected.

"I can't promise that all of them are Supreme Devil Organization bases. And you said that you didn't remember all of them, so..." Noel couldn't continue his words when he saw Anna's expression.

On the one hand, she wanted to know the truth. On the other hand, would she change after knowing this truth? Did she deserve to be this happy?

Even if those people were people from the organization, it didn't change the fact that her nature was brutal, ruthless, and insane.

Noel moved closer to her and just hugged her, burying her face in his chest. "I know that this is not my place to say it, but I think it's fine now. Right now is different from the past. I don't have the memory of it, but I know for sure that we're together now.

"I might not fully know your current feelings, but I do understand your sentiment. If it's not much to ask, I hope that you will allow me to help you shoulder this burden. You are not alone anymore, Anna."

Anna's body was shaking and Noel could hear her little sobbing. Even though they had no proof yet, the possibility alone lifted a lot of burden from her shoulders.

In the past, Noel might have wanted to say this word. Unfortunately, he couldn't really utter those words because they were enemies.

And when she thought about how protective and caring Noel was, both in the present and in the past, she couldn't help but wonder what she had done in her life to deserve him.

"I... Do I... really deserve this kind of hope? If this is just a dream, please I just want to wake up. What if this hope just turns into a nightmare..."

"You have your second chance, and you've been fixing all your mistakes. No one is perfect. Even in this life, you've made a lot of mistakes, but you also strive forward to become a better person the next day.

"Sometimes, we have to let go of the burden in our hearts to see what's in front of us. Even my father said that if everyone doesn't have a second chance, there won't be any punishment other than the death sentence.

"My stance has never changed. I hate the past you, who was merciless, but it doesn't stop me from loving the current you. It's just... I want to do something more for the person I love. If the truth is harsh, I will shoulder that burden with you. If the truth is like a dream, I hope that you won't change... I hope you continue to become a better person."

Anna wrapped her hands on Noel's back while saying, "If you keep doing this, I keep asking if I deserve someone like you..."

"Others' opinions don't matter. Rather than such a vague question, I'm going to say this one thing. You are and will always be the one beside me, there won't be anyone else."

#### Chapter 946 Six Problems

When Noel opened his eyes, he noticed the sunlight lighting up the tent. After telling Anna about the possibility, they ended up in that position for a while. It was a bad memory for Anna, so she became a bit exhausted and fell asleep.

Now that he had woken up, he realized that Anna was still hugging him as if not wanting to let him go.

Even though they had been sleeping together, it wasn't like they touched each other very often. It was more like Noel being a bit more conservative due to the current situation.

Anna was extremely beautiful, so if he stepped a bit too far, he was afraid that he couldn't stop. It would become more convenient for one reason after another.

That was why he was slightly uncomfortable when they were like this. It was different from what he did last night since it was to comfort her while this one was filled with intimacy as if seducing him to take the next step.

Noel took a deep breath to calm his mind before removing Anna's hand gently and escaping outside.

Layla seemed to be the first to notice him as she gave a cheeky smile to tease Noel.

Noel rolled his eyes before searching for Grandell to get ready for departure. The sooner they complete it, the better. He could spend the rest of their time learning from the Sword Arbiter.

Anna, on the other hand, was pretty embarrassed. After meeting the original body's soul, she had sworn to become a bit more proactive in showing her affection. It was quite exciting and embarrassing at the same time, but in the end, she thought it wasn't that bad.

After packing their luggage, they began their next trip. According to Noel's prediction, they should be able to visit the remaining five villages within the next two days.

On the carriage, Noel asked something that he couldn't yesterday. "So, we're going to fight a demon army. It's like fighting a normal army, but with each soldier having complete obedience and disregard for their lives.

"Right now, I'm encountering six problems. I need your input." Noel looked at Anna as though asking about her experience in the previous life.

"If I can answer them, sure."

"So, the first problem will be about the corpses. The demons can stack on top of their dead comrades to climb the wall. I think there is one rune that I currently master that can fix the problem, but can you think of another rune?" Noel asked.

"Hmm. The bodies are going to be heavy, so you need firepower instead of constant movement. Are we thinking about the same rune?"

"I believe so."

"In that case, I think it's good to use that rune for the time being."

Noel and Anna didn't mention which rune since Layla was with them. It wasn't that they didn't trust Layla, the runes were still the Ardagan Family's secret, so it was better if they didn't mention it casually in front of other people. At least, they could slightly elevate the rune's worth in people's eyes.

"Then, the second problem will be regarding the flying beast. I'm thinking about creating the Ballista to shoot them down. Maybe I will reinforce them with runes, but the demons are smarter in the army because there is a demon giving an order. I'm afraid this is not enough."

Anna thought for a moment. "Why don't we create our own flying squads?"

"Flying squads?" Noel contemplated. Anna must be thinking about using the flying plate to soar into the sky. If they had some elites on that board, they could definitely fight the enemies in the sky. However, there were a lot of risks in this plan.

First of all, creating this squad would take time. Then, if one of them fell down, they had to have another thing that could save them from that height. In addition, fighting in the sky that way was more inflexible than having a pair of wings.

Still, Noel didn't dismiss the idea easily. He knew that this concept was useful, not only for defense but also for scouting. They could easily fly back and forth like a bird. If it was more advanced, there was a chance that this might be a new way to deliver a message instead of a bird. With people like them, instead of a small piece of paper attached to the bird, they could even bring their whole luggage with them.

This was why, if he carefully prepared them, there was a chance that they would be useful, whether on the battlefield or on a daily basis.

"I'll think about it. I'm not sure if it can be done for the incoming invasion, but I'll make some preparations." Noel nodded with a serious expression.

Layla, who had been listening to their conversation, couldn't help but think, 'Flying Squad? Like Aurelia? Flying ability is extremely rare and if ordinary people can use it, there will be a lot of benefits. It seems that runes are more versatile than I originally thought.'

Noel continued, "Then, the next problem would be the amphibians. Since we're about to create a canal to the river, some demons are bound to attack us from there. Even if we create a gate, they will definitely destroy it. Well, that part is still under construction, so for now, it's going to be defended by her barrier."

"I'm not very sure about this. I mean, if they're going to stay underwater, it's going to be troublesome since the water might restrict our firepower. We also want to build a new method of transport, right? We have to clear the water as much as possible."

"That's the problem. I need a method to kill the demons under the water."

"I don't think I can provide you with an answer for that one. I mean, we're going to fortify our city with a ditch and fill it with water, right?"

"Yeah."

"Why don't we just let the land demons step on them and fill that ditch? This way, they won't be able to take advantage of the water."

"That's possible, but it needs more fortification. I mean, right now, we won't have any ditches. Think about the first problem."

"Ah!" Anna nodded in understanding. If they created a ditch, the runes wouldn't be able to launch the demon corpses.

"Well, we can think about this problem later." Noel sighed. He didn't expect to get all the answers anyway.

Anna tried to recall what Noel used to fortify the waterway, but she didn't have much idea. In fact, the normal runes on the walls had been covered with the demon's hide so that no one could see the patterns. Even if they did, Noel had painted some other patterns so that they would have a hard time recognizing the runes.

There were some other fortifications, but she was never present when the organization attacked Noel. After all, there was no reason for her to openly join the organization to attack him.

"Then, the fourth problem is the ground. We will have a lot of demons appearing in our city through the ground. Maybe demons like ants, centipedes, or other animal-infested demons."

Anna asked, "Should we reinforce the ground?"

"I mean, how? The wall is already very expensive to build, if we add the floor, the cost is going to be enormous. Besides, we don't have a lot of time."

"Hardening runes?"

"It won't be enough to stop a Peak Level Demon. It will be bad if a Superior Demon is involved. Remember that worm demon?"

"Ah! That's indeed terrible. But we can't afford to have the city overrun by demons. Maybe using other runes?" Anna fell silent for a moment, remembering something. "That's right. I'm about to visit that place. There was a person who fought against a demon army, right?"

"!!!" Noel remembered that his ancestors had indeed fought the demon army. Unlike the Supreme Devil Organization, this army was led directly by a Demon King. If not for the fact that the Demon King managed to lure Alexander, the Ardagan Family wouldn't have fallen.

They managed to deduce that the place where Old Ru resided was their ancestral land. Noel indeed remembered a few ruined buildings even though most of them had been reduced to the ground. It seemed Anna would take this chance to find out how their ancestors reinforced the ground.

"I think that's a good idea. Please take a look at it... I'm not sure if it can be implemented or not, so I'll think about a secondary solution later."

"Yes." Anna nodded. "How about the fifth problem?"

"It's their behavior. They can easily sacrifice themselves or others as long as they can drag us down. This kind of fighting style will definitely put us at a disadvantage."

"I guess we need more rune-powered weapons. Ballistas might be useful for air defense, but we need more stuff to fight the majority of the demons. Since we'll be staying on top of the wall, this problem shouldn't be too much."

"So, play it safe?"

"Yeah. But didn't you say Douglas's blueprint had a better fortification than normal design?"

"That's true. I guess we will create more weapons to ensure our success. Roel will be busy from now on." Noel nodded in agreement.

"I believe he is comfortable with that. I mean, his eyes are always sparkling whenever he creates a new weapon, especially with the runes he has just learned."

"I can't deny it. In that case, let's talk about the last problem. At the end of the day, we have to be careful of their number. I wonder how many Superior Demons they are planning to bring this time... I'm not sure whether they will bring an Ancient Demon or not... Besides, the Devil Saints will definitely make their moves."

"Devil Saints, huh... Are we going to fight that monster?" Anna's eyebrows twitched.

"No. He would probably fight against the commanders so that the Demon Banner Army couldn't help us. But Qiel and Laufey will definitely come after us."

"You and Dimitri can take on Qiel and Laufey. I can probably join the fight if we want to kill them. But that only leaves Howard, Layla, and a paladin in the city. Howard is probably busy commanding our soldiers, so only two Grandmasters left."

"Yeah. They might even come with five Superior Demons this time with a few tens of thousands of demons, not to mention numerous Advanced Level Demons and Peak Level Demons. The only way to stop them is with our firepower that has been reinforced by runes."

"Do we need more people? I mean, I can ask for reinforcement from my father."

"That's what I want, but I think we should request your father to keep the Arbiters in check instead of reinforcing us."

"Fair enough. In that case, we should ask the other side."

"Are you talking about my mother's family or the Tower Association?"



"The Tower Association."

"Hmm... I guess I should sacrifice a bit to invite them. If only the city is fully developed, I don't need to worry about an invasion of this scale."

"Yeah. There should be a few elders from the association that we can move to, right?"

"I think. I will also ask the Demon Banner Army for reinforcement, but we can't expect much." Noel sighed. He had a headache thinking about all these six problems. And he had to handle other work as well.

Anna asked, "Still, what's the objective you want to achieve in this battle? Just defending our territory?"

"Of course not." Noel made the gesture of chopping his neck as if he wanted to kill someone. "A Devil Saint... if possible, Qiel. If they lose their brain, it's going to be hard for them to act rashly."

"I see. Well, we have to work hard on rune weapons. This is the only way for us to win against them."

"Yeah. We'll be using the rest of the time here to list out and if possible make some designs for the rune weapons."

Anna agreed.

Layla couldn't help but shake her head helplessly. She thought that she could help Noel defend the territory with her barrier. But it seemed that she had underestimated Noel's ambition.

She had to adjust her plans a little bit.

#### Chapter 947 Settling the Rest

The expedition went as everyone expected. The enemies had completely pulled back. When they encountered villagers, Noel didn't say anything, indicating that they were normal villagers.

Although it was a shame that he couldn't destroy more bases, he finally wrapped up the expedition and returned to the city.

It had only been a few days, but the city had undergone an amazing transformation.

A lot of buildings that hadn't been rebuilt previously already had a sign of foundation. The water storage was already half finished, which would be amazing once it was completed. The mayor had even planned for the other water storages, believing that they would be able to build everything within two to three months.

At the same time, they knew that their lord had taken care of the demons around the river. They felt ashamed that their lord had to kill a lot of demons in his current condition. At the same time, they couldn't help but admire the lord for doing his job tirelessly.

The kids couldn't help but aspire to be someone like him. The bards were singing his wonderful tale.

The gloomy mood that had been overwhelming the city had completely gone, replaced by a joyous atmosphere filled with hope.

Noel returned to the mayor's mansion first as he had to take all the reports so that he could use this experience for his main city.

The mayor explained, "I believe that the water facility will be able to pull a lot of people into this city. So, once we're done with the reconstruction, we will be able to gain a lot of profits from the land."

Noel thought for a moment. "What about the current citizens?"

"Of course, they will be treated well. They are our current citizens who rebuilt this city, so I think it's fair to grant them a building of their own. And it's going to be near the mayor's mansion or water storage, depending on their needs."

"That's good for now. However, don't open up for the migration yet. The current situation is troublesome since a lot of people are eyeing rune technology. Even with the help of the Sword Arbiter, we don't know what can happen."

"If that's the case, when do we open the migration? We have to start filling up the city soon. At least for workers, so we can speed up the reconstruction." The mayor asked while rubbing his nose, slightly worried about their speed.

"For workers, it's going to be one month from now. At the very least, I want the main water storage to be completed. This way, it won't be easily destroyed or ruined. The well should have been better equipped as well. We will open up the migration for workers before constructing the smaller water storages all around the city."

"I understand." The mayor didn't find one month too long. He could understand Noel's worry, so he agreed with Noel's decision immediately.

"What about the wall?" Noel asked.

"The wall will take a bit longer, but it shouldn't be more than two months. The damage is quite severe after all."

"Alright. Make the schedule for the other walls as well. I want them to be completed before the Sword Arbiter leaves the city. And by the time the Moon Temple's branch has been constructed, the city will have a protector from the demon. It can be said that the people don't have to worry about the threat from those demons anymore. And I think you know what to do after this." Noel smirked.

"Since safety has been guaranteed, the property price will skyrocket. It'll be the time for us to open for migration, introducing a city that has a lot of rune technologies. Don't worry, Sir. I will definitely showcase those runes so that the main city will look even more mystical in those people's eyes."

"Haha. Sorry for making you do it... But at the very least, I want the citizens in this city to have a smile on their faces first." Noel chuckled.

"Don't worry, Sir. It's the least I can do after everything you've done for the city." The mayor nodded furiously.

It had been a while since Noel first came to this city. The mayor, whose complexion was pale and body was thin, seemed to have improved significantly. He still looked tired, but his eyes were brimming with energy and excitement, which he was happy with.

"For now, you don't have to reinforce the city wall with Spirit Enchantments. Since safety is still guaranteed and no one is going to harm the city where they can experience a new technology, the city shouldn't be attacked for a while. After I deal with everything in the main city, I will send some people to reinforce the wall with runes instead of Spirit Enchantments."

"Understood. There are still two problems, Sir. Before this city can produce any profits, we should make the citizens happy. Although I feel ashamed for asking you, I believe we need more funds."

"Don't worry. I will be sending the funds soon. I have arranged it through the Moon Temple, which won't be attacked by people. What is the second problem?"

"That would be a tax exemption. To reward the citizens for working hard, I believe we should grant them tax exemption for one or two years."

"I don't think that's a problem. We can still make a lot of money from the property alone. All the convenience that the city will provide in the future should increase the price far higher, so I want you to keep an eye on it, making sure we don't lose too much."

"Yes, Sir." The mayor accepted the task.

"Is there anything else?" Noel asked while looking at the rest of the report.

"No. The rest are just small matters. I can take care of it myself. During this time, I hope that my lord can rest to recover from your injuries." The mayor lowered his head, pleading with Noel to take care of his own body.

Noel smiled. Even though he was already fine, he still had to act this way. So he accepted his offers and said, "Alright. I will let you handle the rest."

"Thank you, Sir." The mayor made a big smile.

Noel left the office and walked toward the backyard, where he found the Sword Arbiter with Anna.

"What's wrong? It's not like you." The Sword Arbiter asked while furrowing his eyebrows. "Your sword is wavering as if you're not the one I fought a few days ago."

Anna furrowed her eyebrows. She was still Anna, but she indeed felt the impact of Noel's theory as well as the original body's soul to the point where she always thought about visiting Old Ru's place to sort this out.

Anna shook her head. "My mind is just slightly disturbed. I'm sorry for showing such a state."

Duke Lorelei squinted his eyes, feeling something was weird. It seemed that something had happened during the expedition, so he ended up stopping here since Noel should be the one to solve this matter.

He raised his head, finding Noel watching on the balcony.

"What's wrong? Do you want to have a spar too?"

"I think I will just ask you a few questions today."

"About what?"

"There are things that I want to know about the swords. I have been thinking about making progress with my sword, but it feels like I have to improve my own sword to reach the same level as my elements and runes before I can start infusing the sword into my fighting style."

Noel had been thinking seriously about the job change. With his current achievement in the runes, he thought that the sword was the one hindering his advancement, considering it was the weakest in his repertoire.

The Sword Arbiter thought for a moment and waved his hand. "In that case, get down."

Noel and Anna spent the next few days in peace. In the morning, they would have a spar with the Sword Arbiter. After that, they continued to supervise the progress of the city while greeting the citizens.

Noel and Anna were soon to be known as down-to-earth rulers who didn't hesitate to help their citizens directly. They were admired by the citizens because they worked tirelessly in their 'condition.'

The Saintess, on the other hand, had been spending her time moving around the city to experience everything Noel had built so far. Everything looked amazing, but only some of them could be implemented in the Moon Temple. She was also curious what kind of runes Noel planned for the main city.

Meanwhile, Aurelia actually came back as promised. She had brought her luggage, especially clothes for her stay in the main city.

The Sword Arbiter spent these few days training Noel and Anna wholeheartedly. Only after they were gone would he begin learning rune technology.

Last but not least, the blacksmiths. The ones who had been working the whole time might be the blacksmith since they had been fulfilling the demands for construction and Noel's special request for the rune technology.

Finally, four days after Noel's return, they received a letter from the main city. The letter requested that Noel return as quickly as possible since they were ready to open the first batch of migrations. Since Noel had told Dimitri that he would personally inspect those people to avoid spies, Dimitri sent the message stating that the first batch would arrive within four days through their channels in the southeast.

Dimitri took advantage of the relationship between Noel and the Greenwood Kingdom to use their border to transport all these people so that they could arrive without getting attacked along the way.

So, Noel immediately informed everyone that they would be returning the next day and that information was soon spread not only to Anna and the others, but to the citizens as well.

#### Chapter 948 Settling the Rest

The expedition went as everyone expected. The enemies had completely pulled back. When they encountered villagers, Noel didn't say anything, indicating that they were normal villagers.

Although it was a shame that he couldn't destroy more bases, he finally wrapped up the expedition and returned to the city.

It had only been a few days, but the city had undergone an amazing transformation.

A lot of buildings that hadn't been rebuilt previously already had a sign of foundation. The water storage was already half finished, which would be amazing once it was completed. The mayor had even planned for the other water storages, believing that they would be able to build everything within two to three months.

At the same time, they knew that their lord had taken care of the demons around the river. They felt ashamed that their lord had to kill a lot of demons in his current condition. At the same time, they couldn't help but admire the lord for doing his job tirelessly.

The kids couldn't help but aspire to be someone like him. The bards were singing his wonderful tale.

The gloomy mood that had been overwhelming the city had completely gone, replaced by a joyous atmosphere filled with hope.

Noel returned to the mayor's mansion first as he had to take all the reports so that he could use this experience for his main city.

The mayor explained, "I believe that the water facility will be able to pull a lot of people into this city. So, once we're done with the reconstruction, we will be able to gain a lot of profits from the land."

Noel thought for a moment. "What about the current citizens?"

"Of course, they will be treated well. They are our current citizens who rebuilt this city, so I think it's fair to grant them a building of their own. And it's going to be near the mayor's mansion or water storage, depending on their needs."

"That's good for now. However, don't open up for the migration yet. The current situation is troublesome since a lot of people are eyeing rune technology. Even with the help of the Sword Arbiter, we don't know what can happen."

"If that's the case, when do we open the migration? We have to start filling up the city soon. At least for workers, so we can speed up the reconstruction." The mayor asked while rubbing his nose, slightly worried about their speed.

"For workers, it's going to be one month from now. At the very least, I want the main water storage to be completed. This way, it won't be easily destroyed or ruined. The well should have been better equipped as well. We will open up the migration for workers before constructing the smaller water storages all around the city."

"I understand." The mayor didn't find one month too long. He could understand Noel's worry, so he agreed with Noel's decision immediately.

"What about the wall?" Noel asked.

"The wall will take a bit longer, but it shouldn't be more than two months. The damage is quite severe after all."

"Alright. Make the schedule for the other walls as well. I want them to be completed before the Sword Arbiter leaves the city. And by the time the Moon Temple's branch has been constructed, the city will have a protector from the demon. It can be said that the people don't have to worry about the threat from those demons anymore. And I think you know what to do after this." Noel smirked.

"Since safety has been guaranteed, the property price will skyrocket. It'll be the time for us to open for migration, introducing a city that has a lot of rune technologies. Don't worry, Sir. I will definitely showcase those runes so that the main city will look even more mystical in those people's eyes."



"Haha. Sorry for making you do it... But at the very least, I want the citizens in this city to have a smile on their faces first." Noel chuckled.

"Don't worry, Sir. It's the least I can do after everything you've done for the city." The mayor nodded furiously.

It had been a while since Noel first came to this city. The mayor, whose complexion was pale and body was thin, seemed to have improved significantly. He still looked tired, but his eyes were brimming with energy and excitement, which he was happy with.

"For now, you don't have to reinforce the city wall with Spirit Enchantments. Since safety is still guaranteed and no one is going to harm the city where they can experience a new technology, the city shouldn't be attacked for a while. After I deal with everything in the main city, I will send some people to reinforce the wall with runes instead of Spirit Enchantments."

"Understood. There are still two problems, Sir. Before this city can produce any profits, we should make the citizens happy. Although I feel ashamed for asking you, I believe we need more funds."

"Don't worry. I will be sending the funds soon. I have arranged it through the Moon Temple, which won't be attacked by people. What is the second problem?"

"That would be a tax exemption. To reward the citizens for working hard, I believe we should grant them tax exemption for one or two years."

"I don't think that's a problem. We can still make a lot of money from the property alone. All the convenience that the city will provide in the future should increase the price far higher, so I want you to keep an eye on it, making sure we don't lose too much."

"Yes, Sir." The mayor accepted the task.

"Is there anything else?" Noel asked while looking at the rest of the report.

"No. The rest are just small matters. I can take care of it myself. During this time, I hope that my lord can rest to recover from your injuries." The mayor lowered his head, pleading with Noel to take care of his own body.

Noel smiled. Even though he was already fine, he still had to act this way. So he accepted his offers and said, "Alright. I will let you handle the rest."

"Thank you, Sir." The mayor made a big smile.

Noel left the office and walked toward the backyard, where he found the Sword Arbiter with Anna.

"What's wrong? It's not like you." The Sword Arbiter asked while furrowing his eyebrows. "Your sword is wavering as if you're not the one I fought a few days ago."

Anna furrowed her eyebrows. She was still Anna, but she indeed felt the impact of Noel's theory as well as the original body's soul to the point where she always thought about visiting Old Ru's place to sort this out.

Anna shook her head. "My mind is just slightly disturbed. I'm sorry for showing such a state."

Duke Lorelei squinted his eyes, feeling something was weird. It seemed that something had happened during the expedition, so he ended up stopping here since Noel should be the one to solve this matter.

He raised his head, finding Noel watching on the balcony.

"What's wrong? Do you want to have a spar too?"

"I think I will just ask you a few questions today."

"About what?"

"There are things that I want to know about the swords. I have been thinking about making progress with my sword, but it feels like I have to improve my own sword to reach the same level as my elements and runes before I can start infusing the sword into my fighting style."

Noel had been thinking seriously about the job change. With his current achievement in the runes, he thought that the sword was the one hindering his advancement, considering it was the weakest in his repertoire.

The Sword Arbiter thought for a moment and waved his hand. "In that case, get down."

Noel and Anna spent the next few days in peace. In the morning, they would have a spar with the Sword Arbiter. After that, they continued to supervise the progress of the city while greeting the citizens.

Noel and Anna were soon to be known as down-to-earth rulers who didn't hesitate to help their citizens directly. They were admired by the citizens because they worked tirelessly in their 'condition.'

The Saintess, on the other hand, had been spending her time moving around the city to experience everything Noel had built so far. Everything looked amazing, but only some of them could be implemented in the Moon Temple. She was also curious what kind of runes Noel planned for the main city.

Meanwhile, Aurelia actually came back as promised. She had brought her luggage, especially clothes for her stay in the main city.

The Sword Arbiter spent these few days training Noel and Anna wholeheartedly. Only after they were gone would he begin learning rune technology.

Last but not least, the blacksmiths. The ones who had been working the whole time might be the blacksmith since they had been fulfilling the demands for construction and Noel's special request for the rune technology.

Finally, four days after Noel's return, they received a letter from the main city. The letter requested that Noel return as quickly as possible since they were ready to open the first batch of migrations. Since Noel

had told Dimitri that he would personally inspect those people to avoid spies, Dimitri sent the message stating that the first batch would arrive within four days through their channels in the southeast.

Dimitri took advantage of the relationship between Noel and the Greenwood Kingdom to use their border to transport all these people so that they could arrive without getting attacked along the way.

So, Noel immediately informed everyone that they would be returning the next day and that information was soon spread not only to Anna and the others, but to the citizens as well.

Chapter 949 Spiritual Energency?

"Dimitri!" Howard stormed inside Dimitri's room.

"Again? Why won't anyone give me a break and just let me finish my work?" Dimitri sighed.

"I just want to say that the lord has returned." Howard pointed at the back as if he were wondering if he wanted to go together.

Dimitri was shameless enough to turn into a shadow that instantly disappeared from the room. Even Howard was speechless that Dimitri escaped right after that complaint. "Is he serious?"

Outside, Noel and the others had finally reached the city. Instead of cheering for Noel, they were worried when they saw Noel was covered with bandages. Even Anna had a lot of injuries on her body, showing that they had a rough time when they left.

Of course, Khalid had arrived in this city a few days prior, telling all the pillars about Noel's current condition.

"My lord. What happened to you?!" Charlotte looked worried, even though she was just acting to make it more dramatic.

"I'm fine. It's just some injuries." Noel smiled wryly like he didn't want Charlotte to worry.

Dimitri appeared next to Noel. "Master."

"Oh, Dimitri?! I'm back. How is the situation over here?"

"Everything is progressing smoothly. But your body..."

"It's fine. I can't fight, but I can still work like normal. You don't have to worry about my condition. It will heal over time." Noel chuckled while looking around. "It seems that the progress has been quite massive in the past few days."

"Yes, Master. But you must be tired from your trip, so I believe you should get some rest first." Dimitri said those words so that the people knew that Noel was injured. And he would simply bring the matter to Noel after they dispersed.

"That's..." Noel scratched the back of his head.

"Please, I insist."

"Alright, alright." After agreeing to Dimitri's request, Noel waved his hands to the others while moving toward their house.

He had to discuss Anna's departure with Dimitri as well. Though, the most excited people were Roel and Douglas, fully knowing that they were going to have a lot of things to do, which was tiring but also exciting.

Aurelia took a look at the city. It was surprisingly nice. Even though it was barely constructed, the buildings had a nice design. The road was smooth and the main street was wide enough to make people cross it to feel the majestic atmosphere of the city.

But what made her confused was the wall in the north. The wall looked like a single corner of an ordinary city, but when she took another look at it, she realized that the width wasn't enough for the building. In other words, Noel was using a different design than what most nobles used.

"He is truly mysterious. I have heard that the city is only less than a month old, but I can feel the trust from the citizens. They don't seem to be treated badly here. What can you see, Aurelia?" Layla whispered.

"The city is good. Everything looks perfect on the surface. But I don't know if this will continue. After all, once the city grows, so does the slum. I'm afraid we'll see it in the future."

"We can't save everyone. So, the only thing we can do is provide help to the best of our abilities. No one is perfect anyway." Layla obviously understood that the more the city grew, the bigger the gap between people's social status. "Still, it's a quite nice city to live in, right?"

"Certainly," Aurelia admitted without hesitation. If the city were completed, she would love to live here, especially with the rumored rune technology.

They followed Noel to his house. Instead of going to bed, Noel dropped his act and just sat down in the living room, asking, "So, how is the progress?"

"There are some small problems, but we should be able to handle them. As for the migrants, we'll be finding them soon. Though... the others probably have more questions than me." Dimitri glanced to the back, seeing the hungry faces of Roel and Douglas. They seemed to be ready to devour Noel alive once Dimitri was done.

"Alright. Let me introduce you to them. She is Layla, the Saintess of the Moon Temple. I've made an agreement with the Moon Temple and will construct their headquarters here. The one next to her is Paladin Aurelia."

"I have heard about the report. Constructing the Moon Temple's headquarters might be good, but I have to warn them that if they dare to do anything funny, I will rally all the pillars to expel them out of this city." Dimitri looked at Layla and Aurelia coldly.

"Oh my. Mr. Dimitri is as strict as usual. Mr. Luke Ardagan was kind enough to work with us a lot in the past." Layla smirked. Since Luke helped a lot of people, it wasn't surprising to know that he had worked together with the Moon Temple. It was probably why the Moon Temple agreed so quickly to their demands and even sent their paladin to help right away.

"Do you mind sending them to their place?"

"Certainly." Dimitri turned to them and said, "Both ladies. We have prepared a place for you. I hope you can follow me."

Dimitri's tone was a bit strict as if he didn't take no for an answer. It seemed that Dimitri had quite a headache whenever he was working with the Moon Temple.

As soon as Dimitri left, both Roel and Douglas moved toward Noel and slammed the table, saying the same thing. "My lord. We need to discuss a lot of things."

"Roel! I'm first!" Douglas gritted his teeth.

"What did you say? I should be first."

"I have worked for the previous Ardagan Family, so I should go first."

"Shouldn't the seniors give way to their juniors first?"

Both of them glared at each other.

Noel sighed. "Roel. You can talk to Anna first regarding the things we've created."

Although reluctant, he agreed with the arrangement. He was quite curious about the details of everything they had made, especially the automatic carriage.

Meanwhile, Douglas hurriedly opened the design of the city. "After hearing about the report, I have made a slight adjustment to the city's design. Please take a look at it."

Noel couldn't understand everything, but he could see the giant plaza in the middle of the city that was connected to each city's pointy tips of the star-shaped wall. His mansion was placed slightly to the north.

He could see several giant lands that had been changed like the main storage.

"Are you going to build the water storage in the center?" Noel asked while pointing at the plaza.

"No. I think we need to create two storage systems just for redundancy. The building might be targeted, so it's best to have a backup. However, I'm suggesting that we build underneath the ground."

"Huh? Aren't we supposed to use it to place it higher?" Noel frowned.

"That's what I think too, but this one is a backup, so if we place it above the ground, it will be targeted like the main facility. On the other hand, we can still supply the city with water as long as we use the same technique to pump the water up. It will be costly, but this will only be used during an emergency."

"Interesting. But I don't think that's the only reason, right?"

"Yes, Sir. We're thinking about camouflaging this facility with two giant freezer underground. This is mainly the city's storage. We'll supply the storage with ice during the winter, allowing us to preserve food. While we can kill demons for food, I'm still a bit concerned about the logistics. For example, what if the enemy uses the demons to blockade our paths? Even if we can kill some demons, it will be troublesome if they coordinate with them to lure us or anything. Hence, we're going to make an emergency supply underneath the city."

Noel frowned. "This is going to be a big burden for our budget."

"Not necessarily so. Right now, there are no buildings on top of these areas, so we can excavate the hole required for the facility easily. I understand that their creation will put some burden, but I believe it's not as big as you think."

"Hmm..." Noel thought for a moment.



"Ahem!" Roel suddenly coughed to grab their attention. "I happen to overhear your plan about the giant freezer. This is one of my questions. My lord, do you happen to have a rune that can preserve temperature? Maybe isolating things or something?"

"Why do you ask?" Noel was a bit confused. Roel seemed to have another plan in his mind that might take advantage of the giant freezer.

"In the past, my friend once said that the previous civilization was very mysterious. They had a weird gadget and things like that, but what made me curious the most was actually the technology in their houses.

"According to my friend, every house seemed to have a weird lamp that would provide the house with the necessary light during the night. When I heard the concept of the Rune Lamp, I thought about providing the lamp to everyone. The people could do their work during the night this way.

"Then, there is also a thin fan that seems to be attached to the ceiling or walls. It seems to be used to cool down the house.

"And one last thing... It's about a weird item near the kitchen. According to my friends, it stores spices or any organic things like food. So, when Douglas mentioned a giant freezer, I thought about preserving the coldness to re-invent these technologies."

Roel didn't know that he was just talking about a bulb, a fan, and a refrigerator. But it seemed that he wanted to apply the concept to make an even better living environment.

"Well..." Noel closed his eyes for a moment, recalling all the information about the runes.

Of course, there was no way he had any rune that could be useful in his current repertoire, so he directly accessed all the information planted in his head.

"I actually wanted to ask something, which might need to be done while we're building the water facility." Douglas raised his hand. "When you look at the previous civilization, it seems that they had another form of energy that was used to power every item inside.

"On the other hand, we're currently taking advantage of the rune system to provide us with anything. However, I believe that this is extremely inefficient. In the future, I believe that not all citizens will have the money to afford demon crystals. After all, they might use that money to give their children an education or things for survival.

"Hence, Balott asked me for a way to reduce the cost significantly. Instead of letting them buy the Demon Crystals, why don't we manage the facility that provides them with Spiritual Energy needed to supply those rune technologies?

"When I asked Roel about it..." Douglas stopped, letting Roel be the one to answer that question.

"We're thinking about whether we should grind the Demon Crystals. The demon crystals turned gray after we absorbed all the energy, making them look like normal rocks. So, we're wondering if you can embed a rune to restore the energy back, maybe from the air or another demon crystal. If it's possible, we might be able to transport the Spiritual Energy by grinding these crystals and turn them into a cable or conductive rod.

"This way, we only need to generate all that energy inside one facility and distribute that energy to all the buildings. This way, citizens only have to pay taxes to have access to all the available technologies.

"Though, there is a problem since there might be people who don't want the rune technology. While we don't have the solution for it yet, I think the people's curiosity about rune technology will make them not mind having their houses powered by Spiritual Energy, for now."

Noel looked down, falling into deep thought. "That's quite an interesting idea, albeit extremely complicated."

Chapter 950 Finalizing the Concept

Noel looked at the entire project and couldn't help but ask, "How is the fund situation?"

"Far from enough for such an ambitious plan. But this is the only way to cut the biggest cost. If we wait until the city is completed, the cost will skyrocket." Douglas explained.

"How much is the cost compared to our current fund? And how much will it increase if we wait?"

"The current fund? It's about two times... This is the first, so maybe higher than that. And Balott told me that there are also other projects."

Noel fell into deep thought. Getting the necessary funds was easier said than done. If he was not careful, he would lose all the funds without building anything.

Noel turned to Roel. "You should have heard a bit of my plans regarding the rune technology."

"Yes. I've heard from Lady Anna." Roel nodded.

"We have to sell something. It might be the water system." Noel pinched the bridge of his nose.

"If we sell two new weapons, it's going to cover the cost, I believe." Roel explained. Instead of an important water system, he believed this was a better solution.

However, Noel shook his head, rejecting the idea. "We'll keep the weapons to ourselves for now. We're fighting a very dangerous foe, so we can't allow the blueprints of our weapons to be found by the enemies and let them study those weapons. It's going to be troublesome for us."

"If that's the case, how are you going to handle it?" Roel asked.

"Anna."

Anna was confused at first, but it seemed that she understood what Noel wanted. "Since I'm going to meet Damian, I will tell him that you don't mind selling the design for the water system. But shouldn't you ask Livia instead?"

"No. If I go to Livia, it's going to show that I'm desperate, allowing them to take advantage of it to lower the price. But if you go with Damian, the other party won't be able to handle the negotiation, which allows us to demand a certain price. And they will confirm with Livia about the effect. It'll ultimately give us the best advantage in the negotiation."

"I see." Anna nodded before turning to Douglas and Roel. "Are both of you fine? Noel gave you the idea, but you were the first one to ever construct it."

Roel and Douglas exchanged looks. They had been arguing a lot, but surprisingly, they agreed on one thing. Both of them said the same thing. "Sacrifice one to fund ten more."

They wanted to use the water system to fund their research on other things. In fact, by selling this water system, they could get enough funds for the freezer, the power system that would light up the city, and even other things that would be related to those projects.

It was a necessary price to pay.

"Alright. I'll do that."

"Also, since we're the ones selling this, add a condition where they have to acknowledge the inventors and creators. Bring Balott with you to handle the negotiation."

"Got it." Anna nodded. "Still, it's quite an ambitious project. If the entire city can be powered by rune, it will become fundamentally different. After all, if we have a giant power source, we can use that to power more projects in the future."

"Yeah. That's why this project is important." Roel agreed with Anna. "In fact, we could link this power source to the weapons powered by runes. In other words, the walls don't need to be filled up with a lot of Demon Crystals to be fully recharged again and again. We only have to link them to this power source and we can use it forever."

"Combined with the design of this fortress, I believe that our city will become an impenetrable fortress." Douglas smiled, getting fired up.

Noel asked, "Still, we haven't solved the biggest problem. Can the demon crystal actually get restored?"

"That's..." Anna recalled the memory from her past life. In fact, she didn't think that Noel had created something like this in the past. "I am not sure. Will the Energy Gathering Rune work? If not, do we have to use the Energy Concentration Rune?"

"I am not sure." Noel turned to Roel. "Do you have one to test?"

"I do have one, but let me bring it from my workshop first." Roel rushed out, getting excited about this project. This was the first time he had a challenge this big.

After dealing with Roel, Noel's focus returned to Douglas. "So... we were talking about a giant freezer, weren't we?"

"Yes, Sir. If we build the backup water facility together with the giant freezer, people will just think that we're building another freezer. "Besides, there is also another reason why I want to build a giant freezer."

"Another reason?"

"Yes. It's to cool the building. Just like what we discussed earlier, if you could preserve the cold, we could actually use that temperature to cool down the house during the summer."

Noel remembered how hot the summer could become. Although it was the best season for farming, it was hard to work during the summer. If he could cool his room through this method, he could become more focused.

Besides, the inns or any establishments must want something like this so that they can entertain their customers even better, which would lead to their business blooming. He could make money in one way or another.

While it would take a long time to break even, it was still a good idea.

The only question was whether he had the rune or not.

"This is quite problematic. Rune doesn't have elements and can't be fused with elements." Noel murmured while recalling the ice jade he found in the Atracaeca Kingdom. It would be able to create the freezer, but in the end, only one freezer would be built.

If it was stolen, everything would be for naught. So, they needed to find a method to make it so that normal people could create it for a long lasting effect.

Anna suddenly thought of something. "Why don't we use Conductor Rune?"

"Conductor Rune?" Noel looked at Anna's weapon. If he remembered correctly, Anna's weapon had been enhanced by five runes: Extension, Harden, Conductor, Burst, and Blood.

He had mastered the Extension and Hardening Runes long ago. The Blood Rune was extracting the essence in the user's blood to improve the amount of power that could be released, while the Burst Rune was the Advanced Version of the Blast Rune.

However, the Conductor Rune was actually the main rune among those five runes. It made the sword able to conduct Spiritual Energy much more than it was capable of. In other words, whether it was the Blast Rune, the Blood Rune, or even the Harden and Extension Rune, all that Spiritual Energy could be stored within the sword by using the Conductor Rune.

On the one hand, it looked useful for Roel's project instead of this one. On the other hand, Noel thought of a different thing.

"Conductor Rune is an Advanced Level Rune. Even I haven't mastered it yet. It derives from the Energy Gathering Rune and the Energy Concentration Rune. However, its concept is slightly different. Instead of drawing the energy toward them, they devour it and keep it within the rune. So, it will only work for Roel's project." After listening to Noel's explanation, Anna looked a bit sad since her suggestion was a mistake. Noel suddenly added, "However..."

Anna's eyelids couldn't help but rise as though Noel had just found an answer.

Noel thought of something. "If there is a Conductor Rune, there is an Insulator Rune. Basically, the Conductor Rune turns things into a conductor for Spiritual Energy, while the Insulator Rune is the other way around.

"But both runes derive from other runes. The Insulator Rune comes from the Spiritual Energy Rune. It is repelling the energy from the runes.

"The only problem is that... if we repel the Spiritual Energy, will we be able to repel the air as well? What I know is that the Spiritual Energy is like gas, but I don't know whether the energy is actually fused with the gas or a different type of gas filling the air."

"That's..." Anna couldn't give an answer. The only people who knew this answer would probably be the Tower Association.

"If that's the case..." Noel looked at Douglas. "For now, just use the insulation materials. I'm going to send some people to the Tower Association to find any ians researching things like this."

"Understood."

"Do you have a connection there?"

"Ah, I once went to El-Alanca Academy with Rose in the past. We happened to meet a few Spirit ians, so I think it's time to use them to find the necessary ians to provide us some insight."

"El-Alanca? That famous academy that is supposed to research all weird technologies related to Spiritual Energy?"

"Yes. With the help of the runes, we can do much more if we recruit some ians from there. And I'm a lord now, so enticing them is easier." Noel smirked.

"If that's the case—" Before Anna finished her words, Roel had slammed the door open while shouting, "My lord!"

"O-oh?!" Noel's heart skipped a beat, but Roel looked so much worse. He was panting and covered in sweat.

"Ha... ha... While running, I tried infusing my energy, but I couldn't do it." Roel shook his head.

"Of course, you can't. If you can, then the Spirit Grandmasters would just restore this crystal again and again so that the people weaker than them could increase their strength. I'm talking about using rune to do it." Noel sighed.

"A-ah?!" Roel panicked earlier, but he realized he was just overthinking.

As soon as Roel put the crystal down on the table, Noel formed the Energy Concentration Rune on the crystal. Even if it was just a little, he wanted to know whether it was possible or not. In fact, they might be able to create a recharge station for Demon Crystals through the use of Spiritual Energy in the air.

Unfortunately, it was too good to be true. Noel ended up getting disappointed when the crystal showed no reaction to the rune even after several minutes.

"It seems that we can't produce something like this. But when I see how the Spiritual Energy behaves... this Demon Crystal is actually a good insulator," explained Anna while examining the flow of energy.

"What do you mean?" Noel asked.

"Do you remember that this thing is always inside the demon? Once we take them out and grab them, the spirit is the one extracting them, right? And we can actually store these crystals for so long without them deteriorating, both in the amount of essence and its quality.

"If that's the case, how about creating a small tube to let the Spiritual Energy flow inside? You said the Spiritual Energy behaves like gas, so it's going to fill the room, right?" Anna asked.

Roel dropped his jaw to the ground. "If we grind this and melt it into a tube, the energy will fill the room. And at the end, that energy will be used to power up our stuff, which creates empty space. It will be filled up again. The process will continue this way."



Noel's eyes brightened. "Is that possible, Roel?"

"Yes, my lord. It's possible to create it. But we also need the reactor that produces all that energy. A facility that extracts energy from the Demon Crystals."

"Well, we can add the energy from the air, though, it won't be as much as the ones with Demon Crystals."

"We have to think about the output as well and might even need another energy storage. Either way, the concept might actually work. There will be some trials and errors, but I can definitely say that this is going to work." Roel nodded furiously.

"In that case, I will allow you to work on this project. Give me the concrete idea and design later."

"Understood." Roel accepted the assignment happily. If he could do all these projects, he might become the first Grandmaster Blacksmith. The title of Master Blacksmith was already too low for someone like him.

"As for Douglas, continue with the current project. I will try to get us as much funding as possible. I'm not sure about the freezer, so we'll have to wait for the ians."

"Yes, my lord." Douglas politely nodded. Both of them seemed to be quite happy. This city would be like none other... the first ever rune city.