

SPELLCRAFT 971

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 971: The Lesson To Be Learned [Pt 2]

Within the training hall, Sung Han Soo listened to the heart wrenching story of the Ainzlark Demonic Incident, hearing the horrors of the Demon Invasion, and how many people suffered as a result.

The deaths. The destruction. The desperation.

Even though Jared still looked young, he had experienced so many atrocities.

'H-he has suffered a lot!' Han Soo looked at Jared with warm eyes.

It was in this story that Jared met Aloe Vida. Han Soo learned everything about their first meeting—how Jared barely resurrected her, and how she became an ally afterward.

However, this was only one side of the story. The most important aspect was the next.

Jared told him about the aftermath of her resurrection, and it made Han Soo realize something he never considered.

'I... I'm just like Miss Vida was in the past!'

Aloe had looked up to Jared so much that she respected him to a fault. She considered him perfect, and she was bound by his every words.

Han Soo realized how that resonated with him and his current position—how the past Vida resembled his present self.

'Our circumstances are so similar. We both made the mistake of deifying those we highly respect.'

"Do you understand now?" Jared's voice echoed in Han Soo's ears, causing him to look once more at the former.

"It's fine to respect someone, hold them in high esteem, or even desire to be as strong as them. However, never idolize or deify anyone. No one is perfect, and while they may perform good deeds, there are more nuanced and selfish rationales behind their actions."

Everyone was like that? Even Jared and Aloe? Han Soo found it hard to believe that they were currently operating on a selfish basis.

"What is the selfish reason you're helping me so much, Hyung Jared?"

In response to this, he only said one thing. "Because I'll learn and grow from it. Is that satisfactory to you?"

"I see." Han Soo smiled, instantly recognizing what Jared meant by his words. "Its satisfactory."

In the end, even Jared had to keep growing and learning. He wasn't perfect, neither was he a god.

The same allied to Aloe Vida.

"Thank you for telling me all of this, Jared. Thank you for helping me this much too. I really, really appreciate it greatly."

Once again, a warm smile courses through Jared's face, and they both rose to their feet in this renewed atmosphere.

"I promise... I won't put any of this to waste. I'll get stronger and carve a path for the future of this world! I'll use the power I'll gain to help others, just as Hyung and Miss Vida helped me!"

"That's good." Jared's response was soft and cool, making Han Soo's heart jump in happiness.

"I'll teach you as much as you can learn in the weeks to come—at least, until the Grand Symposium."

"Oh? You were invited, Hyung? You're also going to attend?"

For Sung Han Soo, the Grand Symposium had always been his dream. He wanted to go more than anyone else.

Unfortunately for him, the only way to attend was through the Hunter Associations who had formed an alliance, and South Korea's Hunter Association—like the others—could only select three people, other than the Chairman, who could attend.

Being an E Class nobody, he didn't stand a chance of attending.

Even though his grandfather was the Chairman, he couldn't dream of pulling strings to get to the Grand Symposium.

Not only would that stir up great controversies in the country and beyond, but his grandfather was not the kind of man to make such compromises.

If he wanted to go, it had to be by his own merits.

'Hyung is strong enough to attend, so I'm not surprised.'

"Oh, I'm not going."

"R-really?"

"Yes. I'm not officially affiliated with your Hunter Associations. But don't worry, I'll be with you guys in the spirit."

For a moment, Han Soo didn't understand what Jared meant by his words. However, after a few seconds of processing the words, he realized...

"You guys? What are you saying?"

"I'm saying that if you do well in your training, you'll be qualified to attend as well. Isn't that what you always wanted?"

"Really? I can go?" Han Soo's voice rose to an unprecedented degree, and his eyes showed glittering stars of delight.

"Yes. So work hard for it."

"Yes, Hyung! I'll work super hard!"

"That's the spirit."

With that, both the senior and junior initiated the next phase of their time together.

Real Magic Training.

[Weeks Later]

"It's time."

All of the important players were important in Chairman Sung's office

Jared Leonard

Kuzon Midas

Aloe Vida

Director Baek

Chairman Sung

.... And finally, Hunter Sung Han Soo.

"As planned, I'll be going to the Grand Symposium with Miss Vida, Director Baek, and Han Soo." The Chairman began his words.

He was initially skeptical about the choice of the latter, since it would breed controversy.

Even though Jared was the one who made the suggestion, his skepticism made him desire to test out his grandson.

The result of that was the current situation, as well as Chairman Sung's positive assessment of his grandson.

He was now strong!

"As for you two..." He gazed at Jared and Kuzon, who would remain in the Hunter Association.

"There's no need to be concerned about us. We'll have enough action right here in the Association."

"Can't you just tell us the details of the plan?" Aloe muttered, a worried expression locked on her face.

In the end, they weren't able to find the SS Grade Core, and the Zenith was sure to cause major problems for them as a result.

The only reason they could have some degree of confidence was because Jared proclaimed he had a plan.

His sheer confidence in his plan was what propelled them forward.

"If I did so, it wouldn't be a good way to conclude this adventure. What's the point of a surprise if I just tell you?"

Everyone in the room sighed at Jared's words.

"Don't worry about the little details. Just attend the Symposium and act as you naturally would." Something akin to a twisted smile formed on Jared's face as he made his final admonishment.

"Things should play out rather interestingly."

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Chapter 972: The Grand Symposium

The grand symposium had finally arrived, a highly anticipated event where the crème de la crème of Hunters from all corners of the globe would converge.

The prestigious occasion was held in a vast, opulent hall within a magnificent convention center, specially transformed to accommodate the remarkable gathering.

The hall itself seemed to breathe with an air of anticipation, as if aware of the extraordinary individuals who were about to grace its expanse.

The hall was adorned with intricately designed tapestries, depicting mythical creatures and legendary battles, paying homage to the rich history and folklore of the hunting profession.

The high ceilings, embellished with elaborate chandeliers, bathed the space in a warm golden glow, casting enchanting shadows across the room.

The fragrance of freshly cut flowers wafted through the air, mingling with the faint scent of old parchment, creating an atmosphere both regal and scholarly.

As the delegates filed in, the buzz of excitement rippled through the crowd, each person eagerly searching for familiar faces and renowned figures.

The audience consisted of Hunter Association Chairmen, their entourages, and other esteemed guests, all dressed in formal attire befitting the grand occasion.

The attire varied, reflecting the diverse cultural backgrounds of the attendees, with vibrant robes, sleek suits, and traditional garments intermingling, forming a colorful mosaic of sartorial elegance.

At the center of the hall, a magnificent stage stood, elevated above the rest of the hall, commanding attention. The stage was adorned with banners featuring the emblem of the Zenith, yet another testament of their importance in this glorious event.

The emblem, a striking amalgamation of mythical creatures representing strength, agility, and wisdom, served as a reminder of the significance and prestige of the event.

As the murmurs in the hall began to die down, the imposing figures of two of the Zenith's most powerful individuals stepped onto the stage.

They were dressed in tailored black suits that exuded authority and charisma. Their eyes scoured the hall, commanding total silence in recognition of their arrival.

These two Pillars were well-recognized by the world as the most powerful Hunters besides the head of the Zenith.

The Pillar of Love; Derek Scotsman

The Pillar of Diligence; Gyu Pol

The decorum in the hall only lasted for so long before finally being interrupted by a more natural response.

Applause.

The audience erupted into applause, their anticipation reaching a crescendo, before finally settling into a hushed silence as the higher ranked of the two Pillars, Derek Scotsman, raised a hand, signaling for attention.

"Please... save your applause." He smiled, truly exhibiting his title as a Pillar of Love.

He had a handsome look, having dark brown hair, with striking green pupils that would put anyone under an instant spell.

His body was also well-built, and his well-chiseled face as well as clear skin brought everyone's attention to him as he spoke.

The other Pillar, Gyu Pol, stood beside him with both hands behind and a serious expression on his face.

"We only came here to welcome in our leader. He is the one that truly deserves your applause."

The tension in the auditorium reached an all time high, and everyone's expectation shot through the roof.

Some Hunters present in the room hadn't even laid eyes on the one proclaimed to be the strongest Hunter and head of the Zenith.

The time had come for them to say goodbye to that.

"Please present a round of applause to the man who stands at the very top of the Zenith and leads this world into the future." Derek Scotsman smiled, uttering the name of the hero of the world.

"Chad."

Roars and rounds of applause instantly filled the hall, nearly deafening those present. Excitement, awe, anticipation, and expectation all combined into a fine blend.

Everyone's eyes were fixed on the stage, expecting his arrival

And then, just like clockwork... he arrived.

The applause and noise exploded even further once Chad made his appearance, his long white hair dancing as he walked on stage.

He had a clear face, one that put even Derek's to shame. He was so handsome that Derek looked like a rat in comparison.

His well-built body was the perfect tone of balance and a sheer masterpiece.

He was the epitome of perfection, the man who resembled a god.

Suddenly, the room came into a hush—silence befitting a man of such caliber.

"Esteemed Hunters and honored guests," His voice boomed through the hall, resonating with a commanding presence. "Welcome to the Grand Symposium, where the world's greatest Hunters have come together to exchange knowledge, forge alliances, and face the challenges that lie ahead."

The crowd erupted into applause once again, this time a thunderous roar that filled the hall, as the Zenith's leader gestured toward the representatives from each country, acknowledging their presence and contributions. The representatives stood tall, representing the pinnacle of their respective country's Hunter Associations, radiating an aura of strength, determination, and unwavering resolve.

With a wave of Chad's hand, the symposium officially commenced, marking the beginning of a series of enlightening discussions, demonstrations, and exchanges of information.

The hall brimmed with fervor as the symposium unfolded, a melting pot of ideas, expertise, and camaraderie, united in their shared passion for the Hunter's way.

Ever since the Zenith was founded, this had been an annual event for solidifying the bond of every country... and also to remind them of the body in charge of them.

As a result, the grand symposium had become a crucible of intellectual prowess, where the collective wisdom and experience of the world's greatest Hunters merged, fostering a spirit of collaboration, growth, and innovation.

From that moment forward, the stage was set for a remarkable chapter in the history of the world when it came to Gates, Dungeons, Monsters, and research associated with it.

The symposium embraced its role as a beacon of knowledge and a catalyst for the preservation of humanity in the face of formidable challenges.

At least, on the surface, that was the idea. But in the end, it had devolved into one thing and only thing only.

The Zenith's show of power.

"You should all be careful not to draw attention to yourselves." Chairman Sung whispered to the people with him.

They were seated comfortably in the area allocated to the representatives from South Korea, and so far none of them had experienced any trouble.

While it was too naive to expect the same treatment throughout the event, Chairman Sung preferred avoiding anything that would escalate the situation.

However...

"W-why...? Why is this...?" A certain female voice in their midst oozed out.

Chairman Sung and the other two male in their group looked at Aloe Vida, whose eyes were wide in shock.

Her face appeared pale, and her wide eyes were fixated on the leader of the Zenith, who was addressing everyone on stage.

In simple terms, it felt like she had seen a ghost.

"Why.... why is he here? Why is he the one...?"

"Is everything alright, Miss Vida?" Chairman Sung asked, a bead of sweat now escaping his face.

The other two representatives also had awkward, uncomfortable expression on their faces.

This was the first time they had seen Aloe so shaken up, and it was all due to the appearance of the head of the Zenith.

"Have you met Mr. Chad before?" Chairman Sung asked, his face depicting worry.

"Y-yes. I mean, no. Not him. It's just..." Fortunately, Aloe snapped out of her unconscious depiction of shock, and she finally began to compose herself.

Sweat still formed on her face regardless. After all, the man called Chad had a face she recognized too well.

"... He looks like someone I know."

Of all the things she couldn't have expected to see, this certainly topped the list.

'Is this what you meant by a surprise, Jared? Isn't this too cruel?' Aloe's bit her lip as she fought to compose herself.

Her heart raced, but she did her best to control it.

'Why didn't you tell me that Chad looks exactly like Neron?'

The man who led the Zenith was yet another variant of the one they sought after the most.

... Neron Kaelid.

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Chapter 973: The Setup [Pt 1]

The Symposium began with a bang, and it continues with relatively the same energy.

The discussions mainly revolved around the issues of Monsters and the increasing difficulty of the Gates, as well as how to move forward with everything.

The Shadows of Light were also mentioned, but the fact that very little was known about them made the conversation more abstract and obscure than practical.

The Hunters in the room were able to interact with the matters addressed, and everything seemed to be going well.

... Until the most unexpected occurred.

"For the next discussion, and most likely the most important for today, I would like to bring it to your notice that the South Korean Hunter Association has violated our rules and the international treaties that bind the Hunter Association and the Zenith."

The hall went silent instantly, and all eyes greeted the seat allocated to South Korea.

"What is the meaning of this? Why are you accusing is out of nowhere?!" Chairman Sung banged the desk in front of him and shouted in fury.

He was a man who prided himself on his ability to control his emotions, only showing so much depending on the situation.

However, the mere fact that Chad had besmirched his country's name by bringing up a baseless accusation was something he couldn't allow.

It would have even been more surprising if he didn't get upset.

"The South Korea Hunter Association are collaborating with the Shadows of Light, and they have also violated the agreements made to the Zenith, as well as the international interests of the Hunter Association worldwide." Even more nonsense was spewed out.

"W-what are you even—?!" Chairman Sung's face began to show veins, and his eyes turned bloodshot.

However, before he could fully express himself, he was greeted by another shocking reality that brought him to the very edge of despair.

Everyone's gaze... was filled with instant suspicion.

"T-the South Korea Hunter Association. They did that?"

"Is it safe to be seated so close to them?"

"I had a feeling they were suspicious."

"T-this is... to think I placed them in high regard."

"Weren't they trending recently?"

"Why would they do something like this?"

"The Shadows of Light? They would so auch a thing?"

"Unbelievable...!"

"How repulsive!"

"Disgraceful...!!!"

The glares and words of the Hunters gathered in. the Grand Symposium nearly broke Chairman Sung. His heart bled as he powerlessly watched the world turn against them.

"Of course, I'm not saying all of this without basis. I have proof." Chad continued speaking, drawing the attention of the audience to his words.

"We made an agreement to loan an extremely rare SS Grade Core from the South Korea Hunter Association. Of course, we paid the amount required, and we were clear to inform them that we needed to study the Core so as to understand its component and further unravel the mysteries about Dimensional Energy."

Chad further explained how the South Korean Hunter Association, after receiving payment, staged a scenario where the SS Grade Core went missing.

"They claim it was the doing of the Shadows of Light, but if they are in direct collaboration with them, doesn't that mean they get to keep the SS Grade Core for themselves, selfishly hindering the progress we're making for the betterment of humanity."

More murmurs and echoes supporting the words of the Zenith, and degrading the South Korea Hunter Association, surged forth.

"We already explained it was out of our control. We aren't working with the Shadows of Light. It's a huge loss for us too, and we even said we'd refund your funds, so—" Director Baek roared in South Korea's defense.

"What is money compared to the progress we could have made from the researching on the Core? Do you really want to reduce the advancement of humanity to a couple million dollars per month?"

The way Chad flippantly talked about money and emphasized on humanity made the audience gravitate further to his side.

Before they realized it, South Korea became isolated.

"And what about the Busan Incident? I'm sure you are all aware of the S Class Dungeon Break that occurred in Busan, and the two who intervened in the situation—the Busan Heroes."

No one in the room could say the news didn't reach them. The viral videos, and the commentaries were sensational and lasted for over a week.

"Well, those two aren't heroes. Our investigation ties them to the Shadows of Light."

"W-what are you saying? They have no—"

"They were arrested by the Special Seoul Security Service in a warehouse used by Brokers. These Brokers have already confessed to having ties to the Shadows of Light. It's suspicious enough that they were found there, but the Brokers also confessed that the two Heroes were sent by their higher-ups to manage their operation."

"T-that doesn't even make any sense! If they were so evil, would they have surrendered on their own?"

"The SSSS made a surprise attack and caught them in the operation. It would have been messy if they fought and caused a stir, so they surrendered. And can anyone guess what happened after that?"

Silence. No one could speak. They were all waiting for Chad's next words.

"The South Korean Hunter Association came to bail them out of custody. That's right! Those two surrendered because they had a strong backer, and they knew they'd get away with it without resorting to violence."

More murmurs escaped the lips of the Hunters gathered. Disbelief accompanied with disgust played all over their faces.

"Don't tell me you believe him just like that! That's not at all what happened! It's a lot more complicated than that!" Director Baek shouted, his tone desperate for the trust of his colleagues.

However, none of them showed him even the slightest hint of such sentiment.

"The S Class Gate was most likely perpetrated by them, intentionally using it to gain fame and go viral. We can't be certain yet, but I suspect they've found a way to harness the power of the SS Class Core in their possession and those two Busan Heroes are the first of the many Super Hunters that South Korea plans to create."

The audience, upon hearing this, did not bother to think about how much of a stretch the matter had become, or how many unsubstantiated claims were mixed into the actual events that occurred.

Once they heard the supposed project that South Korea had embarked on, and the assumed progress they had made with these 'Super Hunters', it was more than enough as the last straw.

No matter how altruistic a nation was, the utmost priority was to ensure they had the edge over other nations, or at the very least, other nations didn't have the edge over them.

That was the point of the Zenith, and their union as Hunters.

The fact that all nations were equal under the might of the Zenith.

Any country that decided to break out of that restraint and went against the status quo would be officially recognized as a threat.

... No exceptions!

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Chapter 974: The Setup [Pt 2]

The atmosphere in the Grand Symposium hall shifted with an undercurrent of tension as Chad took center stage and didn't back down in his accusations.

The South Korean Hunter Association was in a tight spot, and they knew how stuck they were.

As the one recognized as the strongest, Chad's imposing figure exuded an air of authority, and his piercing gaze seemed to penetrate the very souls of those gathered. The crowd's conclusion was already drawn at this point.

Anything else he would say simply served as an extra layer of butter on his sandwich of deceit.

Chad continued with a calm, measured tone, his voice carrying a weight of certainty that commanded attention. "Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed Hunters," he began, his voice echoing through the hall, "I

have gathered you all today to discuss this matters of great importance, to address the betrayal done by our supposed comrades."

As he spoke, Chad's gaze turned towards the representatives of the South Korea Hunter Association, who sat together, an air of unease and frustration settling upon them.

They knew mere words could not avail them now.

Chad raised his voice, projecting his allegations to the entire hall. "Their actions have had severe consequences, and it is clear that they are unable to fulfill their duty to protect the innocent and maintain the delicate balance between our world and the dimensions beyond. They even conspire with our enemies. Unforgivable!"

The crowd murmured in response, exchanging glances filled with certain condemnation. Chad's words carried weight, and many had already begun to draw their conclusions concerning the South Korea Hunter Association's ability to uphold the ideals of their profession, and their place in the spectrum of good and evil.

"Tch..."

Amidst the growing unease, Aloe felt a surge of indignation.

She could not fathom how Chad could cast such sweeping accusations without understanding the intricacies of the challenges they faced.

'He's misunderstanding our situation, I'm sure of it!'

If Chad truly cared about the world, and he was truly reasonable, surely he would listen to their defense.

'If he's only swayed by the evidence, then we just have to prove it to him!'

Sure, the South Korean Hunter Association hadn't been utterly forthright about all that had been occurring in their midst for the past two months, but that didn't make them evil.

'It just couldn't be helped...'

So, while she tried to understand Chad's suspicions, and the worry of the other countries, she could no longer sit back and watch them wrongly accuse an innocent body of diligent people.

Rising to her feet, she raised her voice in protest.

"Chad, you are mistaken!" Aloe's words rang out with fervor, her voice filled with a mix of frustration and desperation.

"You do not understand the complexity and full scope of the situation. We can sort this out in a way that doesn't lead to pointing fingers."

Aloe's outburst was met with a mix of reactions. Some heads turned towards her in shock, while others regarded her with skepticism, swayed by Chad's authoritative presence.

In the end, though, she was unable to elicit even a single positive reaction. Still...

"If you have any interest in the truth and justice, then hear us out!"

The moment her voice echoed in the hall, it fell dead silent. Everyone's gaze fell upon Chad, who had an unwavering gaze despite her challenge to his authority.

"Hear you out, huh? Of course. Once you're behind bars, you'll be heard properly."

"W-what?!"

"You heard me well. Of course, we'll follow due process and not deny you of your right to defend yourselves, even though it's clear you're in the wrong."

"W-what are you even sayi—?!"

"At this moment, however, you are too dangerous to be left alone. As a danger to your country, and even to the world, you have to be apprehended. If you want to prove your innocence, wait until after you have been arrested and the safety of everyone has been secured."

"That's absurd! We've done nothing wrong!"

"Then you have nothing to fear, no? Resisting arrest will only prove your guilt even more. Of you really care about the safety of everyone here, and the people of your country, then you'll do the right thing."

"Y-you..."

Rage began rising in Aloe's chest as she glared at Chad.

Even though he wore Neron's face, had Neron's voice, and spoke with the same confidence and enthusiasm Neron had, she couldn't get past his clear malevolence.

She had engaged in a battle of words with Chad, presenting her arguments with passion and conviction, but she found herself losing ground against his relentless accusations and manipulative rhetoric.

'He doesn't even want to hear us out! Everyone is condemning us, and yet...!' Aloe's frustration grew, realizing that Chad was not interested in hearing her reasoning.

'He says we'll be given a chance to fairly defend ourselves, but I highly doubt it!'

If he couldn't allow a fair and honest analysis of everything now, what was the assurance that it would happen once they were held captive?

Data could be forged, and evidence could be manipulated—all to suit the narrative.

At this point, Aloe was certain that this was nothing short of sabotage.

'But why? What is his reason for this? Why would he...?!' In the midst of Aloe's waning resistance, a wave of realization washed over her.

She remembered the words Kuzon told her—how she was guilty of everything he warned her about.

'I keep trying to find a reason to explain these clearly malevolent actions. But now I can see...' Her appalled face took on a serious change, and a frown formed on her lips.

'There's no positive hidden motive or good intention here.' Whether he wore the face of Neron didn't matter to her at this point.

Sometimes people were just bad for their selfish gains and interests—Neron or not.

Now, she understood the depth of his deceit.

"You're a liar and a fraud. I shouldn't have trusted you blindly..." Aloe realized that her words weren't merely directed at Chad, but she said so anyway.

"I won't let you get away with this." Energy began to rise from her slowly as she glared at the smiling man on stage.

"Miss Vida, please calm yourself." Chairman Sung's voice suddenly echoed in her ears.

"But he—"Vida glanced at the Chairman of the Zenith, surprised to see a gentle smile locked on his pale face.

His wise eyes met hers, silently conveying a cautionary message. He gestured subtly, urging her to remain calm and not make matters worse by acting impulsively.

Reluctantly, Vida nodded, her gaze shifting back to Chad, who wore a smug grin, convinced of his victory.

'If I act now, I'll only make matters worse. I'm sure everyone also realized that.' Aloe gritted her teeth and returned to her seat.

At this point, the Korean Hunter could only do one thing as they sat in a hall full of enemies.

They could only have faith in Jared's plan.

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Chapter 975: Bird In A Cage [Pt 1]

"We at the Zenith have been preparing for this moment for some time now..." Chad smiled, taking a step forward as he looked at his ever-listening audience.

He ignored the helpless frustration of South Korea's Hunter Association and simply let his charisma overshadow their presence.

'I'm a little surprised that didn't act up more, though...'

His expectations involved the South Korean Hunter Association making the situation even worse for themselves by trying even harder to defend themselves.

Unfortunately, they didn't dig more into the hole he had prepared for them.

'No matter. This much is enough. Besides, I wonder what they'll do once I reveal this...' Widely grinning internally, Chad remained composed

"I'm sure you all know there are seven Pillars of the Zenith, and yet in this very important event, only two are present." Snapping his fingers, a holographic screen appeared right above him.

It was tall and wide, shining brightly in the auditorium. It instantly caught the attention of everyone who had eyes.

Many gasps escaped the lips of the shocked audience, and their surprise was highly justified.

What they saw on the screen was enough to prompt anyone to feel the same.

"As you can clearly see, we've surrounded the South Korean Hunter Association Headquarters. We plan on holding their assets hostage and arresting those involved in their atrocities."

As if that wasn't enough, Chad furthered his authoritative speech.

"Should we find evidence of their collaboration with the Shadows of Light, and their many other crimes, we'll permanently seize their assets and ensure they face the right punishments for their crimes."

In essence, the Zenith would have every right to control a nation's entire body... without any national interest in the country.

Something like that had never happened before!

"Our forces are also closing in on their other bases all over the country. Do not worry. None of them are going to escape."

Murmurs of uncertainty began resonating among the audience.

Worried faces of representatives began to show, though they tried to mask it by nodding in agreement and straining smiles.

None of them could hide the rising fear that was pervading the room.

They began to ask themselves one simple question.

'Could we be next?!'

South Korea was going to fall into the hands of the Zenith. No one was naive or foolish enough to believe that all of this wasn't premeditated.

The country had become a scapegoat—the first of many.

If any country crossed a line, or did something contrary to the Zenith, it was likely that they would also be swallowed up.

The worst part was they none of them could speak up against their actions. Not unless they wanted to be labeled as allies or fellow conspirators.

As such, their worries choked them as they watched the live footage of the Zenith's elite Hunters close in on the Headquarters in Seoul.

"While one of our Pillars is unavoidably ill, the remaining four are currently on the mission. You don't need to look so worried. We will definitely nab these villains and bring them to justice."

Needless to say, they weren't worried about the Zenith's success or failure. They were more concerned about their positions.

At this point, some of them began to feel sympathetic toward South Korea. Looking at the frustrated faces of the Hunter representatives, they could see hints of innocence.

It was more likely that they were innocent. Unfortunately, none of that mattered since they had come to this point.

Chad was in the absolute right.

"Now, then. Let us watch with anticipation. Let us see as the Zenith handles the threats that loom over us."

Chad's warm smile did nothing to signify the brutal cold grin he made internally.

'Hehe... I can see they're very apprehensive now, but it's inconsequential. They've all fallen into my trap.'

Like a bird in a cage, they could do nothing to escape their situation.

'Now that they're at my mercy, they'll be more obedient. South Korea will be an example, and any country that doesn't wish to follow will become more obedient.'

The illusion of control that each country's Hunter Association had would crumble, and they were all going to realize the one true leader that governed them.

'... Me!'

He had already ordered his Pillars to do the needful by framing the Hunter Association with planted evidence.

They weren't going to escape his trap once all was said and done. They could struggle as much as they wanted, but the reality remained.

He had won.

'Now, then... let us begin!'

"We're being surrounded, Jared." Kuzon murmured, his gaze on the television he was currently watching.

It seemed watching TV had become his new favorite thing to do. With popcorn on one hand, and a very relaxed smile, he watched a man sling from building to building... like a spider.

"Yeah. I noticed. Gimme a sec." I was also sort of occupied at the moment.

I was playing a game on the console that was already provided for in our room.

Considering the limited time we could spend in this world, I wanted to complete as much of the stories as possible.

And I was just about to finish a really tough mission!

"In 3... 2... 1... !!!" My tongue rubbed my lips as my eyes widened in anticipation for my mission to be complete.

".... Aaaaand MISSION COMPLETE!" I grinned, jumping to my feet in an energetic stride.

"Alright! I'm ready." I leaped towards Kuzon.

"For real? This episode just started. I can't stop now... it's spectacular!"

"You can just continue after we're done with the problem."

"Why didn't you stop too?"

"Uh... um... the game couldn't be paused."

"Sureeeeeee..."

"In any case, let's just get this over with. Yeah?"

Fortunately, Kuzon agreed with me without asking any further questions.

"So, what's the plan now? How do you want to handle the intruders?" He asked, looking at me with some sort of expectation on how to handle the situation.

"How else?" I smiled, cracking my stiff finger joints.

"We beat the shit out of them!"

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 976: Bird In A Cage [Pt 2]

"Y-you bastards! You have no right to encroach on this territory!" The Vice-Director of Seoul's Hunter Association, Seo Hwa, yelled in anger.

Her misty purple hair danced behind her head as her eyes glowed in determination. She wielded a sword, and aura steadily danced around her.

Behind her were her comrades, fellow South Korean Hunters.

At this point, the Hunter Association had dispatched every single manpower they could muster to protect their building from the intrusion of the Zenith's forces.

Hunters were usually very busy, either raiding Dungeons or handling the rapidly increasing Dungeon Breaks.

As a result, even though this was the Headquarters of the South Korean Hunter Association, they had barely a hundred Hunters gathered to defend their territory.

Compared to their measly number, the Zenith's assault force numbered at least a thousand, with four of the Pillars taking charge of the team.

Needless to say, they were both outnumbered and outmatched.

"Your crimes include conspiring with the Shadows of Light, hoarding useful information that would benefit humanity, among others."

"W-WHAT?!"

"You should surrender while we're still being nice about it."

The air crackled with tension as Seo Hwa heard of these abominable accusations.

"What shit are you trying to pull right now?" Yelling crassly at the Pillars before her, she brandished her blade and instantly recognized them as her enemies.

"You will not trespass on our territory, and not with baseless accusations like that."

The Pillars were not only discourteous to the Hunter Association, but also highly disrespectful to the Korean government.

It was almost as if they disregarded any form of authority and autonomy they wielded. Seo Hwa instinctively knew that if she backed out now, it would shame both her country and her superiors.

"Hehe. Very well, then. I didn't want to do this, but... you leave me no choice."

Even though the Pillars spoke this way, the expression they had on their faces were that of utmost delight.

It was certain that they would enjoy every moment of the fight, reveling on subduing those weaker than them.

"[Skill Activatio—]"

"Okay, let's all just calm down." A voice suddenly emerged from above the two parties engaged in their scuffle.

The confident tone, and the intimidating presence it exuded, caused both parties to temporarily ignore the other to look above them.

"Mr Leonard! Mr Midas!" Seo Hwa exclaimed in surprise.

According to what she had been briefed on, these two were not meant to show any affiliation with the Hunter Association. In the eyes of the public, they were independent agents.

'What are they doing here?' She asked herself, her eyes widening in surprise.

"We sensed the presence of intruders, so we decided to see what was happening."

"A-ah, I see. But—"

"Aha! It's just as the Zenith thought! The two Busan Heroes were affiliated with the Hunter Association, after all. Yet you lied about your relationship." One of the Pillars, the Pillar of Humility bellowed.

The members of the Zenith all laughed, pleased with the fact that their position had been further strengthened by the appearance of both young men.

Looking at them, they seemed to be no more than teenagers, yet the maturity and power they exuded was enough to garner caution from even the Pillars of the Zenith.

"Shut up, idiot. We were invited here as guests. How does that make us affiliated with them?" The one with the golden hair that covered a portion of his eyes spoke with a flippant smirk.

"You're the ones who are the uninvited guests here. If you continue to cause trouble, we're going to have to ask you to leave."

Looking at things objectively, the Zenith was most definitely in the wrong.

They had been too rash and forward in their action. They also didn't regard the South Korean government at all.

However... what of it?

In the end, the one who had the most power was the one who could do whatever they wanted.

It was why the Grand Symposium ended up favoring Chad, despite the several implications his actions caused.

The reason why these Zenith Hunters could so brazenly show up was because they were completely confident of their victory.

They were stronger, after all.

"Hahahaha! You bastards really have no tact. You're really going to rebel against the words of the Zenith?"

"Zip it, retard. What's the point of following the Zenith when they're about to consume the South Korean Hunter Association." The golden haired boy spoke again, causally disrespecting the leading Pillar.

"You really have a big mouth. I'll look forward to making you—"

>WHOOOOOOOOOSSSHHHH<

In a sharp streak, too fast for anyone to notice until it was too late, a golden arrow shot past the Humility Pillar, grazing his cheek and flying off without doing much else.

"A-ah... ahhh...?" Blood slowly dripped from the slit that had formed, and widened eyes of disbelief followed.

No one could fully explain what had just happened.

No one but the two who floated in the sky.

"This shouldn't take very long." Kuzon smirked, golden strings appearing all around him.

He could definitely take on all of them without much of an effort. The only problem was—

"You're right. Don't kill them, though."

Yeah, it was Jared.

"Why?"

"It's part of the plan, obviously."

It was at that moment that Kuzon finally reached the limits of his patience. Not in the sense that he was angry, but that he simply wanted transparency.

"Tch. There's something else you're not telling me, Jared."

"I don't tell you lots of things."

"This one is important. I can guess it's also part of your plan. These people... they're the Shadows of Light, aren't they?" Kuzon sighed.

"Oh? Looks like you figured it out already."

Jared's smile made him clench his fist a little in annoyance, but he controlled himself.

"Well, I can clearly sense the Blood Stone that they have in their possession. It's the same as the one that attacked me."

The most compelling evidence, however, was the identity of the 'Humility' figure that was currently leading the rest.

He was the partner of the one Kuzon faced, as well as the one that Jared defeated and let escape.

At this point, it was certain that the Zenith's Pillars were the same as the Stars of the Shadows of Light.

"Then you know why we can't kill them." Jared's words interrupted Kuzon's thoughts, and the latter shrugged.

"Fine. I understand." Whether it was to kill or to merely incapacitate the targets, it would only take a moment.

"[Original Magic: Marionette]"

The golden threads around Kuzon multiplied rapidly, each forming blades that remained suspended in the sky.

The blades numbered hundreds, and they kept increasing as each second passed.

Before the troops beneath them could even comprehend what was occurring, the blades were now over ten thousand.

"Isn't this overkill?" Jared asked, a bead of sweat falling from his face.

In response to this, however, Kuzon only shrugged in nonchalance.

"I'm just following the plan. Beat the shit out of them, remember?"

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 977: Crumbling Down

The scene quickly became that of horror.

Heavy rains of golden swords fell from the sky, instantly incapacitating the proud and invincible Zenith Hunters.

"Guark!"

"Urk!"

"Keuk!"

The attacks were brutal, albeit blunt. Each sword had no edge, and as such, could only deal dull attacks.

One could think this would be better, but that was far from the case.

At least, when sharp weapons pierced the target in multiple areas, they were bound to experience the sweet release of death.

However, such was not the case with these dull blades.

"S-save meee..."

"S-stop! Stop iiiit!"

"Gahhhhhh!!!"

Like big chunks of metal crushing their bones over and over again, while rendering them unable to deliver a counterattack, the golden raindrops continued.

... Until nearly the Zenith Hunters were vanquished.

The ones that remained were four disheveled Hunters—glaring above with both intense rage, and deep-seated fear.

They were the Pillars, yet even they seemed to tremble at the sight of Kuzon's overwhelming power.

"Oh? You've done well to resist until now." The perpetrator of this gloriously devastating sight smiled.

His golden hair fluttered with the wind, and his hands were in his pockets while he made a casual pose.

"You know, there's plenty more where that came from."

As soon as he said this, more golden blades appeared, littering in the sky with their content.

"Shall we go for another round?"

The clearly frightened Pillars gritted their teeth as they prepared their Skills in retaliation.

From their eye movements and sign language, it seemed they would use their strongest offensive abilities at once in an attempt to destroy the two who remained floating.

"Don't bother." The voice came from none other than me—the observer thus far.

"I'll take it from here." I told Kuzon, finally descending from my elevated position. "Remain on standby, Kuzon."

With that, I slowly fell to the ground, finally touching it with my feet.

"Your attacks will be useless. They won't work."

After I said this, what did they do next? One could only assume they would be sensible and retreat.

However...

"SHUT UUUUUUP!!!"

>WHUUUUUUUUUMMMMMM!!!<

The sum of multiple elements and attacks mixed into a giant orb of multi-elemental energy.

It certainly looked powerful, and from the intense expressions on the faces of the Pillars, it seemed they had given it their all.

'Too bad for them.'

An attack of this level wasn't even going to touch me. After all...

>FSHUUUUUUUUUU<

... I could easily disrupt it with Anti-Magic.

The cluster of energy instantly broke apart, causing the particles to scatter.

"You were saying?" I smiled at the clueless bunch.

"Now, then. I suppose it's time to mete out punishment to you all." My grin became much wider.

"Y-you bastard! Do you think the Zenith will let you get away with this?"

"Y-yeah! Once Master Chad gets a hold of you, then—"

"I... I..."

And finally, the last response I was hoping for...

"P-p-please spare meeeee!" A rather squaky voice emerged from the stuttering group.

Instantly, the owner of said voice crumbled to his knees, bowing before me while surrendering shamelessly.

"I don't want to die! I'll do anything! Please spare me!"

Tears were in his eyes, and his body trembled.

If this was merely an ordinary member of the team, then perhaps things would have been different.

However, the man who was currently submitting to me was the Pillar of Humility—leader of the head of this attack squad's set of pillars.

'... And also someone who I brainwashed.' I stifled my slightly twisted grin.

"W-what are you doing?"

"You can't kneel to him! What will Master Chad say?!"

"G-get up. Hurry!"

Despite the admonition of his colleagues, the shameless man clung to the ground, trembling before me.

'You all shouldn't bother with him. At this point, he has no choice but to act like this.'

He was just following the order I gave him all those weeks ago.

"You're all members of the Shadows of Light. Your leader is Chad, isn't that right? Why should I show you mercy?"

The moment I said this, all the Pillars expressed shock. At this point, they were most likely stuck between wondering how I knew their identity, and trying to formulate what to say next.

However, before they could flat out deny my words, the kneeling man intervened.

"Y-yes we are! We are of the Shadows of Light! We're all executive officers. B-but... it wasn't of our choosing! It's all Master Chad's fault! He is the one you should really blame!"

Just like clockwork, he began running his mouth, his tone trembling so he appeared scared.

"... S-so please spare me!"

As soon as he said this, his comrades expressed shock once more.

"H-hey, what are you doing?"

"We're being recorded, you know?"

"Zip it already!"

It was a shame that none of them were smart enough to simply deny his words on the spot. Humilty's words would have still been implicating, but at the very least, they would be able to salvage some of their image.

Unfortunately, it was too late for them at this point.

Everything was quite literally crumbling down.

"S-shut up! I don't want to die. Didn't you see those rain of blades! We're no match! It's best we confess our crimes and get pardoned." Humilty's words peaked, echoing loudly as he cried.

And then, the internal rambling began.

"Are you out of your mind?"

"You want to betray Master Chad?"

"Thank goodness Master Chad has access to stopping the recording whenever he likes. If everyone at the Symposium saw this, who knows what they would say..."

"In the end, everything will go according to Master Chad's plan. Even this, I'm sure, is all part of it."

"T-that's right. He has never let us down before. Whether as the Shadow of Light head... or as the leader of the Zenith."

"H-hey! Why are you still saying that?!"

"I mean, isn't it too late? He already knows. Besides, the recording would have stopped, so there's no point keeping it hidden any longer."

"I know, but..."

This was what happened when a leader made all the decisions for his followers, and didn't let them think.

Idiots were produced.

'They're making one terrible assumption at this point, to the point of fallacy.'

Their faith in Chad was so great that they thought he was invincible and prepared for everything.

It made them unable to consider the possibility that their great and mighty leader might not have everything under control.

'... Or that the recording was never stopped.'

[The Grand Symposium]

'W-why..?!'

Chad could feel many piercing gazes on him—the likes of which he had never felt in his whole life.

The betrayed expressions of people, and their appalled reactions toward the confessions made by his subordinates.

The wide screen he thought he could use to completely demolish Seoul's Hunter Association had now backfired and become his ruin.

And the worst part made him grit his teeth in greater frustration and anxiety.

'Why can't I turn it off?!'

[**SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar**](#)

Chapter 978: Beautiful Frog In A Well

From the very start, this was my intention.

By using [The Fool] to manipulate the memories and thoughts of one member of the Shadow of Light, I was able to influence his actions a month after.

And the ripple effect of his actions caused his other comrades to implicitly reinforce his words, causing unavoidable problems for the true culprit.

However, for this plan to work, all the parties involved had to be given the illusion of control.

By having a perceived agency over their actions, they would be vulnerable to the weaknesses their emotions and actions would bring.

Of course, everything was hinging on the scenario that Chad couldn't simply turn off the recording and make excuses such as technical issues.

If that was the case, then all the confessions would have been for nothing. The moment Chad saw things were going sideways—no, even before it got to that—he would cease showing his audience the live footage.

But, that was never going to happen.

'No one in this world can resist my Spellcraft.' With a wide grin on my face, I snapped my fingers, causing all the men to fall unconscious, sealing their fates.

'At this point, there's really nothing left for me to do.'

The final phase of the plan was now in effect, and I was no longer relevant to it.

Finally looking around me, seeing all the defeated Zenith members, and flying to meet Kuzon in the sky, I left the scene to continue my video game.

'Chairman, Director, Aloe, and Han Soo. It's your turn.'

"What is the meaning of this, Chad?!"

"You were lying to us all along!"

"So you're actually the villain here?!"

"I should have known!"

"You monster! To think you were secretly the leader of the Shadows of Light!"

"You won't get away with this!"

The entire Grand Symposium was now in a frenzy, with every pointed finger at Chad.

After watching the video of his direct subordinates confessing, there was no one in their right mind who would not be the least bit suspicious of Chad.

However, the true catalyst behind their very agitated response was the 'threat' Chad had posed earlier.

He had them under a leash by implicating South Korea, and they were held hostage—forced to cooperate and watch as they lost all agency and control over their own nations and assets.

Unfortunately, they couldn't resist or fight back... until now.

Right now, every member in the Grand Symposium was on the same side—therefore, they were justified.

They no longer needed to hide in the shadows or cower in fear. United in their distrust toward Chad, they raised their banners against him.

"Explain yourself, Chad!"

"You're not getting away with this!"

"Turn yourself in!"

"Say something, you bastard!"

The maelstrom of comments and noises from the several Hunter Representatives shook the room, and all attention was fixed on the single man on the stage.

He seemed downcast—his expression obscured by the long hair that covered his face.

However...

"Kukuku... kukuku..." Gripping his forehead with his hand, he made a low, sinister chuckle.

It sent a chill down the spines of those present.

However, they couldn't back down now. Not after finally driving Chad into a corner.

"WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE—"

"Be quiet."

At that moment, a dead calm swept through the entire hall.

It was abrupt, absolutely instantaneous. The once noisy hall had now become a deadzone, all thanks to the simple words that were uttered.

"Sit down."

The moment he said this, every single member who had arisen and expressed their antagonism of Chad sat down.

None were left standing.

"This is really surprising. I didn't expect my plans to sour like this." Chad began to mutter.

"To think South Korea was already prepared. How amusing. But, in the end, it is of no use."

So what if he had been implicated? So what if they now knew him for what he was?

As long as he had absolute power, he would still triumph.

'The most powerful Hunters in this room are S Class. My Pillars are SS Class... and I... I'm SSS Class.'

No one here could resist him. Not with his power.

"It seems I will have to—"

"That's enough out of you, fiend!" A sudden voice interrupted Chad's monologue.

Her annoyed tone contained simmering emotions that couldn't be explained with words, but more importantly, the mere fact that she was able to speak brought a series of issues.

"W-what?!" Chad spotted the woman who spoke the instant he heard her voice.

It was a representative of the South Korean Hunter Association!

"Y-you...??"

She was a Hunter that had just surfaced recently, and he was a little interested in her since she seemed capable and looked like a foreigner.

However, since his plan was to bury the South Korean Hunter Association, he decided to leave her for later.

But now, face to face with her, Chad was confused as well as conflicted.

"You... resisted my [Absolute Order] Skill? How?"

There were only two explanations that could justify this result, and none of them seemed feasible.

The first was that his woman, Aloe Vida, was just as strong as him—that is, an SSS Class Hunter.

There existed no one in this world who was capable of such a feat.

And the second option? The second was even more impossible.

It was simply that she was stronger than him!

"But that's impossible! Tell me how you did it!"

Only an SSS Class Skill or higher—if such a thing existed—could ever nullify or resist his power.

How could anyone but him have that kind of power?

'A-ah... ahhh...' He suddenly remembered the two who had defeated his elite Zenith force and four of his Pillars so easily.

Were they the same as this woman? They certainly seemed that way.

It was at this moment that Chad realized the ugly truth.

'I'm... not the strongest...?'

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 979: Crescendo Of The Conflict [Pt 1]

Aloe's gaze was now strengthened with resolve.

Her fists were clenched, and her heart pounded with sheer annoyance.

So far, she had silently observed the antics of Chad, especially after realizing his true nature, but her patience had reached its limits.

Even after he was exposed, he still wanted to control everyone and have them do his bidding.

"You've gone too far. It's time for you to pay for your acts." Aloe floated from her seat, her eyes locked with Chad's strangely terrified gaze.

Sweat formed on his face, and his confidence began to morph into something—almost as if a realization was dawning on him.

"I... I admit..." His voice quivered as he spoke, causing Aloe to hesitate for a moment as she stared at his horrified face.

"... It's my loss this time."

'This time?' Her thoughts echoed.

However, before she could conclude her thoughts, a bright blue swirling pool of energy appeared distorting the space around him.

Aloe instantly recognized the signature, her eyes widening in annoyance.

"YOU...!!!" She sharply lunged at him, her eyes flickering with rage.

"I won't forget this! I'll be back to take what's mine."

>VWUUUUUUUUUMMMMMM<

The energy dissipated, and with it went Chad. He vanished from sight, escaping Aloe's grasp in just a fraction of a moment.

"Damnit!" Her howl rose to an unprecedented degree, expressing just how frustrated she was.

'I have to chase after him.'

At this point, the Hunters within the auditorium were slowly regaining their senses. They seemed weakened, however.

'I can leave them alone here... right?' As Aloe was about to vanish, a sudden thought interrupted her.

'No. Something's not right.'

The Zenith was a large organization. Even though they had dispatched a majority of their troops to attack Seoul, there had to be a good number of Hunters left in this place.

Yet... where did they go?

'The two Pillars as well...'

Using her sensory abilities, she was able to spot them instantly.

'They're all outside the auditorium. But why? Shouldn't they be making an effort to apprehend the Hunters here in order to prevent the information from spreading? Or if they're scared, shouldn't they be actively retreating?'

Other than one particularly hidden one, the rest were just watching the auditorium from a distance.

Why?

'Wait... could it be—?!' Aloe's eyes widened instantly as soon as she realized what was going on.

>BEEP!<

>BEEP!!<

>BEEP!!!<

However, it was too late...

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO—<

... Or was it.

"[Original Magic: Aurora Vidalis]"

The entire auditorium—no, the entire island it occupied—lost all color at that point, replaced by a fading darkness.

The only source of light in the room was Aloe Vida.

Her multicolored Core, shrouded in intense light, complimented her golden form. A halo floated atop her head, granting her the allure of a cherub.

Time seemed to stop for Aloe. Everything around her was in a complete still.

From the multifarious expressions of the people in the hall, to the emerging blast that was bound to consume the entire auditorium in seconds.

They were all frozen in place.

No, that wasn't quite right. It wasn't like time had stopped or anything.

She had just become too fast, and everything else had become too slow.

That was the nature of her Original Magic. This was the true meaning of [Aurora Vidalis].

"Fools..."

In that moment, Aloe took it upon herself to rescue every single person in the hall from certain doom.

She could have simply generated a barrier to protect them, but in order to fully prevent any tragedy, she decided the best course of action would be to evacuate them.

And so, she did.

All the attendants, numbering roughly a thousand, were safely evacuated in the blink of an eye—no, faster than that.

And it was only after she was gone that the explosion resumed.

>—OOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!<

Not only had Aloe saved everyone present, but she was now right in front of a confused crowd, facing the members of the Zenith who were equally confused.

"W-what is happening?"

"They survived?!"

"Teleportation? B-but how?!"

"I-impossible!"

The Pillar that led them, Pillar of Love—Derek Scotsman—glared at Aloe with caution.

He gulped hard, unsure of whether he could confidently face someone as monstrous as her.

'She's clearly responsible for all this. I can handle the others, but this... this one is dangerous.'

As Derek was still having this thought, he heard a strange sound emanate from his chest.

>SQUELCH!<

And with widened eyes, he noticed blood was dropping from his chest, forming a small pool on the ground.

"H-huh...?" He whispered, murmuring as he slowly lost all strength in his body.

That single attack had proven fatal, and death followed instantly.

The last thing he saw was a blurry image of Aloe's confused reaction towards his demise. It didn't seem like she was the one that dealt the final blow.

'T-then who...?' It might have just been an illusion caused by his demise, but Derek felt his shadow flicker before finally closing his eyes and breathing his last.

Rather fortunately—or perhaps unfortunately—death wasn't exclusive to only him.

>SQUELCH<

>SQUELCH<

>SQUELCH<

... It came for them all.

Echoes of piercing flesh rang in the cool outdoors, and puddles of blood gathered to form a massive pool.

Many were too slow to perceive what had occurred, but not Aloe.

She clearly saw the shadowy hands that pierced the chest of each member of the Zenith, ending their lives instantly.

'Shadow Demons? Then, is Jared—' While she was still making this thought, a deep voice echoed in her head.

~Please leave this place to us. You may chase after Chad~

The voice sounded strangely familiar, and the presence also shared the same quality.

It belonged to the one who was responsible for taking her life before she met Jared.

Kahn, the fallen Shadow Demon Lord.

'He's an ally now, so there's no need to be on edge.' Aloe thought to herself, her eyes still wavering a little.

Since Jared's plan involved this, she couldn't particularly complain. However, something else bothered her.

'There's one more Pillar hiding around. He may cause some trouble for—'

~Master is well aware of that. He has plans for that one.~

'Alright then. I'll leave them to you.' With that, Aloe stole one final glance at the stunned Hunters who were still wondering how they arrived outside the hall, how their lives had been saved from the massive explosion she observed in the distance, and the shocking massacre of all their enemies in the blink of an eye.

Everything was happening too fast.

"I'll be leaving to chase after Chad now. Chairman Sung, Director Baek, Han Soo... I leave this place in your care." Aloe glanced at her allies, nodding her head knowingly.

Even though they were still dumbstruck by all that had happened, all three of them returned her nod with theirs.

"Leave it to us."

"We won't fail you."

"Be careful."

Nodding at their words, Aloe vanished in a brilliant glow of golden light, leaving everyone with the sight of a devastated auditorium on one end, and a bloody mess on the other.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 980: Crescendo Of The Conflict [Pt 2]

Sung Han Soo's heart pounded against his ribcage as he looked around him.

The chaotic scene behind him fading into a blur, and the bloody sight before him nearly made him retch.

The deafening explosion that had rocked the grand symposium still resonated in his ears, a reminder of the peril they had narrowly escaped.

Sweat trickled down his forehead, mixing with the dust that clung to his skin, as he took in deep breaths to steady his racing pulse.

Relief washed over Han Soo as he surveyed the scattered and disoriented Hunter Association representatives from around the world.

They were dazed, their faces etched with shock and gratitude for their survival.

'It has to be Miss Vida who rescued us.' Han Soo thought to himself.

Though he had no memory of her swift and decisive actions, he could think of no one else who could have done anything even close.

He was a bit surprised by her heartlessness in causing such a bloody mess by killing all the Zenith Hunters that obstructed them, but Han Soo reckoned it was for their own good.

The mere thought of Aloe Vida brought a genuine smile to his face. In the midst of chaos, she had been their beacon of hope.

'Still... what a mess.'

The pungent odor of blood overpowered his senses, causing Han Soo's mind began to replay the events of the Grand Symposium.

The reality had been nothing like he had expected.

He had imagined an atmosphere of intellectual exchange, a gathering of brilliant minds discussing the intricacies of Gates and Dungeon Raids; all with the goal protecting the world from supernatural threats.

But instead, it had been a battleground. The unexpected enemy, Chad, threw everything into disarray, and they had all barely come out unscathed.

'Thankfully, Hyung Jared and Miss Vida were able to sort things out in the end.' A smile of relief washed over his face.

'But...'

Guilt gnawed at Han Soo's conscience as he replayed his own actions—or lack thereof.

He had felt paralyzed, unable to contribute anything of value while chaos reigned around him.

He clenched his fist, his knuckles turning white, a silent testament to his frustration and self-reproach. How had he allowed fear to paralyze him?

"Even after all the training. After everything I was taught..."

Determined to make amends, Han Soo vowed to himself that he would become a better Hunter.

He would no longer let his insecurities dictate his actions.

He would train harder, study deeper, and hone his skills until he became a force to be reckoned with.

The shame he felt now would fuel his determination, pushing him to exceed his own expectations.

With a resolute nod, Han Soo took a final glance at the smoldering ruins of the auditorium, knowing that the scars ripple effects of today's event would forever mark this turning point in his life.

He joined the other representatives, their expressions mirroring his own mix of relief and determination.

The path ahead was fraught with challenges, but Han Soo was ready to face them head-on, driven by the knowledge that the world needed Hunters like him, now more than ever.

And thanks to being so immersed in his thoughts, he failed to notice the enemy approach.

... Until it was too late.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

The ground shattered as a certain silhouette descended from the sky, it's shadow-coated figure dancing with the wind.

"Color me surprised. I never expected this outcome!"

The shadowy figure finally took on a stable form, and as soon as it brought down its hood, the face of the malefactor became evident.

It was none other than Gyu Pol.

"Hahahaha! Look at all this ruin. Even after all this chaos and death, you all are still alive. What a bunch of cockroaches."

The moment Sung Han Soo heard this, his chest tightened in anger.

"I suppose I ought to take care of the trash. Since that scary woman has gone off to face the boss, I don't need to worry about anyone else here."

Han Soo knew how powerful the Pillars at the Zenith were. They were acclaimed to be worth the power of a thousand Hunters.

Even a bunch of S Class Hunters would have a hard time facing a single Pillar.

'Not to mention the fact that everyone seems somewhat exhausted after being controlled by Chad. I feel fine, but...'

Everyone else wasn't in top form. It seemed like an impossible situation from the get-go.

Amid all of this, Han Soo looked forward, his eyes focusing on Gyu Pol as he asked himself a fundamental question.

'What should I do?'

Even after one month training with Jared, he still had no real idea how powerful he had become.

Compared to his Hyung, though, Han Soo knew he was plenty lacking.

'Still... I can't just watch. Not again!'

He had promised himself that he would do better. That he would protect people and be the hero the world needed.

How could he even dream of doing so if he couldn't take a single step forward?

'I'll do it! I'll use that move!'

He had to use his strongest transformation and most powerful move at the same time.

That was the only way he could be assure dog victory.

'I need to hurry!'

"You maggots never cease to amaze me. I'll make this quick for your sakes." Gyu Pol's voice echoed among the audience, and an amused grin shone on his face.

"Pol, you bastard! You'd really do this to innocents? To think you were part of the Shadows of Light. How low have you really fallen?" Chairman Sung responded, his words coated with sadness.

"Zip it, old man! In this world, power is everything. As long as I have enough power to stand above others, I don't care about little shits like you!"

"I-is that really... how you've always felt...?" The Chairman's voice quivered, his hand clutching his chest and his face squeezing in pain.

"Of course, you old fool!" Gyu Pol snickered malevolently. "I've always been this way!"

"Is that... so..." Sadness clouded the old man's face.

Clearly, despite his efforts trying to convince himself otherwise, Chairman Sung still cared about his previous protege.

To think he couldn't see him for what he was until it was too late...

'I really am a fool'

"That's enough!" The voice of a confident going man soared through the air, and Hunter Sung Han Soo stepped forward.

The other Hunters were either too worried or tired to even elevate their voices beyond a certain pitch, but this young man seemed fine.

He left the tired group and walked right in front of them, determination locked in his eyes.

"Who the hell are you?" Gyu Pol said, his brows twisting upward in both confusion and disgust.

He didn't really care for lowly worms, but this young man was different. He was a tiny ant that had the glare of a tiger.

It infuriated him greatly.

The young man finally stopped moving, not out of fright, but out of sheer determination.

"My name is Sung Han Soo, and right here, right now, I will stop you!"