

With The Gods 171

Chapter 171

Jjeouk-.

The Egg bared his teeth.

It was the first time.

I couldn't believe this bum, unable to do anything but eat, showed up first.

'That's how urgent it is...'

In any case, it couldn't be all bad from YuWon's point of view.

The Egg's help would make the fight much easier.

Besides, what if he joined the fight.....

"Huh?"

Thrrr-.

The teeth disappeared again.

The mouth closed and the Egg went silent again, not even breathing.

'Whatever.'

He didn't think the one that hadn't even hatched would come out to help him first.

He didn't want to get his hopes up.

'Let's see what comes out of that.'

When YuWon felt disappointed and determined at the same time....

"You..."

Pandora opened her mouth as she saw Yuwon for the first time.

"You're getting anxious, aren't you?"

Tkak-.

For some reason, she felt unnecessarily bad.

I don't think she had ever felt this bad in her life.

He felt his own voice echoing in his head.

-You know you're not going to win anyway.

-It's all for nothing. We're all going to die anyway.

-Why don't you give up? Why do you have to go through this?

These were the negative thoughts I secretly harbored.

It was a drop in the bucket compared to everything YuWon felt, but the emotions were not fixed in size.

There was only one way to suppress them, and that was with a strong mind.

"Why are you stopping me?"

Pandora asked.

YuWon replied, channeling his Mana into the Kyneē in his hand.

"Because your presence harms us."

"To you?"

Pandora asked, confused.

From that reaction, YuWon realized that Pandora was more than just an outer shell.

'She's one of those seeds too?'

Chaos Fool.

An Outsider that had been in the Tower since who knows how long ago.

Pandora was like Lancelot.

The only difference was that Pandora in front of him hid a much larger part of the Outsider's power than what was planted in Lancelot's body.

'I can only fight...'

YuWon looked at Pandora's gradually distorted expression.

He had fought the Outsiders countless times.

That was why he knew how dangerous the aura he sensed from her was.

'For now, I will lightly attack-.'

Pak -.

A black Lightning Bolt formed in his hand.

['Lightning Fragment' reacts with 'Kyneē']

A Lightning Bolt shot out from YuWon's hand.

Kwareung-!

Pajijijijiji-!

The Lightning Bolt shot out towards Pandora. The Lightning consumed the aura surrounding Pandora, turning her into a pile of rubble.

"I guess that's your way of saying hello."

Thrrrr-.

The Lightning Bolt that burst with force disappeared as quickly as it had come. YuWon sighed as he saw Pandora emerge from the Black Lightning.

"Mmm."

Pandora's powers fed on emotions to become stronger.

Only negative emotions fueled her power.

And this was a war zone.

A place where negative emotions were bound to increase more than in any other.

Everyone was afraid of death, and all of that fueled Pandora's power.

Skak-.

Fazizik-!

Mana burst forth from Kyneē.

He swung his unsheathed sword at Pandora's throat in one swift motion.

Ting-.

The sword was deflected by an invisible force. He tried to force a slash towards her, but YuWon felt his grip loosen momentarily at the unpleasant sensation that ran through him.

Shhhh-.

Pandora's hand stretched forward.

Pang.

The grip around her nape cut off her breath, and her body defied gravity and floated upward, only to be flung back down.

Quaang-!

Bang-

A jolt ran down his back as he plummeted to the ground.

YuWon felt numb for a moment.

"Wow..."

It was only for a moment, but he felt one thing during the fight with Pandora.

"Strong."

Considering Pandora's performance in the Second Gigantomachy, it might be natural.

He was prepared for it, but he couldn't help but sigh when he realized the difference in power.

His body was pinned to the ground.

Outside, he could feel Pandora walking towards him.

This situation was not unfamiliar to him.

'This happened in the fight with Chryses.'

Before he obtained the Divine Crystal of Darkness.

But even then, the fight had ended in a draw.

He had to think.

A way to win the fight against Pandora.

'Help me, you too.'

[The '????' Egg shakes his head.]

'Damn it.'

In response, YuWon cursed inwardly.

He was a very useless guy.

He didn't need convincing. He wouldn't listen to him, he was too selfish.

He had to choose another way.

Pap-

Pandora's footsteps approached.

And with her, the unpleasant feelings in his chest began to stir.

I think he knew why they killed themselves.

A part of him wanted to slap himself and stick a knife in his throat.

I could not dismiss this feeling as mere irritation. There was a reason it was called conditioning.

'When she was active, Pandora outranked Athena. It won't be any different now, so a head-to-head battle isn't the answer.'

YuWon stood up from his spot.

She had little time to think. The distance between her and Pandora had narrowed.

['Demonic Energy' has been activated.]

['Lightning Fragment' reacts with 'Kyneē'.]

['Eyes of Ash' is activated.]

['Sensory Field' is activated.]

It was a fight with less chance of victory than any YuWon had fought since his Regression, but it was a fight to be won.

An involuntary fight.

But it would be a fight that would make the victory worthwhile.

'Should I take him out? If possible, I'd like to keep it hidden until the fight with the Three Devils...'

A battlefield with many eyes.

YuWon, who needed to look further, couldn't use all his hands.

Of course, if it was too difficult, he couldn't keep it hidden, but he had to fight with as few hands as possible.

'I have to find another breakthrough.'

When he tried to think and act like that at the same time....

"Why are you trying to kill me?"

Pandora's voice boomed over the floor.

"Why, what have I done wrong, why, why, why, why, why?"

Her voice was frustrated, angry and full of resentment.

It was amazing to hear so many emotions in one voice.

Anger, resentment, loneliness, fear?

Pandora was a great mass of all negative emotions.

'Wait.

That's when...

One thing I had forgotten flashed through my mind.

[You have activated 'Steps of Heaven']

[Your movement speed increases by 100% for 5 seconds.]

[You can step on the sky for 5 seconds.]

After stepping on the air several times, YuWon soared into the sky in an instant.

Pandora looked up and their eyes met.

Eyes filled with complicated thoughts.

'I see it.'

The moment she looked into those eyes, she was convinced.

'A breakthrough.'

The ability associated with the Steps of Hermes, Steps of Heaven, had a duration of about 5 seconds, but there were already three seconds left.

That was enough time to check it out.

Kak-

A light step in the air.

Pandora turned her head to look for YuWon. As Pandora rolled her eyes in search of YuWon, who had disappeared in an instant, a purple flame entered her vision.

Fire~

"Er.....?"

Her eyes widened.

What he saw was not just a simple flame.

"Aaahhhhhhhh!"

Krak-!

The tip of his sword slashed Pandora's throat. There was a sound like metal hitting metal, and YuWon's fingertips felt a stinging sensation.

Pit-

The cut was small, and the depth of the wound, shallow.

Tough.

It wasn't just his ability to control his emotions, his physical abilities were already as good as any High Ranker.

'How many alternative physical strength stats does he have?'

'Endurance, which is the basis of physical ability.'

Since he did not use any special skills, this toughness could only come from his stats.

At this point, Pandora's body was so strong that even YuWon's sword could not easily penetrate it.

'Even though it's like this...'

There was little impact from the sword. But the burns on Pandora's skin were clearly from the flames.

'There is damage.'

There were no sword strikes, but there was fire damage.

It was a natural result.

'This is the essence of the Sacred Fire.'

The Sacred Fire is a monster that fed on the emotions of its victims.

And in that sense, the Sacred Fire was Pandora's worst enemy.

[Sacred Fire's skill increases by 0.21%.]

[The ability of the Sacred Fire increases by 0.38%.]

[The skill of the...]

Proficiency/Competence increased rapidly.

As the skill went up in rank, the Sacred Fire Proficiency increased very little. The minimum increase is 0.01%, which is not enough to make a difference.

The Proficiency/Proficiency thus raised was about 5%.

But now, at this very moment, his Proficiency was increasing at a rate that could be described as quantum leaps.

And just like that...

Boom, boom, boom-

As expected, the flames of the Sacred Fire intensified.

Like a small cigarette burning a dry twig as kindling, the flames of YuWon's Sacred Fire curled around the two of them.

"Ah, ahhhh....."

Pandora's eyes fluttered violently.

On a battlefield brimming with all sorts of negative emotions, a gigantic flame engulfed the countless fireflies that could be seen reflected in her eyes, consuming them.

"Go away, go away, go away-!"

Crunch, crunch, crunch~

Pandora waved her hands in the direction of the flames, whose range was gradually narrowing.

But it was nothing more than a fear-driven struggle.

Chii-i-

Hwareuk, Hwaaaaak-!

The fire, once transferred to the body, was not easily extinguished.

No, first of all, the Holy Fire was a fire that would never go out until YuWon's power was completely exhausted.

Its heat was enough to burn Pandora's body.

"Aaaaaaaagh!"

Pandora screamed in pain from the fire in her body.

Negative emotions were the source of Pandora's power.

The stronger the feeling, the stronger she is and the stronger the influence she can exert on those around her.

But that was the problem.

The Sacred Fire was an ember that fed on emotions.

Unbeknownst to her, she herself had become a huge kindling.

'An ability that didn't work so well for Ares is now being used in this way.'

An ability that was useful against a relatively weak majority, was now being used against the strongest and most demanding individual.

No.

Now that his Proficiency had increased, he would probably be able to wield even more power than before, even if not Pandora.

"It will be over soon."

Pandora roared through the flames.

The moment her knees buckled.

[The '????' Egg is salivating]

A message from the guy who was waiting for his prey to weaken.

"All I have to do to feed you."

What it's like to raise a lazy bastard.

"When you hatch, I expect you to give it all back to me."

Jjeouk-.

A mouth, much larger than the previous one, opened from beneath the ground where Pandora was standing.

A hundred mouths, hundreds of teeth.

YuWon nodded at that sight.

"Now, eat her."

Kwazik-!

Chapter 172

It was strange.

Normally, the fight should have been over by now.

Because the gap between Pandora and Kim Yuwon was so big.

He couldn't understand why a fight that should have lasted only a minute or two wasn't already over.

'Is it because of Pandora's instability?'

At first, he thought it was because of that.

Kim YuWon in front of Pandora.

The only reason she was resisting/surviving is because her mental strength is superior to most Ranker Players.

It's true.

With that kind of power is how he got Olympus into such a mess.

But....

Boom-!

Flames erupted from a small distance away from the Heavenly Mountain. The flames grew fast enough to engulf the entire mountain.

But it wasn't the fire that mattered.

It was a scream.

A woman's scream, drowned out by the noise of the battlefield.

Hearing Pandora's screams, Athena rushed to check the situation through the inner face of Aegis.

Pandora's figure was burning in purple flames.

'How the hell...?'

"I got distracted."

Startled, Athena looked up.

At that moment...

Shhhh-

Swoosh-!

Athena's body flew downward as she was struck by the Heavenly Demon Spirit's sword.

Boom, boom, boom.

Kwak-

After knocking down several spikes of the Heavenly Mountain, Athena barely managed to stand up.

On her shoulder, where Aegis had failed to defend, was a deep gash.

"Ugh..."

She never thought a momentary glance would produce such a result.

He had been too complacent against the Celestial Demon. However, this was not a situation that could be passed lightly.

The distance was growing.

Athena took another look at Pandora's situation.

Then.

"This, this....."

Athena's eyes widened.

Indeed, she could see Pandora, burning in purple flames a few moments ago....

"What is that?"

But Aegis reflected something that wasn't Pandora, something black as ink.

* * *

The ground covered in thousands of teeth.

Quack-

Placing Pandora in his mouth, he chewed, and began to devour.

'She does take her time when eating.'

He knew from Lancelot that the size or hardness of her body wasn't what was important.

Perhaps it wasn't Pandora's flesh or bones that the Egg was feeding on, but the power of the Outsider within her.

'Is that a large amount, even for the Egg?'

Unlike Lancelot, who had just joined the ranks of the High Ranks, she possessed strength comparable to that of the strongest High Ranks.

And much of that power she owed to power outside the Tower.

And the Egg was digesting that power with great force.

"What is all this?"

Kwak-

Yuyuan looked up at the sound of the voice.

Up in the sky.

Floating high above, a young man was looking down at him.

"Is what I'm seeing real?"

Hermes.

A High Rank of Olympus who symbolized freedom.

He had a higher rank than Ares, but in terms of skill, he was far below Athena.

First of all, Hermes was a Ranker whose strength was in his mobility, not his destructive power.

"Is that a question for me?"

"So, who else am I going to ask?"

"How arrogant. We're not even on the same side."

"I'm a bit like that."

Hermes descended and landed on the ground.

YuWon, who was wary for a moment, lowered his sword again.

Hermes hadn't even raised his staff and wasn't releasing his mana.

"Don't you intend to fight?"

"If it's fighting, I've had enough. Unless it's my sister, in which case I don't like it."

"Even so, you must have received an order."

"There's no reason to fight anymore, is there (이래서는 더 싸울 이유도 없잖아/No point fighting over this)?"

Kwak-

Pandora being chewed by countless teeth.

Hermes looked at YuWon curiously.

"Apparently, those shoes are mine too, why don't you answer me?"

Hermes' gaze turned back to YuWon's shoes.

He had lost them long ago.

Like the staff, it was a prized object, and YuWon was wearing it.

It had probably come into the hands of an Administrator and had been given to him as a reward.

"I'm not going to ask for it back."

"I see."

YuWon replied while looking at the same scene as Hermes.

"I don't know either."

"What answer is that..."

"Just keep looking."

Hermes frowned with a puzzled expression.

But he meant it.

The identity of the Egg was a mystery and YuWon didn't know its identity either. He only knew it was an Outsider guy from the patterns engraved on the Egg.

The boy was only growing up eating Outsiders.

Maybe.

Just maybe.

'Maybe this guy could become the natural enemy of the Outsiders.'

The odds were low.

The Outsiders he'd seen, the ones he'd encountered, didn't exactly fit the word: natural enemy.

Yamata no Orochi's head, Lancelot and Pandora in front of him, there were many beings that were incomparable to them.

A natural enemy that could eat them?

It was hard to believe.

But he had no choice but to try.

He had been given one more chance.

Somehow, he had to win this time.

"You don't want to talk, do you?"

Hermes, unable to get a satisfactory answer, asked.

Then YuWon nodded and pointed ahead.

"Watch that."

"That?"

Shureuk-.

At the place where Pandora had been....

Dozens of tentacles protruded from among thousands of teeth.

A life form he had never seen before.

At that moment, dozens of teeth pounced on her, unwilling to let go, and devoured her.

Looking at Hermes' blue face, YuWon spoke.

"Can one hear of such a thing?"

It was a strangely convincing statement.

It was something he couldn't believe.

As far as scary things went, Zeus was even scarier. You could have dozens of those things and they wouldn't beat Zeus.

But the fear Hermes felt was different.

For some reason, he couldn't understand it.

"I see."

When Hermes nodded like this.

"Young lord!"

"Get out of the way!"

Two people, Pung Baekrim and Baek Mugang rushed forward and blocked YuWon's path.

Kak, kak-.

Right after that, Shin Mu-geuk and Jang Chun-il blocked Hermes' path. Pung Baekrim's body had already been torn here and there, and Shin Mu-geuk was also limp and limp, as if he had broken one of his arms.

Somehow, the four of them had managed to pin Hermes down with their combined strength.

"Wow. You guys are fast."

Hermes, on the other hand, was relaxed.

He didn't have a scratch on him.

Nevertheless, Hermes raised his staff and said.

"I surrender. I surrender."

"...?"

Question marks hovered over the faces of the four men.

The fight had clearly been one-sided until a moment ago, and suddenly he was surrendering.

"I don't have the confidence to fight that guy. And this fight is already over."

Hermes' head snapped back.

And at that moment...

Shii-.

Quaang-!

Something fell from the sky, raising a cloud of dust. Pung Baekrim and Shin Mugak rushed to protect YuWon, while Baek Mugang wielded his spear to clear the dust.

"Kuk..."

From that dust, Athena stood up.

She was bleeding, clutching Aegis in one hand and her broken sword in the other.

"We're all here."

Is it chance or fate?

As the end of the fight approached, they all gathered in one place.

"Hermes."

"Sister."

Hermes' gaze fell on the place where Pandora had disappeared.

"We have lost."

"...."

It was something he already knew.

And for that, it was all the more bitter.

For whatever reason, she had been distracted for a moment, and had been defeated by Cheon Mujin.

Pandora had been defeated by Kim YuWon, and Hermes was the only one left standing.

However, there was no way to turn the tide of the fight just because he was there.

'That guy is again...'

Pudeuk-.

Athena looked at YuWon and gritted her teeth.

War and Wisdom.

They were two words that symbolized his place on Olympus. In fact, he had fought in countless wars organized by Olympus and had never known defeat.

As such, he had always been at the forefront of war.

Once, not so long ago, he had failed.

And again today, in YuWon's presence, he met with defeat.

'He also did something with Hercules.'

He had guessed, but he wanted confirmation.

And he was curious.

What had he done to turn Hercules, the Hero of Olympus, against him?

What was it about Kim YuWon that attracted him?

But...

"No."

The answer she received was completely different from what Athena expected.

"It's your fault."

"What?"

"I told you what Zeus, your father, is going to tell you. That's all."

What the hell was she talking about?

It was a completely unfamiliar voice. Even if it wasn't, he suddenly felt a misty fog over something that was shrouded in a veil.

YuWon looked at Athena, who was puzzled.

Hwareuk-

[The 'Ash Eyes' understand the truth].

One of the abilities of Ash Eyes.

Falsehood and truth.

In this case, it didn't go as far as simply determining the other party's mood through facial expressions and eyes, but still, using the skill was much more accurate than simply reading facial expressions.

'Athena didn't know.

She had thought she would be involved in Hercules' affairs, since she and Ares were siblings.

But apparently she knew nothing about Hercules.

Athena had been at the forefront of Olympus, leading the war effort, but apparently Zeus did not trust her completely.

'So, Hermes...'

YuWon turned his head and looked at Hermes.

His expression was easier to read than Athena's.

[Not interested.]

It was a very Hermes answer.

His symbol on Olympus was freedom.

Known as the simplest of personalities, disliking complexity, Hermes didn't care much about things unless they concerned him directly.

'They said he wouldn't mind if Olympus collapsed...'

None of them had anything to do with Hercules.

So, could Athena really side with Zeus when she knew all the facts?

He wondered.

'Athena's abilities are useful.'

She was far more powerful than a Ranker.

Having fought in countless wars, Athena's commanding skills shone in great battles.

In fact, it was Athena, not the Olympians or Hercules, who commanded the Gigantomachy twice.

'Should I catch them for now?'

YuWon pondered for a moment about dealing with the two.

'And then...

[Hatching rate of the 'Egg of ?' increases]

The hatching rate of the Egg had started to increase again.

[Hatching rate: 96.01 %]

[Hatching rate: 96.67 %]

[Hatching rate: 97.17 %]

[Hatching...]

The hatching rate kept increasing.

YuWon nervously watched the increase in hatching rate.

'Please....'

[Hatching rate: 99.23%]

[Hatching rate: 99.40 %]

[Hatching...]

'A little more'.

[Hatching rate: 99.95 %]

[Hatching rate: 100 %]

[Egg of '?' begins to hatch.]

Boom-.

The thousands of teeth in front of him disappeared and cracks formed on the surface of the Egg in the inventory

Chapter 173

Three gazes hovered over a pond.

In the midst of the silence that had been quite long, a small voice was heard loudly.

"Lost."

It was Apollo who broke the long silence and spoke.

Above the pond, he saw Athena throwing Aegis to the ground and Cheon Mujin holding a sword to his throat.

The fight was over.

It was an outcome no one had expected.

"Now why don't you tell us why you called us."

"...."

Zeus was speechless.

It was the most terrifying silence.

Zeus, whose expression never changed, frightened those who were always near him.

"Father?"

Artemis called.

At that moment, Zeus raised his head.

"We'll have to wait another 3000 years."

"What?"

The answer had nothing to do with the question at all.

Apollo tensed. He asked again, ready to leave at any moment.

"What do you mean, three thousand years?"

"I'll go back to having a batch of several sons, raising them and turning them into Rankers..."

Zeus blurted out his words as if in thought.

"That's how long it will take to rebuild the power of Olympus after it has been cut off." ("That's how long it will take for Olympus to regain its power.").

The words sent shivers down Apollo's spine.

It was also the answer to his first question.

"Are you going to cut us too?"

"Don't you know better?"

"Because you don't need us?"

"Yes."

Against Zeus' wishes, Apollo and Artemis did not participate in the Gigantomachy.

From then on...

Apollo and his sister were out of Zeus's sight.

'I wondered why now...'

Apollo's gaze strayed to the pool that, moments before, had illuminated the battlefield.

'It was to keep us tied up.

Did he know that Hargan and they had made contact?

Before the full-scale destruction of Olympus, the two were contemplating whether to join the fight.

But apparently Zeus knew.

"It's all screwed up."

Zeus stood up.

Pak-!

A huge bolt of lightning exploded around Apollo and Artemis. As if in a fit of rage, Zeus' mana crackled and crackled around them.

'We must flee.'

The decision was clear.

Apollo's eyes drifted upward.

He was unprepared for such an occasion as this, but he had brought the Chariot of the Sun with him.

'If only I could ride in the chariot...'

Not even Zeus would be able to keep up.

Just then...

Flash-

High in the sky, more specifically, in the dark clouds.

A bright beam of light emanated from them.

"It's been a long time since we've had a family reunion, and it's a shame it's already over."

Huddle, huddle, huddle.

The charred remains of something fell from the sky.

The moment he saw it, Apollo's eyes widened like saucers.

Apollo knew immediately what this wreckage was.

'The Chariot of the Sun...'

The best vehicle in the Tower, created by Hephaestus over many years.

It had been reduced to ashes by the power of Zeus.

"I'll ask them one more time."

Clack-

Zeus approached Apollo and his sister.

"Whose side are they on?"

* * *

Athena and Hermes were imprisoned in the deepest prison of the Murim. Their Mana was suppressed and they were bound with a rope that even a High Rank could not break.

The Heavenly Mountain had fallen.

The battle was won, but the Celestial Demon Cult had lost their home.

"We'll have to relocate."

"To where?"

"How about to Hefei, where the Namgung Family is located?"

"There are still many who fear the Heavenly Demon Cult, and it would be premature to move our base."

"But we can't stay here forever, can we? It's time to ask for their cooperation."

"I agree. Hah, to think it would come to this..."

The strongest members of the Heavenly Demon Cult gathered in the villages near Heavenly Mountain or in simple barracks to hold meetings.

There were two topics.

The treatment of the Rankers of Olympus, including the captured Athena and Hermes, and the migration of the Cult.

Both were important, and the meeting lasted a whole day.

And at that moment...

YuWon sighed, lying in a barracks he had acquired from the Celestial Demon Cult.

"This is taking forever."

Clunk-.

Another crack.

The Egg looked like it was going to crack if he gave it a firm blow.

Of course, if he was going to hatch it like that, he would have smashed it a long time ago.

[It's hatching]

Same boring message.

YuWon took out the egg, not knowing when it would hatch, and watched it.

Perhaps thanks to the full hatching rate, the purple pattern was nowhere to be found. Instead, the surface of the Egg was filled with a purple color and other parts were missing.

'It's amazing.'

[The 'Ash Eyes' look inward.]

Just in case, YuWon used his Ash Eyes again to examine the inside of the cracked Egg.

But.

'I can't see anything.'

He still couldn't see anything in the Egg.

Even using the Ash Eyes, the Egg still only looked like a purple sphere.

'That side is also just as perplexed.'

YuWon turned his head and looked at the woman sitting on the bed in front of him.

Pandora.

She was looking at the Egg with the same blank stare as YuWon.

Unlike when they first met, she didn't show the slightest hint of emotion.

'The only thing that was eaten was the power of the Outsider. There wasn't even the slightest scratch on his body.'

It was a strange thing.

It looked as if the Egg was eating it, but Pandora was fine on the outside.

The only thing the Egg ate was really the 'Outside' that was nestled in Pandora.

'A hollow, emotionless beauty'.

That was the current state of Pandora that YuWon concluded.

Having been consumed by a huge, uncontrollable mass of emotions, she seemed literally hollow/empty.

"What are you doing?"

Just then, Hargaan, who had removed the cloth and poked his head into the bunkhouse, asked YuWon.

In response to that question, YuWon pointed to the Egg with a nod of his head.

"Why, are you going to eat it?"

"No. It looks like it's about to break."

"What, is it going to hatch?"

Hargaan's eyes twinkled with curiosity and he stepped inside.

And then...

"W-Whoa!"

Hargaan shouted in surprise at the sight of Pandora inside YuWon's barracks.

He was an enemy until just a day ago.

Besides, Hargaan was afraid to see Pandora, as he felt so bad that he wanted to kill himself just to be around.

"W-W-What? Why are you here?"

"Even if you tell me to leave, I won't leave. Don't talk."

"Then why don't you kick her out?"

"I'd like to."

Shrugging, YuWon looked at Hargaan and asked.

"But can you?"

".....No."

Pandora stuck to YuWon's side and didn't move.

There was no point in pulling her hand, and she had no intention of leaving on her own.

It was impossible to force her out.

Not only was her Holy Fire no longer working, but simply in terms of strength, she was stronger than Athena.

'Unless Hades himself comes, there is no one on this side who can get her out.'

For that reason, Pandora stayed close to YuWon.

Actually, there was no need to throw her out.

Because she really wasn't thinking of doing anything bad to YuWon.

"I guess I can't stay here. I'm leaving."

"Why?"

"Unlike you, I don't have much courage, and I'm still a little upset."

Hargaan walked out of the barracks as if he were running away.

Just as well, because even if he had gone in, I was going to take him out.

Clunk-.

Another gieta.

It really seemed like the time had come.

Thrrrrrr-.

A human figure stepped out of YuWon's shadows.

An Undead with the face of Lancelot.

"Arthur."

Arthur knelt down in front of Yu-Won.

- Tell me.

"Guard the entrance to the barracks. Don't let anyone in."

One never knew what would happen from now on.

The power of the Outside, from what they had learned, was beyond the reach of this small barracks.

Maybe someone would get in and get trapped in it, or a really dangerous monster could come out.

That was the reason YuWon called Arthur to protect the barracks.

-Yes, I understand...

Eek-.

One step ahead of Arthur, there was a person who had heard YuWon's words and stood in front of the barracks.

"Pandora...?"

Pandora, who was sitting in front of YuWon a moment ago, was guarding the entrance of the barracks with her back to YuWon.

"What are you doing?"

"You said to guard the place."

"I wasn't talking to you."

"I heard you."

He was stuck.

He thought she wouldn't hear him when he asked her to leave, but now she heard him just fine.

"Oh, right."

YuWon knew from what had just happened that there was no point in arguing.

Besides, he had no reason to refuse.

As long as Pandora was on guard, no opponent, be it the Heavenly Demon or Athena, would be able to enter.

'I don't know what happened, but.....!'

Something had changed on Pandora.

What it was would have to wait until later.

'Now this side comes first.'

Crack, crack, crack.

Cracks spread across the purple surface of the egg.

Purple light seeped through the cracks, and he felt a familiar aura.

'Mm.'

The head of Yamata no Orochi, Lancelot and Pandora.

It was a creature that fed on the remains of the Outers and increased their hatching rate.

Naturally, he had suspected that its identity was also related to the Outers, and with this, his suspicion became certainty.

Now there was only one problem.

The Outer Gods.

Among those who call themselves Outer Gods, what kind of God is the one inside?

Creack, creack, creack

The Egg was cracking faster and faster....

It spread all over the Egg and cracked the surface, which was very fast compared to the long wait.

Bang-!

Hwaahhhh!

A swarm of light emanated from inside the Egg.

Yu-Won gazed at it helplessly.

And at that moment...

[The 'Egg of ?' is hatching]

['...Begin contract with ?'.]

"...What?"

I could understand hatching, but a contract?

This was unexpected.

The swarm of lights did not disappear easily. The energy emanating from it was getting stronger and stronger, until it became difficult to be near it.

Suddenly, Pandora turned and looked in this direction.

Tsureu, Tsutsu-.

Clusters of light and energy emanating from the broken Egg enveloped YuWon and began to enter his body.

The inscrutable power that exists outside the tower.

The moment he accepted that power, YuWon realized....

'So this is a contract?'

This power was originally possessed by the Egg.

Sharing that power, or rather, sharing it together, was the process of the contract.

Kwak-.

The power emanating from the Egg gradually diminished over time.

The light also gradually faded, revealing a little of what was inside.

And then...

['...?' hatched successfully]

['...?' has a growth rate of 0%]

['...?' may have a name, please indicate it]

['...?' has a level of 1]

"Level?"

A strange message floated in front of YuWon.

Chapter 174

Levels.

There was only one instance where a level was given to a non-player, at least as far as YuWon knew.

'Undead Chimera.'

An undead capable of leveling up.

Due to its existence, the rank of the Chimera Maker, Childe, later rose much higher than it had at first.

After leveling up, he quickly became a High Rank Player, only to be slaughtered once again by the Great Sage, Equal to Heaven, ending his days in the tower.

As such, it was not uncommon for beings other than players to level up.

But.

'I've never heard of a god leveling up.'

A message beyond common sense.

YuWon gazed at the slowly extinguishing light and saw the body of the Egg lying inside.

Inside it...

Gop-

"...a baby?"

There sat a palm-sized child, blinking at YuWon silently.

Black hair and pupils. Small and round, like a fairy.

"Abba?"

I wonder if he means daddy.

"Abba, baba?"

The words that followed suggested otherwise.

He was just a child who hasn't learned the language, blurting out whatever comes out of his mouth.

'I really didn't expect this.'

It was confusing and complicated.

I was expecting a little monster with tentacles or something, because I could feel the energy of the Outsiders.

But no, it was a little kid.

'I feel like a babysitter.'

He didn't like it.

Depending on the player's inclination, the creatures hatched from the eggs were usually used to fight on the front of the battlefield at the will of their owners.

YuWon was also planning to use the hatchling in that way.

But, be that as it may, the thought of throwing such a small creature against the enemy pricked his conscience.

In addition....

"We can't communicate either-".

"Abba?"

The voice that came right next to his ear made YuWon turn his head in surprise.

The boy was standing over his shoulder.

Yu Won didn't know what he was talking about, so he tilted his head, it seemed like it would be hard to communicate properly.

'How did you get up here?'

He knew at least that he wasn't just a boy the size of the palm of his hand.

But to be able to move so imperceptibly?

'Abba, baba-baba-.'

[Please give a name to '????']

A message came with the child's cry.

The name.

He had never named anything before, but it seemed that this message would keep coming to him unless he named it.

'What should I...'

A moment's thought.

Soon, a familiar character was superimposed on the boy's face.

'He looks like a character from the game Autumn Leaves.'

It was one of YuWon's favorite games from Earth, long ago.

It looked like a character with a 1:1 head to body ratio, and he named it.

"Danpung*." (Literally means 'Autumn Leaves'.)

[Do you want to call him "Danpung?"]

"No."

YuWon shook his head.

The boy was puzzled.

If there was a first name, there had to be a last name.

"Kim Danpung. That's your name."

At those words, Pandora, who was standing next to him, turned her head and looked at Yuwon.

His face was still expressionless.

No, with a slight frown.

YuWon, who looked into her eyes, asked.

"Is something wrong?"

"What a strange name."

Pandora's gaze then shifted to the little boy they had named Kim Danpung.

"And that, scary."

She was frightened, as all the Outer Power in her body had vanished, and with it all her emotions.

'This little guy?'

Did Pandora see something she couldn't see?

Probably not. As high as Pandora's rank was, as capable as she was, she didn't have the same abilities as YuWon, namely the Ash Eyes.

There was only one way to explain it.

"Instinct."

The Power of the Outsider, a power that had been in her for a long time. This little one fed on that power all this time, growing, to finally come out of the Egg and come into the World.

As much as it was the power that had been tormenting it all along, Pandora's instinct rejected it.

It was then that YuWon looked at Pandora....

['????' received a name]

['?????' likes the name]

[The contract has been completed]

[Later, some of the statistics of 'Kim Danpung' will be shared].

[The statistic is invalid]

[Some of the stats are replaced with 'Arcane Power'].

[Arcane Power has increased by 3].

A sudden burst of messages.

Followed by.

Pang~

YuWon's vision flipped as he felt his body defy gravity and float away.

The view from inside the barracks, and Pandora standing next to him. They all disappeared, leaving him alone in an empty world.

No.

"Abababa."

Danpung riding on his shoulders was still there.

"You did this?"

"Abba!"

"You keep saying daddy."

In any case, at a glance, it seemed to mean he was right.

YuWon turned his head and looked ahead. Something was appearing in this black, empty space where no gravity could be felt either.

'Teeth?'

jjeook-

It looked familiar.

The mouth that had appeared every time the Egg ate the Outsiders.

That guy opened his big mouth and approached YuWon.

His breath was cut off.

It was the first time they had tried to sink their teeth into him.

Even when the Egg had first eaten Yamata no Orochi's corpse, the strange, alien sensation had been repulsive to him, but not as oppressive as it was now.

What on earth is that?

An Exterior?

If so, it was certainly a higher level of Outsider.

"Is it targeting me this time?"

The mouth was getting closer and closer.

I couldn't see anything through its gaping maw.

Being eaten...

Although he could feel it so clearly, but YuWon strangely wasn't scared.

'It's not dangerous.

This was something created by Danpung on his shoulder.

No, maybe it was this guy himself.

'There's no danger.

With that assurance, YuWon stepped into the creature's mouth.

At that moment...

Kwajik-!

[Skill: Predator (捕食者) has been acquired.]

A message appeared and Yu-Won entered.

Huh-ah!

His vision returned.

The weightless state disappeared, and the scenery inside the barracks was reflected in his eyes again.

YuWon blinked rapidly, remembering the message from earlier.

'Predator?'

Hatching the egg resulted in three stat points, all of them Arcane Power, quite decent.

He was immediately overcome with a sense of fulfillment, the likes of which he had never felt before.

It was quite an accomplishment, and he had even gained an additional skill.

YuWon quickly checked his abilities.

[Predator (捕食者)]

Rating: ???

Mastery/Competence: 0.98%.

Summons monsters that feed on unknown, nameless beings.

Increases stats based on the size of the target.

It was a skill that fit the name perfectly.

By unknown beings, he probably meant "Outsiders".

This power was transformed into an ability and put to sleep in YuWon.

'In the message it said that some stats can be shared? I wonder if this ability is part of that...'

That mouth he saw earlier.

It was the Predator, and it had definitely entered his mind.

Predator.

An ability that devoured Outsiders and absorbed their power.

'You mean I can eat them and become stronger...'

In an instant, YuWon recalled the horde of Outer Gods stretched out in front of him.

At the time, they had seemed like a tidal wave to him, a huge mess. But now that he had this ability, he felt a sense of irony as he recalled that incident.

"Almost a feast."

Eating them and getting stronger?

He was imagining it.

Then a shiver ran down his spine.

"How crazy..."

This was more than a powerful ability.

This was a power that would completely change everything YuWon had planned.

YuWon would have to meet the Outsiders in the future, either inside or outside of this Tower.

-What are the odds?

Half a year ago...

Was the question posed to him by Son OhGong's twelfth alter ego.

-Well. I'd say it's about 1% at this point.

-That's it?

- The point is, there is a possibility. Like I said, we've just plugged the broken hole.

Plug the broken hole.

At the time, it was very appropriate.

Because all he had done up to that point was prevent Hephaestus from joining Olympus and discovering Lancelot's connection to Olympus, which was the beginning of Ragnarok.

Even now that he had succeeded in luring Hercules, he thought the likelihood would not change.

However...

'10%'

With this power, it would be a different story.

The odds increased dramatically.

There was hope for a fight he had thought impossible.

The Egg he had obtained out of nowhere was simply a blessing from the heavens.

Now, the next step was to increase his level.

YuWon looked at Danpung.

Feeling more at peace than he had in a long time, he sketched the biggest smile he'd had since his return.

"Danpung."

"Abba?"

"You're my lucky charm."

"Abba, Ababa!"

Perhaps delighted by the compliment, Danpung laughed, raising his little arms in the air.

Apparently, he was in a very good mood.

Although YuWon didn't expect this in the first place, this surprise was much better.

[Name: Kim Danpung]

[Level 1]

[Strength: 1]

[Agility: 1]

[Stamina: 1]

[Perception: 1]

[Divine Power: 100]

[Skills possessed]

[Predator, ?????]

[Growth rate: 0%]

[When the growth rate reaches 100%, it will grow to the next level regardless of your/its level.]

[Special Point 1: It recognizes you as an owner].

[Special Point 2: Still a bit bossy/selfish].

A divine beast with levels and stats.

Such a thing did not exist in this Tower.

Unless you were created as a chimera, having a level meant you were chosen by the System.

Also.

Danpung is not a god or a divine creature, but a player.

'His basic stats are terrible. The only stat that is significantly higher is Divine Power...'

Apparently this stat is the equivalent of Arcane Power for normal Players.

'Right now I can't think of how to get it into combat.

The stats are terrible, and no skills other than Predator were revealed.

It looks like YuWon would have to figure out the skills one by one later.

Most of all, I wondered how I could make this little guy fight.

'This is enough for now.

The Egg hatched into Danpung, and the contract with the creature granted YuWon an ability more valuable than any other he could have wished for.

He didn't know how great Danpung was, but he had gotten more than he expected, and it was enough for now.

For now, she would just think of him as a cute and pretty little thing.

She even gave him her last name and called him Kim Danpung, so she felt like she had a son.

"Pung-ah*." **(Note: -ah is to speak more informally, out of confidence).**

"Abba?"

The creature that had slithered from YuWon's shoulder and crawled through the barracks turned its head.

Round eyes.

YuWon met those eyes and smiled.

"Let's do well in the future."

Chapter 175

"So, this guy came out of there?"

Tap~

Hargaan poked his head out and stared at him, and Danpung blinked a couple of times with those big eyes.

It was a look as if to say, What the hell is that?

"Yes."

"Wow, it's so cute."

Hargaan's reaction to Danpung was that of a cute little pet.

He certainly was cute.

With a head and a body almost half and half, he really lives up to his name and looks like a character from a video game called. Autumn Leaf.

In this tower, where all sorts of quirky monsters were sold, Danpung looked enough to steal someone's tenderness.

"Don't get too close."

Of course.

"Or it will eat you."

In YuWon's eyes, he didn't just look cute.

'It's more monstrous than anyone could imagine.'

When Danpung hatched, YuWon saw the monster that had been sleeping inside him.

Moreover, the monster was now part of YuWon.

Hargaan, oblivious to that fact, could only scratch his head, wondering what the hell he was talking about.

"Anyway, you're telling me you're going to adopt it as a son?"

"Yes."

"I see that you really cherish this son of yours."

"That's what parents should do."

Turning Hargaan's face away from him with the palm of his hand, YuWon immediately mentioned the matter for which he had summoned him.

"So, tell me about your mother."

"What about my mother?"

"Now that we've taken a hit, it's our turn to attack next."

He couldn't play defense forever.

Hercules was busy moving alone now, but it wasn't clear how far he would get.

Fortunately, I had a rough idea of Hercules' movements.

Every time he raided a temple, Hercules would announce his next destination in his player kit.

'I can't keep watching Hercules get out of his boxes, otherwise the tower we've been working on might collapse if he stays like this a little longer.'

Pandora and Athena, the cards he had been holding, had now been captured.

Zeus had only one option.

"Zeus is going to move now."

Finally, he managed to draw out the crouching giant.

"So you must know about the hidden card in this fight."

"A hidden card? What is it?"

YuWon and Danpung blinked.

After a moment of silence, Hargaan asked, puzzled.

"No way, me?"

"What did you hear before you came here?"

"No, what the hell have I got?"

"You have half of Zeus."

Hargaan gaped at YuWon's words.

Half?

Himself, did he really have such a thing?

"Right now, the vessel is too small to channel its power, but it's there."

"What the hell are you talking about?"

"First of all. Tell me about your mother, what she was like."

"My mother was...."

Hargaan hesitated for a moment.

Before speaking, he took a breath.

Then.

"She was a very beautiful and pure woman."

Hargaan began to talk about his mother.

"And she loved only one man in her life."

* * *

Pang -

Zeus' body was covered in golden armor.

It was an unfamiliar feeling.

Besides the white cloth, he hadn't worn such hard armor since the Gigantomachy.

No.

Even in the Gigantomachy, thanks to the exploits of Hercules, he was rarely called upon.

Pap-

After preparing himself, Zeus turned his head towards the pond.

His own face reflected in the pond looked somewhat sad.

On the outside, he still looked calm, but....

"This makes me feel bad every time I see him."

Tak~

Crunch~

With a slight snap of his fingers, the calm surface of the pond shuddered with the sound of something falling.

The natural reflection of Zeus' face had disappeared.

In its place was an expression Zeus had been hiding.

'That's how I know.

A pool reflecting the truth.

In front of it, everyone was naked.

The expression hidden inside was revealed and the truth came to light.

This is how he learned.

'That everything in the world is bad'.

He had brought many people to this place.

At first, it was curiosity.

To see what his own women thought of him.

They, oddly enough, had the same expressions in front of him, but hid another identical expression.

"Sure. I couldn't expect another harassment either."

Even Zeus knew who he was.

A man with a hundred wives, a hundred children.

That was why he had come to love no woman and no child.

It was greedy to expect love from someone in that position.

Everyone had contemptuous faces towards Zeus and smiled in front of him because he was the King of Olympus.

The surface of the water of the broken pond soon became calm.

On a calm surface.

Then, another face surfaced.

"He was mad."

He was the only one laughing in this room.

"Falling in love again."

A love he thought would never appear in his life.

When he finally brought her here, Zeus was surprised.

It was the second time.

The face outside the pool was the same as inside.

The other thing is that the other one, Hera, was the only one who despised Zeus equally in and out of the pool.

"Yes, madman..."

Above the pool, he saw his reflection again.

With that, Zeus turned and walked out of the temple for the first time in a thousand years, his Thunderbolt in hand.

"Like to give my other half to that boy."

* * *

"So that's it in a nutshell, the only woman who ever loved Zeus."

"Was that summed up so simply?"

After a long conversation, Hargaan smiled awkwardly and nodded.

He wasn't wrong, after all; his mother had certainly loved Zeus.

"But I don't know if she's the only one. There's Nemesis, there's Themis, there's..."

YuWon's heart sank at the mention of a few names.

The names he was hearing were the names that would later be among the most vocal in their opposition to Zeus.

They had wished his downfall more than anyone else on Olympus.

"They're all on Hades' side - haven't you heard?"

"Really?"

"What do you think of your mother?"

At that question, Hargaan hesitated for a moment and then sighed.

There was nothing to think about.

"Even if the sky collapses, she'll probably side with my father."

"It's different from you."

"Because love is bigger than anything else, and my mother was a foolish woman who knew what was right and wrong, but she was blinded by love."

"Is it okay for you to say that?"

"It doesn't matter. She knows it herself."

Shrugging, Hargaan smiled faintly.

"That's why I didn't want her to live like him."

"I wondered why you were standing on this side, and it was for that reason."

"Yes. Because it's the right thing to do, because it's Olympus."

The belief that Olympus is a righteous collective.

It is said that Olympus was created to bring order to the chaos of the Tower.

Perhaps Hargaan wished to honor those roots.

Pak-

The player's kit in Yuwon's arms rang.

At the same time, a familiar cry rose above Hargaan's head.

"Abaat, baa-"

Danpung was now on top of Hargana's head, patting him on the head.

YuWon put Danpung back on his shoulder and said.

"Come on, get up. We'll talk about the rest on the way."

"The rest? Is there anything else to talk about?"

"The story I couldn't tell before I got here."

"Oh, that... But where are we going?"

"Your uncle just started moving."

The vibration that sounded a moment ago.,,

That vibration was a message from Hades.

"It's time for us to move too. Zeus will do it too."

"My father..."

Zeus had not been seen in public since the Gigantomachy.

But with Olympus in such dire straits, even Zeus could not afford to remain confined to his temple.

'No. He wasn't just hiding.'

Zeus would sit in his temple and watch the world through his pool.

Not long before, he had also cast a Thunderbolt directly at Camelot, the city ruled by the Round Table.

He stopped all activities and was planning only one thing.

Second Gigantomachy.

The great war that would ultimately lead to the destruction of the Giants.

Hargaan asked with a slightly tired face.

"Will this fight be the last?"

"Maybe."

YuWon nodded.

"The fight against Olympus will be the last."

"Against Olympus?"

"Yes."

"And you, I suppose there will be others."

This time, YuWon nodded.

Olympus was a mountain to cross.

But that didn't mean that beyond it was a flat plain.

The last mountain to cross was much higher, and Olympus was only the first of many.

"You said you were going to break the roof."

- "I broke the roof of this Tower.

What YuWon said in the Tutorial.

When he heard that, he just thought he was a guy with high goals.

He thought that only a guy like this could stand beside him, that he could rival the future King of Olympus.

But that wasn't the case.

The tower he experienced as a player was too wide to look up from the ceiling, and the ceiling he was looking at was too high to see.

But YuWon wasn't.

He was looking higher, even now.

"Tell me, what's up there?"

It was a question he would never know, but Hargaan was curious.

What the hell is above him, why Yuwon and Zeus want him so badly?

And for some reason, he wondered if YuWon would even know what was up there.

And that thought was the same.

"You don't have to know yet."

YuWon didn't say he didn't know.

"Not yet."

* * *

Quaang-!

Boom, boom, boom.

The ground collapsed and the temple collapsed.

It only took a minute or so for the castle-like temple to collapse.

Hercules threw his short club, just over a meter long, on his back and muttered.

"This is the fifth.

Fifth.

That was the number of temples on Olympus destroyed by Hercules.

First Hera, then Poseidon, then Dionysus, then Hestia.

And now, the temple of Demeter.

The Rankers, who had been busy blockading the second temple, had suddenly disappeared from the third.

Right now, all the way to the fifth temple.

'He was right.

"After you take down the second temple, they probably won't bother to stop you at the third. They'll know it's a lost cause."

At first, I was skeptical.

Even if it was predictable enough, he really hadn't expected them to behave as YuWon had predicted from the second temple.

'He's a mysterious guy.

Kurrureung-

Above the collapsed temple...

Thick black clouds rolled in, slowly cooling the air.

The foreboding began when Hercules first stepped onto the 32nd floor.

'Surprisingly, even this last thing he said came true...'

A thick black cloud filled the sky.

"And from the fifth temple, perhaps...."

BANG!

A rumbling and furious thunder.

As soon as he saw it, Hercules was sure....

"You'll be able to meet Zeus, the person you most want to see."

That he was right.

Chapter 176

The 32nd floor was a rich world.

The land was fertile and there was always enough rain to grow grain and fruit in abundance.

These were fed to livestock, which provided abundant meat, and the inhabitants of the 32nd Floor never had to worry about eating.

They even exported to the other worlds.

Therefore, the word that symbolized the world of the 32nd floor was "peace".

But then...

Quang!

The world was now the scene of a great war.

Thud-!

Kneeling in front of Hercules, a Ranker collapsed with his back split in half.

He was a large, imposing man of four meters, a renowned Ranker who answered to the name Orion.

"You're using this guy as a chess horse?"

Hercules looked up, and wiped away the sweat.

There were still dark clouds in the sky.

How many people had he killed so far?

Slowly, he was beginning to feel nauseous.

He had even split someone while fighting.

"Why don't you come out yourself?"

A growling voice.

Boom-.

Kwaang-!

A club swung through the air, and the clouds parted.

"Don't send them for nothing."

Kihihihihing-!

A group of Sun Chariots descended from the parted cloud.

The carriages were driven by white horses. Inside were several players and Rankers.

"Tsk."

Hercules raised his fist.

Boom-.

A fist pounding the air.

Boom, boom, boom-!

Quack, quack, quack-!

The impact of his fist shattered dozens of Sun Chariots.

A sorrow flowed through Hercules' body. It was for attacking the players who didn't become Rankers riding the Sun Chariot.

'As expected, he's just trying to tire me out.'

Zeus was a cautious character.

He rarely moved directly as he did now, he was often behind the scenes, manipulating the various Rankers within Olympus as if they were his hands and feet.

He was like that even now.

"Zeus probably won't try to deal with you directly."

"How do you know that?"

"Because your father is that kind of person."

"Do you really know him that well, and even if you do, aren't you being a little presumptuous?"

"You'll see when you get there."

At this point, he could only wonder.

How on earth did it all fit together so well?

He always thought Zeus was the best when it came to drawing the big picture, but in this case, it seemed like YuWon was on top of it all.

'Besides...'

"Just buy yourself some time. It doesn't have to be long."

He had anticipated all of this and even told her how to deal with it next.

'What the hell are you thinking?'

She couldn't understand what he meant.

In fact, when he'd first heard it, he'd been skeptical.

But now he had to believe it.

'Right.

Pudeuk-.

A part of him wanted to run to Zeus in the sky right now.

But...

'You want to avenge your mother, don't you?'

YuWon's advice stuck in his throat and he couldn't let it out.

"Then make sure you do it. Don't rush it just because you're angry."

'Since we've already come to this, I can only continue.'

Boom!

Boom-!

* * *

A battle carpeted in red, with countless Rankers gathered around.

"So much for Olympus."

"A civil war between Hercules and Zeus. This is worth seeing."

The room was buzzing.

The topic was the recent situation on Olympus.

The news was that Olympus, which had been the talk of late, had started a civil war.

But the uproar didn't last long.

Pang, pang, pang~

Right next to the throne. It was the sound of a man's hammer.

The hall was silent in an instant. Countless Rankers closed their mouths, and only then did the one-eyed man sitting on the throne open his eyes again.

"Olympus is Olympus, and we do our work. Nothing good can come from taking too much interest in the affairs of the neighborhood."

After Hades' visit...

Asgard's biggest concern was the civil war on Olympus.

Olympus was one of the few Guilds comparable to Asgard.

Naturally, there were many within Asgard who wished for the downfall of Olympus, and it was natural for them to talk about it.

Especially now that war was a certainty.

"We listened."

Hundreds gathered in the hall bowed their heads in response.

And at their reaction, Odin, the King of Asgard who sat on the throne, nodded.

"Well, I'll just tell them to mind their own business in their own neighborhood and....."

Without Hades, Olympus and Asgard were no longer connected.

There were more important matters to attend to.

"Let's talk about Surt, as we have already arranged. If I see one of you looking for fun snooping around for no reason, I will throw you out of the castle without mercy."

"Understood!"

"Understood!"

A thunderous response.

Odin nodded, seemingly satisfied.

With that, the conversation changed direction.

Soon, one by one, they began to talk about Surt and the other Giants.

He had to concentrate on the meeting, though.

Oddly, Odin had one thing on his mind.

'Kim YuWon...'

The player who had brought Olympus to this point, and he wasn't even a Ranker player yet.

It was strange, to say the least.

No matter how much talent you have, it's impossible.

I was intrigued.

It had been a long time since he had been interested in anything outside of the long battle against the Giants.

That was true even in the past, at the Round Table.

But.....

'T'd like to take a look.'

For some reason, he was interested.

He thought it had been a long time since he had had a glimpse of the future of everything in the world.

'I'll have to meet him when he comes up.'

Of course.

"Only if he can survive that bastard Zeus."

".....?"

Odin's muttering brought the meeting room to silence for a moment.

Apparently those last words had been strong.

'I thought he said we weren't supposed to talk about that.'

What did he just say about Zeus?

'Really...'

A flurry of looks.

"Mm?"

Odin, who was sitting with his chin resting on his hand, raised his head at those stares.

"Get on with the story. Pay no attention to other things."

* * *

A light flashed in the sky.

Thwack!

A line of lightning struck.

Pajik, Pajik-.

A deep pit formed in the ground, and intense sparks flew around it.

Hercules raised his arms to protect his head. Every inch of his body tingled from the lightning that had struck him.

"Are you finally going to move?"

Hercules looked up and felt Zeus' gaze on him.

He had made enough sacrifices.

Nearly a hundred Player Rankers had already been sacrificed, and many more were dying.

Hercules' body also had small wounds all over it.

"For Olympus."

"For Olympus!"

After that lightning struck....

Another group of troops approached.

"Those fanatics..."

There was only one meaning of the arrival of Rankers other than Zeus.

It meant that he wasn't going to go out to the front yet.

'Are you going to support them from afar?'

The range of Zeus' attacks was practically everything under the sky.

It wasn't hard to find his position while launching his Thunderbolts, but it wasn't going to be easy if he insisted on bringing in other Rankers like this.

Besides...

"It's been a while, Hercules."

Familiar faces mingled among them.

"Dionysus..."

Dionysus and Demeter, High Ranker members of Olympus.

It seemed to be past the stage of buying time and reducing their resistance.

They're going to try to catch Hercules, and they're going to try to catch him with the right Rankers.

'It doesn't matter how many of those guys there are.

The problem isn't them, it's Zeus behind them.

He had been hit by Thunderbolts before, and was fully aware of his power.

No.

Maybe even he had adjusted his power a bit to account for the influence of his allies around him.

'Still, at this point.....'

Kuk-

Hercules tensed the club in his hand.

Then, ignoring Dionysus' salute, he raised his head and looked up at the clouds.

The corners of Hercules' mouth turned up.

Finally.

"It is about to begin.

The beginning of a great battle in which the very existence of Olympus was at stake was about to begin.

* * *

Pajjik-

A burst of lightning flashed through the blackened clouds.

Zeus stood in the sky and looked down. His golden eyes reflected everything on earth, and he had been watching Hercules for quite some time.

His son was going mad on the battlefield.

Despite the misery of the situation, Zeus' eyes did not reflect bitterness or sadness, only regret.

"He's a pretty hard-working guy..."

Pajjik-

Another Lightning Bolt was placed in Zeus' hand.

"I don't know if I can ever create someone like him again."

The gesture was light.

Zeus immediately followed Hercules' movements and rolled his golden eyes.

For a moment, the allies withdrew as if they had made a promise.

At that moment...

Zeus' Thunderbolt fell.

Kwareung-!

A deafening roar and a blinding flash of light streaked across the sky.

Hercules raised his arms again and blocked the lightning with his whole body. Without any special skills or maneuvers, he had no way to avoid Zeus' lightning bolt.

'How many more shots will it take to stop him...'

Pajjik-!

Zeus formed another Lightning Bolt in his hand.

'I'm curious.'

His greatest masterpiece.

Having done it once, there was no way it was impossible to do it twice. That's why he wanted to check the following.

Hercules, the Giant Slayer.

How far he had come on his own.

That's when Zeus was about to cast his next Thunderbolt....

"I see you still have that face.

Ssshhhh~

A pitch black darkness suddenly spread around Zeus.

Zeus raised his head and looked in the direction of the voice.

"Isn't it the same for each other?"

An absolute stealth that assimilated with the darkness.

A High Rank who, despite his appearance, was one of the most skilled assassins in the tower.

"Brother."

Hades stepped out of the darkness.

"I see you've started a war."

"What's the problem with a war, let's keep it a family squabble."

"Sure. You must have a big family."

It was a horse with bones*. (Note: Korean phrase meaning that words have more depth than they appear).

Zeus changed the direction of the Thunderbolt in his hand.

"And it looks like it's going to be a sibling rivalry from now on."

"A fight between siblings... that's good too."

He hoped so.

Hades had come a long way to get here, and he intended to fight.

"You know that, don't you?"

However...

"You've never beaten me before."

The fight had been settled long ago.

Though united by the name of the Three Gods, Zeus' ascension to the throne of Olympus was not by lot.

"Yes. I know."

And Hades, who could not be unaware of that fact....

"By the way...".

So he played another hand he had been holding back.

"Isn't there a person missing in the war between brothers?"

"....."

Zeus' eyes narrowed.

It was a rare moment of tension.

Suuuuu-.

In the dense darkness created by Hades.

A man with beautiful blue hair emerged from it, contrasting with Hades' jet black hair.

"I have only waited for today, Zeus."

One of the Three Gods of Olympus.

Also known as the God of the Sea, the Lord of the Seas.

"How dare you imprison me?"

Poseidon snarled at Zeus

Chapter 177

"Take Poseidon with you."

The day Hades met YuWon...

After being told that he could bring Hercules into the fray, YuWon began to paint the big picture of the fight.

"He's in prison in Asgard right now."

"I know."

"You're saying that even though you know?"

"I'll try to make a deal. It's necessary to beat Zeus. Zeus must also be a thorn in his side."

He was not wrong.

Given what Olympus had done to keep Asgard and the Giants apart, it made sense for Asgard to keep Olympus in check.

Instead of escalating into all-out war, they only hoped for internal divisions.

"Releasing Poseidon will only increase the antagonism between the three Gods, as well as pit Poseidon against Zeus, and there is no reason for Asgard not to respond."

"What if they think we're trying to team up again and beat them?"

"Once they see that Hercules is on our side, they'll never think that."

Hades could only nod.

If the civil war on Olympus really got serious, if there really was a need for Poseidon in such a situation....

There might even be the possibility of freeing Poseidon from Asgard.

"For that, we need Hercules on our side first."

"I know."

"Are you sure?"

"I am."

The answer was so definitive that it was embarrassing to question.

After their conversation, Hades erased the picture he had painted and began to paint a new one.

But whatever he did, he couldn't draw anything as beautiful as a union between Hercules and Poseidon.

'It was a bet, and in the end...'

Hades couldn't believe what was happening.

'It really happened like that.'

At the bottom, Hercules was leading Zeus' army towards him.

And at the top, two of the three gods were keeping Zeus at bay.

All this....

No...

The whole scenario...

'Was it planned by that guy?'

What the hell?

He even got goosebumps at the thought.

Hercules, himself, and Poseidon.

And even Zeus in front of him.

All of them, like one man's chess pieces, moved into the positions the guy really wanted.

'The phase of doubt is over.

From the moment YuWon had recruited Hercules, he had decided to trust him.

He had already made it this far.

Now the fight was in his hands.

'What is the end of this painting?'

Kwareung-!

Boom, boom-!

Lightning exploded in front of him and a wave of water surged across the sky.

"What are you doing, aren't you going to help?"

Hades, who hesitated for a moment at Poseidon's shout, began to move again.

* * *

Hades.

One of the three Gods of Olympus, and of High Rank, ranked 61.

Poseidon.

A High Rank with the title of God of the Sea, ranked 72.

Both occupied high positions in the top 100.

Beings that could take on a single guild with their own strength, and even take on over a hundred High Ranked players.

However.

The opponent was someone with a much higher rank than those two.

Kwareung-!

"Kuk!"

BANG!

Poseidon's body crashed to the ground.

His body was covered in burns from the explosion, with open wounds and dripping blood.

Poseidon quickly straightened up and swung his trident.

Tang-.

A huge wave of water flowed through the air, moving along the tip of the spear.

In a world full of moisture, Poseidon condensed it into a single form.

Hundreds of spears of water.

Along the tip of the spear shot out toward Zeus.

Pajik, jik, jik-!

A veil of lightning that surged in front of Zeus blocked it.

Seeing this, Poseidon muttered in annoyance, wiping the blood from his mouth.

"Bastard."

"You and I are polar opposites - don't you know that?"

It hadn't been that long ago.

Poseidon had lost a fight with Zeus, and was imprisoned in Asgard.

What Poseidon confirmed in that fight was the overwhelming difference in abilities.

An unattainable heaven.

First of all, Poseidon, a water-based mana user, and Zeus, a lightning-based mana user, were not a good match.

"So..."

Sshhh-

A single palm stretched out in front of Zeus' nose.

"What if it was me?"

Thud.

The third god with a higher rank than Poseidon.

Hades' hand grasped Zeus' neck.

The corner of Poseidon's mouth lifted. The attack a moment ago had been a delaying tactic to create this situation in the first place.

Ssshhh-

Dark attribute mana enveloped Zeus' head. It was the power of aging, melting skin and corroding bones.

The battle was won.

The same thought passed through both of their minds.

However...

"A very clever tactic, but..."

Quack...

Zeus grabbed Hades by the wrist, who was holding him by the neck.

"As expected, it's not enough."

"...!"

Kwareung-!

A lightning bolt fell from the sky.

To avoid that, Hades hid in the darkness again, but it was already too late

"Kuhh..."

Hades crashed to the ground, as did Poseidon.

Sitting on his knees in shock, Hades had a look of surprise on his face.

'It didn't work.

The wound on Zeus' neck/head was just a scratch.

That was the result of his collaboration with Poseidon moments ago.

The two of them, instead, had been struck by a Lightning Bolt and had plummeted from the sky to earth.

"They must have been neglecting their training."

Zeus' body floated to earth.

Olympus had a saying.

Even if everyone on Olympus turned their backs on him, they couldn't handle a single Zeus.

No.

It wasn't just Olympus, but the other great Guilds as well.

The power of a single-digit High Ranked Player was something else entirely.

Of course.

Although Poseidon and Hades, both equally powerful members, would never admit it.

'Is it that much of a difference?'

He didn't think he'd need another painting.

Maybe I can finish this fight before Kim YuWon arrives, he thought.

But no.

It had to be done.

It was a matter of pride, as one of the Three Gods.

"You've been holed up in your temple doing nothing, and you ask us about our training?"

Poseidon, with sinews popping out of his head, said in an angry voice.

Indeed, Zeus had been out of the public eye for a thousand years after the Gigantomachy.

The fact that he would even discuss training was absurd.

"I see..."

However.

"I guess it seemed that way."

Hearing this, Zeus laughed.

"You're the one who's been complacent and hasn't done anything."

"What?"

"Have you ever thought about going higher?"

Higher.

However, Zeus didn't mean the top of the tower, but higher.

It had been the same thing the first time, when Zeus had become Ranker with his brothers.

"I will climb to the top of this Tower."

"Then I can really be the king of this Tower."

It was a great ambition.

To do something that no one had ever done in this vast Tower.

Zeus simply could not be satisfied with Olympus alone.

"You are already the King of Olympus. Are you not satisfied with being in that position?"

"A life without looking up is as good as being dead, especially in this Tower."

Hades reminded.

It wasn't the first time they'd had this conversation.

Some wanted the top, some wanted complacency.

And then it happened...

Zeus, Poseidon and Hades.

A rift began to form between them.

"This is why I despise them."

Zeus no longer referred to the two as brothers.

His gaze upon them remained impassive. His thoughts were too ingrained to allow for emotions like contempt and anger.

There was nothing to be angry about, nothing to question.

They had already begun to go their separate ways.

"Is the Second Gigantomachy a stepping stone?"

Poseidon, who had planned both the Gigantomachy and Ragnarok with Zeus, realized what Zeus meant.

He was inclined to be halfway between Zeus and Hades. His goal was the expansion of Olympus through war, but it occurred to him that perhaps it had something to do with the "above" Zeus spoke of.

"Even if I told you, you wouldn't believe me, would you?".

Zeus no longer expected anything from the two of them.

Beings who became Rankers by receiving the blessings of the System, living a life close to eternity.

It was impossible to convince them.

"The next level, it doesn't exist. It doesn't make sense."

The top of the Tower no longer exists.

That was the common thought of the countless Rankers who had seen the top of the Tower, and it was the same for Hades.

But.

"No, it does exist."

The answer came not from Zeus, but from a completely different direction.

"The Top, obviously."

Hades turned his head.

Zeus had already noticed it for a while, so he was already watching him from that moment on.

A familiar face.

YuWon patted Danpung's head and said.

"Good job."

"Abbat, baa-."

The boy raised his arm to respond.

His reaction seemed to say, "Well, that's nothing."

Poseidon, who had also discovered YoWun, made a complex and subtle expression.

"That guy...."

Kim YuWon.

Not the most reliable of allies, but it was clear he was an unusual guy after hearing his story.

But he was partly to blame for Poseidon's situation in the first place.

It was YuWon who revealed the secrets of the Round Table and blocked Zeus' Thunderbolt.

Also, it was he who took the Sea Stone that Poseidon wanted.

Pudeuk-.

But anyway, they were allies now.

It was hard enough dealing with Zeus in front of him, and it wouldn't hurt to have another Ranker on this side... though YuWon wasn't one yet.

'For now, Zeus comes first.'

Poseidon sighed and swallowed his anger.

On the other hand...

For the first time in this fight, Zeus' eyes trembled.

"You..."

Zeus' voice trembled slightly.

To his ears, YuWon's words had not sounded like mere bravado moments ago.

"You know something?"

"Probably more than you know."

It wasn't a very sincere answer.

He hadn't even looked Zeus in the eye to answer in the first place.

'Fortunately, it's not too late.

The fifth temple.

It was the same number as before the Regression, when Hercules began his rampage.

And it was also the point at which Zeus, unable to see Olympus crumbling, had made his own move.

History does not repeat itself unless people change.

YuWon waited for this moment.

Pajik, pajik-.

A fierce current flowed through Zeus' body.

He felt like his body would burn just by getting close.

He was, in name and reality, a High Ranker within the Top 10 who was arguably the strongest in this Tower.

'I'm finally going against a monster.

The first opponent he should be nervous about.

Fortunately, Hades and Poseidon had arrived.

"This is our first fight together."

YuWon said to Danpung on his shoulder.

"Be careful not to turn your stomach."

Jjeouk-.

As YuWon looked at Zeus, the Predator opened his mouth.

Chapter 178

One day, Zeus called out to Pandora.

"Here is your gift."

It was a box.

Each of the Three Gods of Olympus gave Pandora a gift for becoming a Ranker.

Pandora was delighted and accepted the gifts.

But Zeus' gift was a bit unusual.

"You must not open this box. Never."

A gift that must not be opened....".

Pandora thought it was strange. But she could not disobey the order of Zeus, King of Olympus.

And so, for hundreds of years, she did not open the box, as Zeus had said.

The only time she opened it was out of desperation.

To survive.

He opened the box that had been in his inventory for so long.

And right after that.

He was left with all the misery in the world.

* * *

The situation on the battlefield wasn't positive enough to change with the addition of just one person.

Hades and Poseidon were already bleeding.

Even if two of the three Gods joined hands, Zeus was a formidable opponent.

Moreover, YuWon knew that his skills were still far from those of the three of them.

'What I'm going to do is not a one-on-one fight.'

It didn't fit Yuwon's fighting style.

But he had to be clear.

That what he was going to bring was completely different from what he had been bringing.

"Tell me."

Zeus' gaze fixed on YuWon.

"What do you know about the peak?"

At that moment...

Swish-

YuWon's gaze swept over Hades and Poseidon.

A brief glance.

And the two weren't bored enough not to notice.

Bang-

Suaaah-

A huge tidal wave and darkness descended upon Zeus. Standing still and staring at Yuwon, Zeus immediately raised his arm and pointed it at the clouds in the sky.

"Fall!"

Flash-!

Quarreureung-!

Dozens of lightning bolts falling from the clouds.

Although the power of each is weak, as numbers are numbers, it was enough to neutralize the power of Hades and Poseidon.

Zeus divided the two.

The stage now belonged, for a moment, to YuWon and Zeus alone.

"Speak."

The voice was low and heavy.

There was a subtle sense of authority in his voice that was enough to make him the head of a guild and a King.

YuWon faced Zeus.

In line with his voice, the mana of this World shifted.

"It is no different from what you know."

YuWon began to speak.

"Only that you discovered it through them..."

Paji Jiji-!

Hades' darkness swallowed Zeus' rays.

Their time alone was not long.

"Except that I figured it out for myself."

"You caught up with him?"

"Yes."

It was absurd...

YuWon wasn't even a Ranker yet....

Naturally, he had neither the time nor the skill to get to where Zeus wanted to be, which was higher than the highest level the Rankers had reached.

But...

Looking at YuWon, Zeus recognized that the words were not a boast or a falsehood.

"...I see."

Zeus' head turned quickly.

It all made sense now.

Where had it all gone wrong?

How it had all gone wrong because of this little player.

YuWon wasn't just a player with great talent.

He was already a being who had climbed higher than himself.

"I apologize for ignoring you all this time."

Paji Jiji-!

On top of the golden armor that surrounded Zeus' body, the lightning armor was placed.

"From now on, I will treat you as my enemy."

Flash-!

Lightning shot out of Zeus' hand and flew towards YuWon.

The lightning flew at the speed of light.

It was nothing compared to the one that had fallen on Camelot, but it was enough to reduce any High Ranker to ashes.

And at that moment...

Kwaji Jijik-!

Between YuWon and Zeus, a person intervened.

Tsutsu, Tsutsutsutsutsutsutsutsut-.

The woman blocked the beam with her arms and raised her empty eyes.

"Zeus."

Despite her gaze, her voice was as clear as water.

Pandora looked at Zeus and pursed her lips.

"What have you done to me?"

She remembered it clearly.

The way he had handed her the box.

His eyes telling her she must, must open the box, but his voice telling her she must not.

Pandora knew.

That she had no choice but to open it.

"What did you do?"

As if chewing on every word, she looked at Zeus.

But, unfortunately, Zeus wasn't looking at her.

"Is she also a hand you prepared?"

"Unfortunately, no."

Clearly, Pandora was a rank player, above Athena.

Although she had been inactive for so long that she was not properly ranked, she was surely just below the Three Gods in the rankings.

She may not have been able to defeat Zeus, but she could withstand a thunderbolt.

But she wasn't part of YuWon's plan in the first place.

"She's nothing more than the Karma you created."

"...Well."

True to his word, Zeus was wary of YuWon at this very moment.

Of course, being alert was not his strong suit.

It was a "picture" he had painted for this moment.

"If it's not part of the plan, there's nothing to fear."

And if it was out of the picture, it didn't matter.

No matter how many Pandoras there were, Zeus was confident he could handle them.

And he knew it, not out of arrogance, but because it was obvious.

And so, as Zeus prepared his next Thunderbolt....

Bang-!

Hades and Poseidon burst through the boundary he had created.

"They came after all."

Zeus looked at them.

"The paletas/remos you prepared."

Zeus no longer saw them as brothers.

They had long since ceased to be, and as such he saw them only as one or two bystanders.

But at this moment, Zeus saw that the two had changed.

Kim YuWon had prepared his hand.

He had climbed higher than himself, but it would be another thing if he had fallen and prepared a hand.

"...Is it Pandora?"

Hades, who stepped through the beam, looked alternately at Yuwon and Zeus.

It didn't last long, but just when he thought YuWon wouldn't make it (resist Zeus), Pandora was in the middle.

Pandora is one of the few beings on Olympus who can resist Zeus' lightning bolts.

If she was helping YuWon, it wasn't something she didn't understand.

But...

'How is Pandora here, and why is she helping him?'

He couldn't understand.

They recognized Pandora's abilities, but it was hard to understand how she could break through a barrier that even they couldn't easily break through.

And it was the same with Zeus.

"So, I too..."

Pagit-

Zeus' body disappeared from sight.

Pandora's eyes rolled back in her head. The next moment, Zeus' fist was extended in front of him, pointing at YuWon's head.

Kwaaang-!

Pandora's body went flying.

She instinctively defended YuWon.

"I'll try to fight more aggressively."

Her target was YuWon, not anyone else.

Realizing that, Hades realized the rules of this fight.

"Poseidon!"

"I know, I know!"

Zeus' target.

That man was the king of this battlefield.

And now, the king of this battlefield had become YuWon.

'I'm not sure what's going on here.'

Swoosh-.

Hades shrank back into the darkness.

'But first of all, I can't let him do what he wants.'

Poseidon drew in all the water from everywhere and made another wave.

Pandora went flying and, before she knew it, she had repulsed another blow from Zeus, her shoulders slumped as if she had broken an arm.

And then...

['Inferno' is summoned.]

Kak-.

Through YuWon's Kyneē, the colors around him began to change.

Everything turned black.

At the same time, the Arcane Power of Hades turned.

'This is...'

That was not the end.

Pang-.

A large amount of water gushed out from within him.

Along with a fragrant salty smell, a familiar Arcane Power enveloped Poseidon's body.

[Sea' is summoned.]

At that moment, Poseidon's eyes opened.

"Sea Stone..."

Divine Crystal of the Sea and Divine Crystal of Darkness.

The different types of power that these two objects possessed manifested in this place.

Changing the environment so that the two could fight to the best of their abilities.

That was the first move YuWon prepared for this fight.

'Sharks can only show their strength in the water.'

Pang-.

A huge amount of Arcane Power was consumed by Kyneē and Triaina.

Originally it was an environment that should have been Yuwon's strength, but this time the case was different.

These two powers originally belonged to Poseidon and Hades, who were the three Gods.

Their ranks rose even higher after obtaining the Divine Crystal of the Sea and the Divine Crystal of Darkness.

The proof?

Poseidon's eyes glittered with greed as he looked at YuWon, and Hades, who was unaware of the existence of the Divine Crystal of Darkness, looked puzzled.

Fortunately, however, the two High-Ranked Gods were not willing to waste their time.

Psssst!

The darkness of Hades, borrowing power from Hell, devoured the light of Zeus.

Forces that were no match for him moments ago were now becoming a bit of a struggle.

Zeus' eyebrows twitched.

Poseidon's too.

B-Bang-.

A tidal wave the likes of which they had never seen.

Controlling it with the tip of his Trident, Poseidon's tidal wave engulfed Zeus' body.

Purrrrrrrr-!

Troubled waters.

Kwajijijiji!

Zeus' hand on the thunderbolt split it in half like the Red Sea. But that tidal wave was not alone.

Boom!

A second tidal wave, even bigger than the first, fell upon him.

And just as Poseidon's wave was swallowing Zeus, Hades rushed up to YuWon.

"What did you do?"

"I changed the environment a bit."

"What and how?"

"If I tell you, will you take him away?"

At YuWon's words, Hades found Poseidon's eyes looking at YuWon from afar.

Even in this situation, he could not let go of his obsession with the Sea Stone.

It wouldn't change anything even if he obtained it when he had already become a sinner in Asgard.

"I don't want to be like him."

That didn't mean he wasn't greedy, he really wanted that thing that amplified his powers.

But Hades knew why Poseidon was the way he was, and he accepted that depending on his response, he could end up in the same position.

The player in front of him was already such an existence.

"Wise one."

"So now what do we do?"

Hades had come to accept that it was YuWon who was calling the shots in this game.

At least now it was clear that he was the one who had created this fight and was controlling it.

"He's probably increased the odds from zero to ten."

"¿10%?"

"Yes."

"...That's too low."

It was still a small possibility.

Hades doubted it, but at least YuWon was sure.

Nothing was what it seemed.

It wasn't for nothing that they said that if all the single-digit Rankers gathered, the Tower could be destroyed.

Zeus' power was absolute.

Besides, Zeus probably still has a hand or two up his sleeve.

'I know it's a 10 so you can't see it, but...'

It went without saying.

Besides...

'The unseen part is mine.'

YuWon was waiting.

Zeus, the God of Heaven.

The Heaven of Olympus.

The moment he was cornered would be the moment he would reveal all that he had hidden.

'So get him out quick, Zeus.'

Boom!

The sea rose up.

A pillar of golden lightning flashed across the sky.

Kak-.

Zeus slowly emerged from the Sea of Poseidon.

From now on, the real battle between the Three Gods would begin.

Chapter 179

Passth, passth, passth-.

Lightning mixed with seawater shook the ground.

Various types of mana became entangled and shrieked. The mana in the air dissipated and the ground transformed into an intricate array of colors.

In a Sun Chariot.

Hargaan watched the spectacle.

'Out of this world.

Born and raised in Olympus, Hargaan had seen many Rankers.

Among them, there were several beings close to High Rankers. At this moment, even his own mother was a Ranker who had reached the top of the tower.

But this fight before him, this battle, was something completely different.

Rankers among Rankers.

A battle between beings who had risen to the top of their ranks, among the top of their ranks.

There was no place for him in such a fight.

But....

"There is only one thing you can do."

"A fragment of Zeus' Lightning Bolt. Grab it."

A fragment of Lightning.

The power behind Zeus, possessing the power of the Lightning Attribute.

YuWon only had a small fragment, but Hargaan's was quite large.

Even though he's not even a Ranker, he's still not able to fully manifest it, but....

'If they are the same kind of power, the story is different.'

He wondered if he really inherited half of Zeus.

Did Zeus really shower that kind of affection on him?

He was curious.

He wanted to find out.

Phagejit-.

Arcane Power pulsed across the battlefield.

Reaching out toward him, Hargaan recalled YuWon's words.

"In my world, there was a thing called a lightning rod, you will become that."

* * *

Crackle-!

".....!"

Poseidon's body flew through the air.

The marks of Poseidon's trident remained on Zeus' golden armored body. But it could not pierce Zeus' armor after all.

Kak-.

Hades returned to Zeus.

The Arcane Power of Hell enveloped Zeus' body, binding him for a brief instant and restricting his movements.

Immediately after.

['Lightning Fragment' reacts with 'Kyneē']

From the sky rained down a black lightning bolt.

Kwareung-!

A rain of lightning rained down on Zeus' head.

Zeus' figure could be seen reflected in YuWon's Ash Eyes, which went up and poured it down.

'It doesn't work after all.'

The armor pierced by Poseidon's trident.

He thought he had aimed right in the middle, but the armor returned to its original state.

A lightning armor enveloped Zeus' body.

It was not a special item, but an ability made with Zeus' Arcane Power.

Its defenses were ridiculously high, and you could take lightning damage just by getting close to it.

It also regenerated incredibly fast, so it wasn't easy to get through it.

The reason Hades' Darkness didn't work was her armor.

"My father's greatest strength is that impenetrable armor."

"Not the Thunderbolt (Lightning)?"

"The Thunderbolt (Lightning) is not just a weapon. It's also a spear, a shield, armor, and my father's very power."

The Thunderbolt.

The world knew it as the Spear of the All-Piercing Lightning, and it was an object of Zeus himself.

No.

To call it an object in the first place was an understatement.

That's why when Hercules talked about Zeus, he always said.

"Unless you go through that armor, you'll never be able to reach my father."

Absolute defense.

Zeus, who possessed the strongest spear, unjustly possessed the strongest armor.

[Golden Eyes' are watching you.]

Eye contact.

Upon discovering YuWon, Zeus was relentless.

Tak-!

In an instant, the two were at eye level.

Zeus had a spear in his hand.

Flash-!

['Sensory Field' is activated]

['Demonic Energy' opens up]

['Sensory Field' is strengthened]

A single spear grazed past Yuwon's body.

It narrowly missed.

If he hadn't dodged it, Zeus' Lightning would have pierced YuWon's body.

'I expected a certain amount of hindering, but...'

Zeus was rapidly approaching.

Despite using both his Sensory Field and his Ash Eyes, Zeus' movements were too fast for his eyes to follow.

'It's a little later than expected.'

Boom!

Zeus' fist and Pandora's fist collided.

Pandora's body trembled. It must have hurt, but she lunged at Zeus again as if she didn't feel the pain.

The collision did not last long.

Pajik-.

As if Zeus had no interest in her, she soon approached Yuwon.

That was when...

"Too late."

Boom-.

Twack!

After colliding with Zeus' fist, another fist appeared that he couldn't push back.

Boom, boom, boom.

A wave of Arcane Power created by the collision of the two fists pushed YuWon's body.

As expected from that guy.

'The only one in Olympus who can face Zeus and not be pushed back.'

The strongest hand prepared by YuWon for this occasion.

"Don't be too hard on me. I've had a hard enough time on my own."

Using only his bare fists, he pushed Zeus' body back.

He was above Zeus at least in terms of brute strength, not to mention Rank.

Then, his gaze turned to Zeus.

"Finally we meet."

A burly man with a lion mask on his head and holding a wooden stick in his hand.

"Father."

Hercules, looking at Zeus, said.

Zeus' expression became serious.

The man who had at first driven back his troops and had tried to hunt him with Thunderbolts from behind, had defied them all to get this far.

It was through the interference of Hades and Poseidon.

Two of the Three Gods, plus Pandora, plus Hercules.

Now it was really an awkward situation for him.

'With this, the odds of winning increase to 30%.

It's a game made to catch a single digit Ranker, but it's still not enough.

I didn't know if it was Hercules at the time of the Second Gigantomachy, but Hercules at this point had not yet reached Zeus.

Hercules.

He was only really complete when he got his hands on a certain weapon, not just a wooden club like that.

Crunch, crunch.

Hercules' muscles expanded and swelled with the Mana contained within them.

The muscles of his entire body that came to life.

[You are witnessing a 'complete gigantization']

[The Giant's power cries out for battle]

[The 'Gigantization' responds]

As if reacting to that power, Yuwon's abilities twisted inside him.

As if telling him: please let me fight.

Of course, it was impossible.

'This is not my fight.'

Gigantization was definitely a great skill.

From partial Gigantization to full-body Gigantization, YuWon's Gigantization still had a long way to go.

Moreover, the gap between Hercules and YuWon was as wide as heaven and earth in terms of stats alone.

No matter how much his Arcane Power stat increased, unless one's basic physical strength was up to par, he would only be able to reach such heights.

Kwajik-.

Hercules' feet pressed against the ground.

For a moment, the ground shook like an earthquake.

Boom-.

Hercules' club flew towards Zeus' head.

A blow that could easily bring down a mountain.

The power of a giant within him swung with the sole intention of crushing Zeus' head.

Boom!

A Lightning Bolt from Zeus' hand knocked back Hercules' club.

It was just an ordinary club made of carved wood.

Even if it had been strengthened by infusing it with immense Arcane Power, it could not withstand Zeus' strength.

Creack~

The club cracked.

Hercules immediately shook his fist.

And through the gap.

Thud-.

Poseidon's spear and Hades' grip flew, aiming at Zeus' left and right respectively.

Gulp-.

Relieved of the tension, YuWon swallowed saliva for a moment and stared at Zeus. He had not backed down before the two Gods and Hercules.

The power of the Thunderbolt was still intact, and the three were unable to pierce Zeus' armor.

'It is a battle to see which of the three will fall first through exhaustion, or if the Arcane Power of Zeus is exhausted.'

However, the possibility of the latter was not very high.

Even if it wasn't Thunderbolts, he must have some sort of near infinite supply of power.

Hence the importance of this matter.

'It's time to move.'

YuWon's eyes moved skyward.

Hargaan.

That was the signal.

With the arrival of Hercules, all preparations were complete.

There was not much Arcane Power left.

Now it was Hargaan's turn.

Pah-.

A small yellow light flashed in the sky.

['Lightning Fragment' reacts to a new fragment].

Pajik, Pajik-!

The light grew stronger and stronger.

Now even Zeus, who was not aware of it, noticed it.

He stopped in the middle of the fight and looked up at the illuminated sky.

"...Hargaan?"

The voice sounded a bit grim.

His guess was not wrong.

[Waiting for the 'Lightning Fragment' to return to its original form]

[The 'Lightning Fragment' will select its master].

The powers that were originally one began to merge again.

There were now three of them, including YuWon's, but that was only a very small part.

The real halves were separated.

"Hargaan!"

Zeus shouted as he looked at Hargan.

The Thunderbolts surrounding his body dissipated. The power that had enveloped him was released and it surged towards Hargan.

This is what happens when every fragment manifests its power.

Hargaan was now defying the power of Zeus' Lightning.

Trying to mask its true owner.

'Normally, I would be able to hold out for a few minutes with half a shard, but...'

Because of this, Hargaan managed to destroy Olympus in the distant future.

Unlike now, when he was already a High Rank.

'Now there is no time.'

Since he had just acquired the level power of a Ranker, he didn't know how long he could maintain that power no matter how much he possessed half of the Lightning.

A dozen seconds at most.

Maybe a few seconds.

It wouldn't take long for the Lightning to find its original owner. After all, Hargaan was only an insignificant player compared to Zeus.

But at least for that short time, Zeus would be naked, literally naked, without the Lightning Power.

Just as expected.

Pook-.

Poseidon's trident had pierced Zeus' shoulder.

"Without the Thunderbolt, you are nothing."

"...Did it look like that to you?"

Thwack-.

Zeus grabbed the trident embedded in his shoulder.

Pook-.

Boom-, quang-!

After pulling the trident out of his shoulder, Zeus thrust it into Poseidon's body against the ground. Poseidon's eyes rolled back in his head at what had happened, and he buried himself deep in the earth.

"Even if I wasn't, I'm stronger than you, brother."

"I see... even if your teeth are missing, you're still a tiger."

Swoosh-.

Hades' darkness enveloped Zeus' body.

He was not like Poseidon.

In the absence of the Thunderbolt, Hades using the power of darkness was an opponent to be wary of.

"But still, it doesn't change the fact that the teeth are missing."

The direction the voice was coming from.

Zeus stretched his hand in the opposite direction.

"Is that so?"

Tang-.

Zeus' hand grabbed Hades' grip.

Kuk-.

The grip bent the other way.

"But that doesn't mean I won't lose to a fox."

"Even if you are a tiger..."

Hades, leaping out of the darkness, his hand broken, smiled.

"If you're unlucky, you might get bitten by a rat."

An overwhelming sense of unease.

Zeus realized he was missing something.

"The Thunderbolt you had..."

The same place on the other side, from where Hades' voice came....

"I'll take it."

From there, YuWon's hand reached out.

Chapter 180

"By the way, where is the Thunderbolt?"

The king of another World who knew Zeus.

Odin asked.

"Unlike Poseidon and Hades, he carries nothing in his body."

Zeus did not show up directly except in extreme circumstances.

The last time he fought properly using the power of the Thunderbolt was during the height of Olympus' destruction.

However, the Thunderbolt could not be seen. Even Odin could not find the location of Zeus' Thunderbolt.

"Perhaps the first thing to do is to find the hidden Thunderbolt...."

"My father never hid his Thunderbolt. Rather, he always showed it to us."

The Thunderbolt was the strongest element Zeus had.

It was also Olympus himself, and was said to have the greatest power in the entire Tower.

It's hard to imagine such a powerful object being in plain sight.

But not many people knew what Zeus' Thunderbolt looked like.

"If we are to succeed in destroying Olympus, we must take his Thunderbolt."

It was not an option, but a necessity.

Without stealing the Thunderbolt, it would be impossible to defeat Zeus alone with the confluence of Hercules, who was still in an incomplete state, and the other two Gods.

That is why stealing the Thunderbolt would be the most important role of the person who would travel in the past.

Hercules also knew this, and perhaps he would be the one to return to the past.

"My Father's Thunderbolt...."

So he thought, if he were his own Father....

Where the hell would he hide his Thunderbolt?

* * *

A fleeting moment.

Zeus' eyes riveted on YuWon.

An anxiety like he had never felt before.

His hands were held by Hades, and the power of the Thunderbolt was temporarily sealed.

And then.

Bang-.

Behind him, Hercules' grip tightened around his shoulders.

He could not move.

There was no way to escape Hercules' grip without his lightning bolts.

'No way...'

YuWon's hand coming closer.

Where that hand was headed, Zeus closed his eyes tightly.

No.

He was trying to close them...

At that moment...

Poof-.

Swoosh-.

YuWon ran out of Hades' darkness and brushed Zeus' side. A few seconds passed that seemed too long, and Zeus lost half his world.

Passit-.

A burst of lightning began to emanate from Zeus' body.

Kwalung-!

"Kugh...."

Hercules released his grip as a massive pillar of lightning shot upward.

An electrifying current shot through his body.

Hades and Poseidon frowned as the temporarily sealed Lightning bolt reopened.

"That brief moment was our chance."

Poseidon muttered regretfully.

Hades agreed.

For some reason, Zeus had been unable to use his Thunderbolt, and that brief window of time had been a very brief window of time in his absolute favor.

'I wonder if trusting him too much was the problem.'

In that brief moment...

Seeing that YuWon seemed to be aiming for something, Hades decided to help him.

It was YuWon who created the breach in the first place, and it was YuWon who wanted to take advantage of it, so the right thing to do was to help him.

However.

The result was rather disappointing.

'Just one eye.

One eye.

In a way, it was a great achievement.

But the absence of one eye didn't seem to reduce Zeus' vision.

Making him close one eye wasn't going to change his chances.

At that moment...

"With this..."

Kwak-

YuWon, who stole one of Zeus' eyes, grabbed it tightly.

"70%".

"...70%?"

Surely, just a moment ago, he had said the odds were only 10%.

Hades stared in disbelief at the golden light emanating from YuWon's hand.

An unusual Arcane Power.

It was impossible for such power to emanate from a mere eye.

Then...

"No way...?"

A guess flashed through Hades' mind.

"Is that the Thunderbolt?"

What was the Thunderbolt of Zeus?

No one knew.

Even Hephaestus, the object's creator, said it had no fixed shape.

Besides, Zeus, the owner of the Thunderbolt, always wore a piece of cloth around his body, so it was impossible to know what it was.

But what if the Thunderbolt had planted itself in his eye?

"Yes."

Creackle-

YuWon responded to the immense power roaring in his hand.

Heaven's Divine Crystal

The last and largest of the three pieces.

The object that made Zeus what he is today.

The Thunderbolt.

'I can't believe he actually put this in his eye'.

Zeus always kept the Thunderbolt hidden in his eye.

It became Zeus' eye and a source of power. That's why he hid the Thunderbolt in a place where no one could find it.

In his right eye.

'The Golden Eye of the System, did he mean the Thunderbolt?'

His eyes, like those of a crystal ball, could see far and reach to the truth.

Apparently, that was one of the effects of the Ray.

And YuWon finally understood.

"So, what's up with that?"

Passit, passit, passit-.

Hades asked at the electrical discharge emanating from Zeus' body.

It didn't look much different from the one he had just seen. In fact, it seemed even more fiery than before.

"It's some kind of protest."

Scorching Arcane Power.

"As if I were shouting: I am still alive and well."

The loss of his Thunderbolts did not change the nature of Zeus' Arcane Power.

The power of the Thunderbolt burning around him was the power of his own Arcane Power.

However, without borrowing the object's power, Zeus' strength would be significantly less than before.

'In terms of ranking, I would say: ...between tenth and twentieth place, maybe twentieth.'

It was incredible that a single object could make such a difference.

But that was the estimated rank of Zeus' abilities without his Thunderbolt.

And if that's the case, the scales of this fight would definitely tip this way.

Or maybe different.

"I don't know why, but...."

Kak-.

Hercules, approaching Zeus, raised his cracked club high.

"You look so much smaller than before."

Kak, kak, kak, kak!

Crack, crack, crack!

Zeus' Thunderbolt and Hercules' club collided.

The cracked club did not shatter, nor did it bounce as it had in the first collision.

The power had been considerably reduced.

Meanwhile, Hercules extended his other hand toward Zeus.

Pajjik-!

Zeus resisted the blow with his electric discharge and once again wrapped himself around Zeus' body and became a solid armor of lightning.

But somehow...

Chak-.

Hercules' grip ripped through the armor with such ease that it was unlike anything he had ever seen before.

"Didn't I just say that?"

Kak-!

Hercules' foot kicked Zeus in the chest.

"You've gotten smaller."

"Ugh..."

For the first time.

A small groan escaped Zeus' mouth. Pushed back by the impact of his chest, Zeus staggered for a moment and looked around.

Darkness enveloped him and the waves of the sea were rising into the sky.

The spear of Poseidon was pointed at him, and the darkness of Hades was already enveloping him on all sides.

Hercules was relentless in his pursuit. Normally, the three would have been easy to defeat, but now things were different.

Bang-!

The electric fist and Hercules' fist collided.

Force against force, he would lose. Only by pouring out a lot of Arcane Power could he even the score.

Hercules had not become the hero of Olympus for nothing.

He was the existence that became stronger in the Gigantomachy he had planned.

Twack!

The baptism of water from above crushed Zeus' body.

Zeus lost his balance.

Barely reaching out and sending lightning bolts, Zeus mimicked the Thunderbolt.

'I never thought the absence of an object could be so great.'

Opening his one remaining eye, Zeus wiped the sweat from his brow and pushed the water away.

If he relaxed in the slightest, he felt as if the current was going to crush him.

Strong.

This was the power of Poseidon, who had at least half the power of the Divine Sea Crystal on his back.

On the other hand.

"I never thought the loss of the Lightning would be so unfavorable."

Stripped of his lightning, he was literally naked.

Bang-.

Kwaang-!

A fist extended between the cracked streams.

Zeus' body, barely holding on, trembled, and at the same time, Poseidon's current swallowed him whole.

Splash-.

The pressure of the ocean was truly mysterious, and although it was simply water, he felt as if his whole body contracted and was crushed as he entered it.

It seemed impossible to move with mere force.

In the midst of it, Zeus saw Hercules slowly walking towards him.

'What an incredibly strong body.'

He could not believe that Hercules could walk under such intense currents and pressures.

He was not a very big man, but he felt as if he was facing a Giant.

Now that he had lost the Thunderbolt, he was even more confident.

How big was the Hercules in front of him at this moment.

What he would become if he got his hands on a weapon as big as his Thunderbolt.

'I've been raising a monster.'

Maybe if he didn't have this title now, it would be a title he could grow out of in the future.

Kaw-.

Pak-!

The electrical discharge emitted from Zeus' body again created a large hole over Poseidon's sea.

Immediately afterwards, the darkness of Hades enveloped Zeus.

Tsutsutsu-.

The skin blackened as if it was being scorched.

It meant that Hades' darkness was piercing Zeus' armor.

But.

'There's still an eye, left.'

Although the Thunderbolt that played the role of the eye was removed.

That didn't mean that the darkness can't be seen.

Hwaaak-.

Zeus reached out his hand, towards Hades' throat. Surely, he had to have felt something in his fingertips.

However...

Pap-.

He caught nothing but empty air.

"The speed has also slowed down."

Kak-.

A slight tension in the back of his neck.

Through the back of his neck, gripped by his broken hand, the energy of Hades, whom they called the God of Death, entered.

"Kukuk!"

Gagging, blood was spat from his mouth.

Kwajak-!

He quickly turned around and unleashed a lightning strike, but it was a little too late.

Tsut-.

A small wound appeared on Hades' cheek.

That was all.

As if he had already anticipated Zeus' counterattack, Hades disappeared into the darkness once again.

The current Zeus was not strong enough to break through this darkness and attack Hades.

"Ugh....."

Zeus gritted his teeth.

It was a brief moment, but a feeling of helplessness gripped his entire body.

The Lightning.

If only you had that....

Pajjik-.

It was then...

A familiar flow of mana was felt in the sky above the sea.

At the same time, a single figure was clearly visible through his one remaining eye.

Creackle-!

YuWon, high above the clouds.

And in his hand, a twelve meter long lightning spear.

[Lightning]

The Lightning in his hand, sucking in the electricity it unleashed, forged the most powerful spear-.

Flash-!

Now he pointed the tip of the spear at himself