

## With The Gods 311

Chapter 311

C311

Despite the urgent situation they were in, Chronos looked considerably worried.

It was a pressing situation, but YuWon and Odin didn't press him.

And in that wait, Chronos reanimated as he nodded his head.

"... We must return to Olympus."

Upon Chronos' words, Odin traced a symbol in the air with his hand.

Along with the magical symbol that appeared following his gesture, the three people disappeared from the place.

The landscape changed in the blink of an eye.

Although they hadn't traveled a great distance, they returned to Olympus once more.

And not at the center of the city.

'The royal palace, is it this?'

They arrived at a majestic palace surrounded by high walls.

YuWon had visited the royal palace of Olympus several times. However, the palace that soared up to the sky and the palace in front of him seemed to have completely opposite natures.

'It's vast.'

The royal palace of Olympus was located on the outskirts of the city.

It was large enough to believe it was not just a palace but a small city.

Step, step~

Chronos headed towards the entrance of the palace without saying a word.

YuWon and Odin followed him.

And then...

"Wait."

The Rankers guarding the entrance of the palace blocked Chronos' path.

There was no one who didn't know Chronos among the Rankers. Chronos also knew their faces.

But still, they stopped him.

"What are you doing?"

"The King has given us orders."

"The King? Do you mean the Great Father?"

"Yes."

"Has he ordered not to let us pass? Me and everyone else?"

"Yes. That's what he has ordered."

It was an incomprehensible order.

Olympus doesn't belong to anyone. This was Olympus, a land where everyone was equal and free.

Especially at a time like this.

"... He has already started to move."

Step~

Chronos started advancing again.

The Rankers stumbled backward from the force. The startled Rankers raised their voices.

"Prince!"

"Get out of my way, I don't want to hurt you."

"You can't do this..."

"It's the Great Father who shouldn't be doing this!"

Grrrrr...

The Rankers' legs trembled. Chronos, who looked at them as they knelt and fell to the ground, passed through the palace gate.

Odin made a gesture to the gate guards.

Then, the gate guards fell into slumber. It was the best way to silently pass unnoticed.

"We've already intervened."

"So we can consider that there's no one inside the castle."

Entering the interior of the castle, YuWon felt perplexed by the tranquil atmosphere that was perceived.

"But why here?"

He was sure that Uranus' next target would be Tartarus.

However, Chronos had returned to the castle instead of going to Tartarus.

Why?

"We should hurry and go up to the 44th floor, don't you think? We don't have time to be here now."

"What are you talking about?"

As if saying something absurd, Odin looked at YuWon.

"This is the 44th floor."

"What?"

With a dull thud, he felt something fall on his head.

The floor where the ancient Olympus was located was the 44th floor.

The 44th floor that YuWon knew was so desolate and dark that it was known as the "Hell."

Most Players considered it merely as a path to the upper world, as it was extremely difficult to live there.

The only Ranker who managed to adapt and live in that hell was Hades.

But...

'Is this the Hell?'

This realm?

The interior of the majestic castle, composed of beautiful paintings and shining marble, came into YuWon's view.

And not just here.

Outside the castle were countless people, and all of them had smiles on their faces.

The sky was blue, and beautiful flowers bloomed all over the village. This world full of life didn't fit at all with the concept of a Hell.

'Now that I think about it...'

A scene passed fleetingly through YuWon's mind.

"Before, it wasn't like this." (Chronos)

The 44th Floor.

That was what Chronos had murmured during the battle against the Outer Gods in Hell.

At that time, he didn't pay much attention to those words. After all, many worlds had been left in ruins due to the battle against the Outer Gods, so it wasn't something worth worrying about.

Moreover, Hell couldn't get any worse.

'It seems this is what he meant by those words.'

Hell was a much more habitable world than YuWon had realized.

The ancient Olympus. It was not much different from other floors and even turned out to be a much more pleasant place to live.

Something had happened in this land.

An event so significant that it would change an entire world.

And at the end of that event...

'What the hell happened here?'

This world would soon turn into that "Hell" that YuWon knew.

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Step, step~

Footsteps echoed against the ceiling.

Chronos' steps quickened.

"There's not even a rat here."

That's what Odin, who was following them, said.

The stairs led to the palace's underground. No matter how much they descended, the end of the stairs was not in sight.

"How far have we descended?"

"It must be at least hundreds of floors."

YuWon answered Odin's question.

Although the exact depth was unknown, the stairs leading to the underground extended so long that if they pointed upwards, they would probably reach the clouds.

Why had they excavated so deeply underground?

Chronos, who had been silent all the time, opened his mouth at that moment.

"What I will show you from now on is the greatest peculiarity of Olympus."

Peculiarity.

Chronos, whom YuWon knew, was as proud a person as anyone.

Although he was not as righteous as Hercules, he had done nothing to be ashamed of, and he had enough courage to sacrifice himself in the end.

If Chronos said it was a peculiarity, it meant that something significant was hidden in Tartarus.

Sssshhh...

After descending even further, at a moment when no ray of light entered, and they could only feel the touch under their feet, YuWon felt the familiar presence of magic.

"We have arrived."

Chak...

YuWon stopped his steps as he descended the stairs.

It was no longer meaningful to keep walking.

"It's Tartarus."

Sssshhhh...

The stairs that kept going down disappeared. Although the surroundings remained dark, YuWon could sense that there had been a change around him.

This place was not inside the palace or an underground connected by stairs.

The three had arrived in a completely different world, as if they were going up and down the Tower.  
And this place was...

[You have entered 'Tartarus']

This was the place YuWon had desired to go so much.

'I didn't expect it to be like this.'

It was not the real Tartarus. It was simply a place created by Uranus' memories and the power of the system.

But if Uranus had been in the real Tartarus, and Chronos knew of the existence of Tartarus, then this place would not be very different from the real Tartarus.

"It gives an unpleasant feeling."

Yuwon nodded at Odin's murmur.

It would probably be even more uncomfortable for Odin, who specialized in light and electricity magic.

Mana existed everywhere in the world. Even in seemingly empty air, in water, in fire, in earth and rocks. Even in time. Everything was composed of mana.

Therefore, mana could turn into anything.

But in this Tartarus, only one type of mana was felt.

Darkness.

A place where you felt as if you were being sucked, sucking your mind, just by entering it.

It felt suffocating, as if you couldn't breathe. YuWon had experienced this same feeling before.

Woosh-.

['Golden Cinder Eyes' illuminate the path]

No matter how dark it was, there was always a way to find the path.

Light sprouted from YuWon's eyes. A vast and flat land of red fire and sparkling golden pupils entered his vision.

Odin and Chronos also illuminated their vision in their own way.

Within the illuminated vision, the three could see with greater clarity than before.

The ceiling and the floor were completely black like tar.

At the same time, what caught their attention were the horizontally extending bars.

'A prison?'

An unsettling feeling emanated from the narrow and tight bars.

Yuwon and Odin peered inside.

What was inside?

At that moment, there were movements within the bars.

"The son of Uranus, Chronos, greets the Elder Uncles."

Thud.

A heavy sound made the bars tremble.

Eyes appeared behind the bars.

Those eyes were at a much higher height than YuWon, Odin, and Chronos.

-Uranus...

-Did you say Uranus?

-How dare you say that name...

-The son of that man?

Dark souls writhed. As emotions intensified, the images of the Giants trapped in the darkness of Tartarus became clearer.

There were about ten Giants.

It wasn't a large number. YuWon had seen several giants before, and he had even fought an army of Giants in Ragnarok that numbered in the tens of thousands.

Even so, the strength of these Giants was special.

Each of them possessed power similar to that of Gigantes.

If these Giants were to come out into the outside world, there would be a drastic change in the Tower's ranking.

All the Giants here could occupy the top one hundred positions in the ranking.

Thud, thud.

-It's you again, Chronos!

-Come here!

-You should be locked up here too!

-Bring Uranus! He must know this pain!

-From Tartarus, we...!

Shouts like heart-wrenching cries resonated in their ears. Feelings of injustice and resentment mingled with those cries and seeped through the bars.

Chronos opened his mouth with a voice that seemed like he was about to vomit.

"They are my father's brothers."

The brothers of Uranus were trapped in Tartarus.

Born as Giants, they were trapped in Tartarus after being defeated in the war against Olympus, and they were eventually devoured by Uranus.

A truly tragic fate.

In the history of Olympus, they were recorded as traitors of Olympus and not as "giants" but as "monsters."

"At first, I also thought these individuals were wrong, that they were too powerful and abused their power; that's what I was taught."

Not only Chronos.

It was a fact known to all Players living in Olympus.

But...

"That wasn't the case."

Chronos later discovered the distorted truth of the history of the other Giants.

And here...

He entered Tartarus and confirmed that fact.

"We used them to establish Olympus. We squeezed them dry and then left them abandoned here."

"But why did you stay silent until now?"

Odin narrowed his eyes.

It was a reproachful gaze asking why, knowing all that, he remained silent.

"I suppose it's too late for regrets now."

However...

Chronos had his reasons too.

"If these individuals get out, Olympus will fall."

He saw a more distant future.

He saw what would happen when the Giants of Tartarus were released.

"There will be bloodshed. There will be war. The Gigantomachy. My father's prophecies about the future will come true."

A war that would lead to the destruction of Olympus. Thinking about it, Chronos couldn't free the Giants of Tartarus.

It was then.

Step~

"...?"

YuWon took a step towards the bars.

What is he trying to do?

Chronos and Odin's gazes turned to YuWon.

YuWon extended his hand toward the bars.

[The dead adore you].

[Tartarus adores the 'King of the Dead'].

Gigantomachy?

The fall of Olympus?

'It's all over anyway.'

If everything continues like this, those events will surely occur.

Tartarus must be freed.

That was the only way to overcome this Trial.

THUD!

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Since he first entered Tartarus...

[The 'King of the Dead' confronts his own world]

[The dead adore you]

The title lying dormant within YuWon twisted.

'Once again...'

The King of the Dead.

It was the title he had obtained by clearing Susanoo's dungeon.

Upon reflection, it was because of this title that he set foot in Tartarus for the first time.

Tartarus called out to him.

Why exactly?

YuWon looked at the Giants in front of him and the bars that blocked them.

'Was it to ask for help?'

He felt an implicit certainty.

It was as if he could shatter the bars before him with a single strike.

And he had a feeling that he must do it without fail.

This kind of certainty was often dangerous. It had no basis, and he still didn't have the certainty that the Giants inside those bars were on his side.

But...

'I can't just let things continue like this.'



At this rate, Uranus would devour the Giants trapped in Tartarus.

Uranus, growing uncontrollably, would bring ruin to Olympus as it had in the past history, and many Rankers, including Chronos and Odin, would wage a war to capture him.

'If it reaches that point, the Trial will be a failure.'

The exact purpose of this Trial was still unknown.

But he was sure that blindly repeating established history was not the criterion for overcoming it.

So, there was only one thing to do on a large scale.

'Change the future.'

And that was something he had always been doing.

Step~

YuWon took a step towards the bars.

Chronos's words resonated enough in his ears.

There was such a story in the history of Olympus that dated back to the times of Uranus.

It wasn't a surprising tale or something new to consider.

Even if he felt ashamed himself, in the end, it wasn't Chronos's fault.

Step~.

"What are you trying to do?"

Chronos blocked YuWon's path to the bars.

"I have to free them."

"Didn't you hear my story?"

"I did."

"Even after hearing what will happen if they're released, you still have that idea?"

"What if they're not released?"

A completely opposite situation from what he was concerned about.

YuWon explained that, at this moment, if Tartarus were to remain as it is: "What will happen to Uranus?"

"My Grandfather..."

"Ponto is already dead. Next will be here."

Chronos's eyes wavered.

To come all this way and still, he was conflicted.

Whether what he was doing now was right. If releasing these Giants with hatred towards Olympus could or could not lead to Olympus's destruction.

But YuWon's words were not wrong.

Ponto was already dead.

There was no place to doubt it. He had known that Uranus was twisted for a long time.

Odin's arrival here was also due to countermeasures against Uranus.

"If we go on like this..."

Although he wasn't certain, he had to say what he had to say.

YuWon's gaze turned to the Giants trapped behind the bars.

"They will all die."

YuWon didn't know Uranus.

But he had heard about Uranus, and he knew that neither Chronos, nor Odin, nor himself were rivals for him.

They had to obtain the power of the Giants.

That was the strategy YuWon had conceived to face Uranus.

-There's someone interesting here!

The Giants trapped in Tartarus fixated on YuWon.

And among them, there was one in particular.

He had an especially large and solid presence.

'Is that guy the leader?'

YuWon's gaze turned to the Giant observing him through the bars.

He had three eyes, even on his forehead.

In an instant, YuWon felt as if he was seeing a superposition of Surt over him.

The King of all Giants.

Surt, the most powerful Giant who had fought against Asgard for a long time.

The Giant in front of him also radiated a presence that was no less than Surt's.

-Are you a High-Ranker from Olympus? What's your name?

Unlike the other Giants, his tone was calm and not hostile.

However, despite what was shown on the surface, YuWon could perceive an anger more intense than anyone else.

"No."

-Not?

As if asking what kind of answer that was, the Giant looked at Chronos.

Finally, Chronos realized.

Why exactly YuWon was here?

"No. I'm seeing this person for the first time today."

-Why is this guy here and doing this?

"Well..."

Chronos was about to answer, "Because he's from the future," but he stopped himself.

Even for him, who was the only one using time-related abilities, it would take a long time to understand it.

But, could the Giants in front of him really accept that?

'I hope they don't think I'm mocking them.'

-Is it a difficult question to answer?

"Do you really need to know?"

In response to YuWon's question, the Giant blinked his three eyes simultaneously while looking at him.

The aura around him gradually calmed down. Until a moment ago, it seemed like he was about to break the bars in front of him and run out, but suddenly, he showed curiosity.

-Although you have an arrogant attitude, you seem to have the qualification for it. That's what it looks like.

"Does it?"

-I don't know. Maybe it's the influence of the years, or maybe it's madness.

A vague answer, but YuWon didn't have time to get distracted.

"We'll talk about the rest outside."

YuWon passed by Chronos and headed towards the bars.

Chronos no longer tried to stop YuWon. Instead, he asked a question while looking at YuWon's back, who was approaching the bars.

"Is there any way to let them out?"

"No. There isn't."

"What?"

A reaction that seemed surprised.

It was none other than Tartarus's Cage. Something not even the great Giants could break, and they had been trapped for a long time, yet YuWon was saying that he would release them quite easily.

However...

'That is, I can't explain it with words.'

['The King of the Dead looks at his subordinates']

['The King of the Dead looks towards Hell']

A message that had been echoing in his ears since he entered Tartarus.

It was an inexplicable certainty. But despite that, it was a certainty.

He felt that if he reached out immediately, he could break the bars of the cage that were blocking the Giants.

That's why YuWon didn't hesitate.

There was nothing wrong with trying.

It was then that YuWon reached out his hand towards the bars...

"Your actions are dangerous."

Swoosh-

A shadow rose from the ground of Tartarus.

Thud-

Something grabbed YuWon's arm. YuWon frowned and turned his head.

'I thought he would keep watching...'

Through the Golden Cinder Eyes, he could see the figure that had hidden in Tartarus, but he tried to pretend that he didn't know.

Just a step late.

He hoped he would keep hiding as if he didn't know anything.

But apparently, it wasn't going to be that easy.

Swoosh, swoooooosh-

Color rapidly added to the black shadow.

Chronos's eyes widened as he saw the golden-haired man who entered Tartarus.

"Grandfather?"

"You seem very busy lately..."

Grr.

Uranus's grip on YuWon's arm tightened.

"Son."

Son.

Uranus uttered that word forcefully.

In a paradoxical way, by uttering the word "Son" with more force, Chronos realized that Uranus no longer considered him his son.

Thud-

The strength of Uranus's grip twisted YuWon's arm.

At the same time, YuWon's arm was filled with Arcane Power.

[A Giant's power adheres to your arm]

Gigantification.

The top-grade ability that turned Hercules into a hero.

If it was just a competition of brute strength, YuWon was sure he wouldn't yield to anyone.

That's why, even knowing that Uranus was right in front of him, YuWon approached the bars.

But...

Crack!

Although he tried to use his giant-transformed arm to resist, he couldn't pull away Uranus's hand.

'I can't escape.'

The pain that felt like his bones would break disappeared, but it was still difficult to free himself from his grip.

Uranus's hand emitted light.

The power of the blazing electrical attack began to be felt through the hand holding his arm.

At that moment...

Thwack!

A flying spear pierced through Uranus's head.

The strength of his grip weakened.

Yuwon quickly pulled away Uranus's hand and stepped back.

Fajik, fajik-.

The head that had disappeared reappeared.

It was his body that had transformed into lightning. It had only momentarily let go as he used another ability. Uranus didn't shed a drop of blood.

Uranus's gaze turned towards the direction from which the spear had come.

Swoosh-.

Odin stood firm, retrieving the spear he had thrown with all his might.

He remained undisturbed by Uranus's appearance.

"Odin."

Woosh, woosh-.

More than a dozen magic circles/symbols appeared around Odin.

He was a mage with notable abilities, considered one of the best among the High-Rankers. He was also a warrior who wielded both a spear and a sword at the same time.

A tough and formidable opponent.

"A delicious feast."

Greed shone in Uranus's eyes.

Of the many types of greed, what came to Uranus's mind was appetite.

It had been a long time since Odin encountered a beast that could threaten him. A carnivorous beast, voraciously hungry, showing its teeth.

"How vicious."

Cluck-.

Odin tightened the grip on his spear and advanced forward.

At that moment...

Thwack!

With all his might, Odin rushed towards Uranus.

Kwaang!

The clash between the two shook Tartarus. To YuWon's eyes, it seemed as if Odin was staggering and being pushed back.

However, he quickly regained his balance, as if saying he wouldn't give up.

Using dozens of magic marks, he reinforced his lack of power and launched both magic and his spear. It was a brief moment, but YuWon was surprised to realize that Odin was being pushed back.

"Once again, I see this guy losing to someone."

Uranus.

He had only heard his name, but it was the first time he had seen a fight like this.

Odin's ability was undeniable.

Even as he wielded his spear, he seemed to be aided by dozens of Rankers, using countless magics.

Yet, Uranus, facing Odin, always remained calm.

Don't they say that a tiger does its best when hunting a rabbit?

No.

That statement was incorrect.

Uranus fought without hurry, as if carefully considering how to savor Odin best in front of him.

"He's different from that guy."

YuWon had seen Uranus twice.

Once when he obtained the Uranus Heart.

And the second time when he came here.

However, those two times and the Uranus in front of him now felt completely different.

"He hasn't been satisfied yet."

After devouring Ponto and swallowing the Giants of Tartarus, Uranus had become an uncontrollable monstrosity.

So, the Uranus in front of him at this moment was clearly a different entity from the one YuWon or future Chronos knew.

YuWon observed the fight between Uranus and Odin.

The reason he didn't intervene in the fight was that Uranus's movements seemed unnatural in some way.

"He's blocking the bars."

From the beginning of the fight, Uranus never left a specific area.

Unnatural movements.

YuWon became convinced of this when Uranus glanced at him.

"Is he aware of me?"

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Thud-!

Uranus's body was torn apart.

It definitely looked that way.

Crack!

Uranus, transformed into a golden lightning, extended his hand.

The situation became increasingly eerie, as if his head was about to separate from his body. In an instant, Odin stepped back under Uranus's overwhelming force.

And at that moment...

Swish!

Uranus's eyes turned in another direction.

Pop!

Odin, who retreated while retrieving the spear he had thrown, looked at Uranus.

A brief hesitation.

It wasn't the first time. Although it was a short fight, Uranus was aware of different directions several times.

And it wasn't hard to know which direction he had focused on.

"Is it him?"

Kim YuWon.

It was the first time he saw him today. He suddenly appeared and predicted Ponto's death, then confirmed Uranus's whereabouts.

At first, he had doubts.

He wondered if it was one of Uranus's tricks.

But now those doubts quickly vanished.

"There were several dangerous moments."

This was the first case.

Since he began climbing the Tower and became a High-Ranker, Odin had barely found his match.

He founded Asgard and became the king of a country.

Until now, he had never faced such a high wall.

"You've truly become a monster."

Odin thought he was just prey for Uranus.

He felt like a weakling standing in front of a fierce beast. No, he definitely couldn't get close to Uranus.

Nevertheless, the fight was intense.

It was due to Uranus's vigilance towards the other direction.

"If attention is diverted elsewhere-."

Hum, hum, hum.

The interior of Tartarus momentarily lit up.

Uranus's gaze, which had turned away to another side, finally returned to its original position.

But now his surroundings were filled with dozens of magic symbols.

"It's only natural that the field of vision narrows."

Giiiiing.

Uranus's body twisted in response to Odin's gesture.

Along with space, his body began to distort.

The magic Odin had prepared since the beginning of the fight was an ability that distorted space and shattered the opponent's body.

No matter who the opponent was, no matter how strong.

That didn't matter.

"There's no organism that can split into a hundred or a thousand pieces and still survive."

Crack, crack, crack.

The distortion in Uranus's body became increasingly intense.



Trapped in his restricted movements, Uranus resisted the force contained in the dozens of magic symbols solely with the power of his body.

And at that moment...

Shh!

Uranus's gaze turned once again to YuWon.

"You still dare..."

He knew his opponent was strong.

But even though that was the case, he couldn't bear being so ignored.

Pah!

Odin rushed towards Uranus, holding his spear upside down.

The spear imbued with Arcane Power struck Uranus's head.

Uranus, whose body writhed under the power of the numerous magic symbols, couldn't change shape quickly as he did before and escape.

This time, finally.

That was the moment when Odin had full confidence.

Kong!

Uranus tightly gripped Odin's spear.

His body defied gravity and moved freely.

A knee entered Odin's line of sight.

Crack!

"..."

Uranus's knee struck Odin's face, sending him flying. At that moment, Odin stopped, not understanding what had happened.

Tohwak!

Odin, who had been thrown, quickly regained his balance.

He fixed his twisted nose with his hand. Uranus, once again, was looking in another direction.

"Why do you keep looking at that?"

"The real danger is over there."

Swoosh~

Yu Won, with his eyes ablaze, was standing. Instead of at Uranus, he was looking at the Giants in the cage.

Odin realized from his response what Uranus was suspicious of.

"Is he worried that the Giants will be freed?"

But how?

He had his doubts, but the visible circumstances were clear.

Uranus was convinced that YuWon could free the Giants. That's why, while fighting against Odin, he was also keeping an eye on YuWon.

"If that's really the case..."

He had to change his way of fighting.

-Why are you standing still?

Odin's voice resonated in YuWon's mind.

The Transmission of Sound of the Murim World ability. Odin surpassed even magic and was unrivaled in the martial arts of the Murim.

And YuWon was no different.

"I can't see any openings."

"Openings?"

"Don't you see it?"

YuWon's gaze moved.

An empty space with nothing in it.

To the naked eye, it seemed like YuWon was looking at the bars.

But...

'It can't be...'

Odin concentrated his Arcane Power in his eyes and looked at the bars where the Giants were trapped.

Then, what wasn't clearly visible during the fight became visible.

Zsuh-

Zsuh, Zsuh, Zsuh-

A dense black net enveloped the bars.

It was as if it didn't allow anything to approach, twisting as if denying access.

Odin hadn't discovered its existence at any moment.

'Is it thanks to those eyes?'

Hwaluk-.

Odin looked at the two bright pupils of YuWon's eyes.

They were eyes that radiated a strange and suspicious energy. As it was the first time he felt the flow of that energy, he simply considered it as some special ability and overlooked it.

But it wasn't as simple as that.

'He can see even more than I can.'

Uranus's body turned toward YuWon.

At that instant...

-Chronos.

-I know.

Odin sent a Transmission of Sound, and Chronos received it.

Wung, wung, wung-.

A huge magic symbol floated up, illuminating Tartarus.

An uncontrollable flow of magic. Uranus raised his head.

"Annoying."

Juk, chaaah-.

The net that spread across the bars was revealed.

As they became clearer, all of them began to emit a threatening aura.

Chyaah-!

Uranus's initial target was YuWon.

In an instant, the nets tightened from all directions toward YuWon.

Odin didn't stop the operation of the magic symbol.

It was Chronos who made the move.

Chiing-.

The nets stretching forward came to a halt.

It wasn't like something was pulling them back; instead, they seemed to have frozen in place as if they were in a photograph.

It was Chronos's ability, which held time in place.

Wung-.

It was at that moment that Odin's magic symbol began to function...

Kwalung-!

Odin, with his entire body bathed in blue lightning, adopted a throwing posture.

Huge energy accumulated at the tip of the spear. This time, Uranus couldn't ignore Odin.

And while Odin contained Uranus in that manner...

"Now is the time."

YuWon, who was looking for an opportunity, began to move.

He looked through the spaces in the stopped nets. Although they were stopped, the nets were so dense that it seemed impossible to pass through.

But...

[The 'Golden Cinder Eyes' read the path]

Without a doubt, there was a path anywhere.

Even if it was a skill created by Uranus, it didn't matter. There was nothing that couldn't be seen with the Golden Cinder Eyes, and it wasn't difficult to find a path.

'Here it is.'

Among the tightly spaced net, the weakest point.

He couldn't simply pass through it, but at least it was weak enough to break through.

Wharr-.

[The 'Heart of Fire' is activated]

[The 'Heart of Fire' awakens the 'Holy Fire']

The heart began to beat strongly.

The engine roared with power. The flames emanating from the heart gathered in the palm of the hand.

Tartarus began to shine brightly.

With all his strength. He swung to tear through the net.

Fwoosh!

The Fire Sword cut through the net Uranus had created. Once a hole appeared, the net lost its strength and disintegrated rapidly.

"You...!"

"You shall not pass."

Odin stood in Uranus's path as he lunged toward YuWon.

A golden lightning erupted from Uranus's fist. His fist extended toward Odin's chest.

Twack!

Giik-!

Odin's body was pushed back.

But Odin's defense did not collapse with that single blow.

Ung-.

A blue magical armor surrounded him.

And on that armor, there were dozens of runes (symbols) engraved.

The armor's defenses were bolstered by a series of enchantments. Odin crossed his arms, molding his body into a solid shield.

It was a determination not to allow anyone to pass.

Tick-

Then, the sound of a clock was heard near Uranus's ear.

Zii-iik-.

His feet took a step backward on their own accord. It wasn't as if his body was being controlled, but rather as if the steps he had taken forward were being reversed.

He didn't have to think about who had done it.

[Time Reversal]

The ability to invert time within a certain space.

It was an ability that only Chronos could use, which could do anything except bring the dead back to life.

Ziiiik-.

Another step.

Uranus's body barely moved. Although Chronos could turn a person into a baby in an instant if he wished, time wasn't fair to everyone.

Uranus's time had an even greater power. Chronos was exerting a considerable amount of Arcane Power to reverse a single step of Uranus.

And amidst that...

Swish-.

YuWon's hand reached the bars.

["The King of the Dead meets the wall"]

["The King of the Dead rejects the wall"]

["The King of the Dead..."]

The title kept resounding.

It was as if it had its own will, urging YuWon to break the bars in front of him.

'It's not just a simple title.'

The King of the Dead.

At first, he thought it was just one of the many titles known in the world, a name that referred to a title.

But since he arrived in Tartarus and stood in front of the bars, he knew it wasn't like that.

King.

It was a position and title held by someone.

The King of the Dead was not just one of the many titles known in the world; it was the title with which 'someone' had been called in life. In other words, that person definitely existed and had been alive.

And it continued speaking.

Telling him to break the wall in front of him.

To destroy it and free his poor and wretched people trapped inside.

'This title has the power to do it.'

Now that he had grasped the bars of the cage containing the Olympos Traitors.

YuWon felt as if everything in the world, except himself, had stopped.

The King of the Dead whispered.

Destroy this wall quickly.

He already had it in mind. It was not appropriate for them to fight each other while facing a monster like Uranus.

Cr-crack-.

The energy forming the bars began to disperse.

As the wall, as strong as steel and never breaking, began to crumble, the Giants who watched the scene in awe shouted for joy.

-The bars are breaking!

-Now we can get out!

-Keep going, Human!

It was a deafening cheer from Giants who had long yearned for the outside world, but it didn't reach YuWon's ears.

At that moment...

YuWon was in a completely different world from theirs.

'I wondered why it kept reacting like this...'

The moment YuWon grasped the bars, he realized.

Why the King of the Dead had been reacting since he arrived in Tartarus.

Why the souls of Tartarus worshipped him like a king from the start.

It wasn't merely because of the title's effects.

The King of the Dead had the power to rule over the dead, but the dead worshipped YuWon solely of their own volition.

There was a reason.

The reason was one.

The owner of this title.

Crack-.

YuWon's hand holding the bars filled with strength.

Now he could be certain.

King of the Dead.

What was the name of that king?

'Tartarus.'

Chapter 314

C314

YuWon had thought of Tartarus as a world for the dead.

A vast ocean composed of mana and numerous souls swimming within it.

YuWon's soul had glimpsed it, dipped a toe into Tartarus, and saw the surface of the world.

However...

Once he fully stepped into Tartarus, everything was completely different from what he had known until then.

Crack, crack...

["The 'King of the Dead' wishes for you to break the wall"]

The true name of the "King of the Dead" that YuWon possessed turned out to be Tartarus.

Tartarus was the King of the Dead. He was the owner of that small world where YuWon found himself; he was the very world itself.

Here, he was like a God.

And YuWon, with the power he possessed, was the same.

The power of the title within Tartarus was absolute.

The cage in front of him was a wall built by Uranus. But with the power he possessed, breaking that wall was not such a difficult task.

Puff-.

The remnants of the cage turned to dust and dispersed.

Uranus's eyes flickered as he saw it, and Chronos and Odin, who held him back, rejoiced internally.

'Good.'

'It's true.'

The cage vanished.

The Giants of Tartarus cheered.

-I can't believe it, it's true...!

-The cage has disappeared!

-We are free!

Thump, thump, thump...

The Giants stepped out with heavy strides.

It was at that moment that Chronos's ability was deactivated...

Whoosh...

Uranus turned his body.

Boom!

A golden lightning bolt burst toward the rushing Giants.

The Giants were pushed like waves. Although some Giants managed to resist, Uranus's lightning was too powerful to be endured by the body alone.

However...

-Uranus!

-There's Uranus!

-Kill him!

The number of Giants was not just one or two.

Thump, thump, thump...

The disappearance of the cage and the Giants that opened their eyes in the darkness were like a great wave.

It was unknown from where they had emerged, but with clubs the size of their forearms gripped in their hands, they charged toward Uranus.

YuWon felt the momentum of the Giants passing by his side.

Countless years had passed, difficult to measure in time.

The accumulated resentment during those long years could not be simply judged by levels or values of Arcane Power.

"It has finally come to this."

Thud...

Chronos approached YuWon's side.

While his gaze remained fixed on the Giants, he spoke with a concerned voice.

"The victory or defeat in this fight is no longer as important."

The frenzied cries of the Giants resonated in his ears. The Giants moved driven by their desire for revenge against Uranus and Olympus.



Even if Uranus won this fight.

Once the Giants were out of Tartarus, bloodshed would reign once more.

But...

"Don't worry."

YuWon thought Chronos's concern was unwarranted.

"How can I not worry..."

"They can't leave anyway."

"What?"

Chronos seemed baffled, as if he didn't understand what that meant.

Unfortunately, there was no way to answer that question. YuWon also didn't have a clear way to explain it.

'Alive, but not really alive.'

That's what YuWon saw in their eyes.

The King of the Dead. The souls of the Giants trapped in Tartarus.

'Foolish and wretched souls who believe they're still alive.'

Once the Giants were trapped in Tartarus, there was no way for them to leave. They were already dead.

Tartarus was a refuge for the dead. The time the living could spend here did not even exceed a day.

The Giants had been trapped here for thousands of years.

They were already on the border between the living and the dead.

Unless the King of the Dead in Tartarus allowed it, there was no way for them to leave of their own volition.

Uranus's arrival in Tartarus walking on his own was a unique opportunity for the Giants.

'Susanoo.'

While Uranus was busy dealing with Odin and the Giants, YuWon called out to Susanoo.

"The King of the Dead" was the title YuWon obtained after going through Susanoo's Dungeon.

-What's going on?

'Don't you have anything to say?'

-Are you saying that the true owner of this title was Tartarus?

I see.

Susanoo also realized it. It wasn't surprising that Susanoo, who had wielded that power for over a thousand years, noticed what YuWon had discovered.

-I didn't know either. I obtained this title as a reward after becoming a Ranker.

The trial for becoming a Ranker is special.

As the final floor of the Tower, the trial granted each Player a special test suited for them.

There were no Administrators or Supervisors in this Trial.

Only the will of the System overseeing the Trial existed.

"You obtained it by passing the Trial? What kind of Trial was it?"

-It was a trial of putting the souls of only 10,000 players into the sword.

"10,000 souls?"

Since the content of the Trial was different for each individual, there were various opinions among the Rankers.

From stories that the Trial differed according to each Ranker's personality, to stories that the rewards varied depending on the composition of the Trial.

The difficulty was also different for each, with some Rankers easily ascending to the top while others with much better abilities failed the Trial dozens or hundreds of times.

10,000 souls.

It wasn't an easy type of Trial.

One couldn't go down the stairs and do the Trial from the lower floors, and a Player on the top of the Tower wouldn't be much different from a Ranker.

"You're pretty good yourself."

YuWon could see how Susanoo had reached such a high rank.

It also solved part of the mystery of how Susanoo had managed to kill so many Players, making him one of the worst assassins in the history of the Tower.

"King of the Dead..."

This was the first time YuWon truly felt the power of that title.

In his previous life, Hades had never been able to find Tartarus, he recalled, because he had tried for years, and Chronos had never revealed its existence to him.

But this time was different.

["The 'King of the Dead' is furious"]

The Giants of this world.

The walls that imprisoned the people of Tartarus.

Tartarus, the King of the Dead, was furious with Uranus, the builder of that wall.

Even if they're dead, they're still his subordinates, right?

"The power of this title is exerted in Tartarus."

The title seethed.

The King of the Dead.

He knew more clearly than ever how to wield the power of that title.

For example, to mention one.

"Arise."

Shhh-

YuWon's eyes turned black.

Within his field of vision, he entered the inside of Tartarus.

Numerous souls writhing as they slept were glimpsed.

"Oh, undead who cannot die."

-----

BANG!

A Giant's foot crushed Uranus's body.

The corners of the Giant's mouth curved upwards, as if the anger he had been harboring for so long had been released.

But only for a moment.

Kuuuk-

The Giant's foot lifted. In the blink of an eye, the Giant flew off into the distance.

Flash-!

A light shot out from where Uranus was.

At the same time, a black spear shot towards the Giants.

Bang!

A spear with the power of both light and darkness, two diametrically opposed attributes.

Holes were opened in the bodies of the Giants, who fell to the ground, and the charging Giants wavered.

And in the midst of that...

Swoosh!

A spear passed by Uranus's head.

"Is it you again?"

Hmm, hmm.

Odin grasped another spear in his hand and prepared to throw it one by one.

As the Giants faced Uranus, Odin prepared by throwing one spear after another with precision.

Each of them was a dreadful spear charged with various spells to increase its power.

"The young king of Asgard, seems to have some value."

Greed shone in Uranus's eyes.

Each of the Giants possessed the strength of a High-Ranker, and they were all brothers of the same blood, having climbed the Tower and become Rankers alongside Uranus himself.

That's why he planned to devour those locked behind the iron bars of Tartarus.

But his plan fell apart from the beginning.

"Food tastes better after going through hardships."

Thrrr, thrrr-.

Uranus's magic crackled, creating a net.

The net entangled the Giants. At the same time, Odin's spear flew towards Uranus, aiming for his head once again.

At that moment...

Crack-.

Uranus firmly held the spear flying towards him and returned it to Odin with all his strength.

Bang!

"...!"

Odin's body staggered as he narrowly dodged the spear. It would have been a tragedy if he had been a little slower and lost his life on his own spear.

But the calmness lasted only for a moment.

"First...".

Right in front of him, Uranus reached out his hand.

"I'll devour you."

Crash-!

"Kuck!"

Gripped by the throat, Odin was slammed into the ground. He felt Uranus's hand tightening, experiencing such intense pain that it seemed his neck would break at any moment.

He had to free himself.

But he simply couldn't do it in any way.

It wasn't just because Uranus's power was strong.

'Arcane Power...'

Odin's Arcane Power hadn't moved from the moment he was in Uranus's clutches.

What the hell?

A question mark formed in his mind. As he ascended along the arm gripping his neck, he could see Uranus's face.

His eyes gleamed violet.

Every time he used magic, he felt his Arcane Power being absorbed through his hands.

At that moment...

Bang!

A Giant's fist slammed down on Uranus's head. A water barrier protected Uranus's head, but it only lasted an instant.

The barrier protecting his body broke. Uranus no longer had time or space to hold onto Odin's neck.

The fist didn't stop with just one hit.

Crack!

"Guh!"

Odin spat blood from his mouth from the punch that struck his body. It was such a powerful blow that it felt like his back would break.

-You move quite well to dodge punches.

"You're slow."

-We'll see how long your arrogant mouth can keep yapping.

Thud.

The Giants weren't afraid.

No.

Anger consumed their fear. They moved solely in search of revenge against Uranus.

As if that was the sole meaning of their existence up until now.

"What a headache."

And this madness was precisely what worried Uranus the most.

Those beings who weren't afraid of death were much more dangerous than their original power.

The Giants before him were blinded by the desire for vengeance, having been betrayed by Uranus and imprisoned in Tartarus.

"The dinner I was expecting has turned into a disaster."

But it didn't matter.

Either way, they would all enter his belly.

He would devour them all, sating himself on them.

What he desired to have would soon be in his hands, in the not too distant future.

And so, it began.

Gulp-.

Before them stood the largest Giant.

"For now, just one."

Creak-.

Something opened deep within Uranus. A strong appetite surged, and Uranus's pupils turned completely violet.

It was at that moment that Uranus attempted to move...

Crack-.

Something grabbed his foot and wouldn't let go.

They were heavy and powerful claws.

"This is...".

Uranus looked down and saw the hands gripping his foot.

Thousands, tens of thousands of tormented souls.

They clutched Uranus's foot and dragged him towards Tartarus.

And in that precise moment when he discovered it...

"What have you done?"

In Uranus's eyes appeared the one who had become the King of this world.

Chapter 315

C315

Shortly after releasing the Giants...

"This place is a bit different from what I knew."

The voice came from Tartarus.

It was a voice he had never heard before, but it was not unfamiliar. It was familiar, as if it belonged to an old friend.

Immediately, YuWon knew to whom it belonged.

Tartarus.

Here, the King of the Dead approached YuWon and spoke to him in his own world.

"This is not the true Tartarus."

-Another world created by your System?

"Again, have you experienced this before?"

-I see you're not surprised by my voice at all.

"This world is you. Why should I be surprised that a king who controls hundreds of millions of dead can speak?"

This world imbued strength to his title.

YuWon realized that fact and decided to take advantage of it.

Tartarus was the king of this world.

Moreover.

Perhaps he was a forgotten Ranker who had existed since the ancient times of this Tower, older than Uranus.

Anyway, at this moment, he had to use his power.

"Do you want to kill Uranus?"

YuWon lifted his head and looked up.

-Then, will you help me?

It wouldn't be something that difficult.

Perhaps not anywhere else, but here.

Zuuuu...

YuWon's eyes began to darken.

And in the next moment.

"Please, help me..."

YuWon's mouth opened unnaturally.

"That's right, then."

Zuuuu...

Feeling like he was sharing his body with someone was not pleasant.

It was uncomfortable and caused intense rejection.

Tartarus entered YuWon's body. A kind of unknown power filled his body, and his immobile body began to move on its own.

Step~

YuWon, no.

Tartarus took a step towards Uranus.

"You... did this?"

Surrounded by the dead, Uranus glared at YuWon.

His eyes filled with intense hostility.

The dead held onto his two legs. Uranus gathered Arcane Power in his hands.

Pazhik-!

The lightning that erupted from his hands swept across the ground. For a moment, it seemed like the lightning extended, devouring the surrounding darkness and annihilating the bodies of the dead.

But that was just an instant.

Kwaaaak-.

The hands of the dead didn't release Uranus.

Uranus's eyes shook. In his eyes, he saw something he had never seen before.

Ssshhhh-.

Black waves gently swaying.

"The sea?"

For the first time, Uranus looked in bewilderment at the vast sea of the dead that resembled an ocean.

"Just with those bars?"

YuWon's mouth opened at that moment.

"You thought you had really trapped them in this world?"

Woosh, Uranus's head turned.

Suddenly, YuWon appeared right beside him.

Swoosh, Uranus's body was engulfed beneath the sea.

It was YuWon who stood in front of him.

"You've changed."

Blackened pupils. Uncontainable rage and a changed expression that couldn't be hidden.

And the atmosphere.

Uranus realized that YuWon had become someone completely different from before.

No wonder.

"You're perceptive."

YuWon didn't deny Uranus's words.

All of this was his doing. He broke the cage, summoned the dead to stop him.

It wasn't something an ordinary Ranker could do.

And now, facing YuWon, Uranus felt like he was confronting a giant wall that he could never overcome.

"Who are you?"

"The essence that made you exist, and the king of this world."

It was an enigmatic answer.

Could he even be a god?



During the brief conversation, Uranus's body was being dragged down by the spirits up to his thighs.

"You are a very large soul. You possess a soul that thousands of spirits could eat and still be left."

YuWon saw Uranus's soul in his eyes.

It was a soul that had fattened after devouring Ponto. Although it was insufficient considering the sins he had committed so far, it still had a satisfactory size.

"You will pay for the punishment of having devoured the citizens of my country, with your soul being torn apart by the pain of being eaten."

"You..."

With YuWon's words, Uranus was able to confirm his identity.

"So, you were Tartarus."

Swoosh, swoosh.

Uranus's body disappeared up to his waist.

If he continued like this, he would fall into the deep ocean and never come out.

However, Uranus didn't fight.

No, he couldn't fight.

That was because there were too many spirits holding onto his body.

"Why are you clinging to someone like him? A being like you?"

"I'm not doing this because I like it."

YuWon shrugged.

"My own mother created me this way, so there's no other choice. If I want to see the world even a little, I can only cling to someone else's body."

"My body...?"

"It's not that bad either. In the end, isn't it the same for both of us? Doesn't it mean we can break the rules of the system?"

"..."

"Don't beg for your life and don't become more miserable. Isn't that what the great lineage of Olympus does?"

Uranus's eyes snapped shut.

The fear of what was about to happen sent chills down his spine.

So Uranus closed his eyes entirely.

And thus, he submerged deeply, all the way down, into the waters of the ocean.

"There, at the bottom of the ocean, live forever."

YuWon, who watched the place where Uranus had disappeared, turned around.

The Giants escaped from the bars.

Odin.

Chronos.

They all looked at YuWon.

"Why are they like that?"

In the darkness, without a single light, within overwhelming darkness...

"Laugh. Isn't it a happy day?"

YuWon laughed brighter than ever.

-----

Odin and Chronos returned to the palace of Olympus.

The palace of Uranus imprisoned in Tartarus was like an ownerless empty house. Orders not to enter had been issued, and the two took YuWon to a room and laid him down.

It was at that moment when YuWon, who had lost consciousness for a moment, opened his eyes.

He looked around as if confused for a moment, but there was nothing unusual, so he got up as if nothing had happened.

"Thanks for bringing me here comfortably."

"Are you okay?"

At Odin's question, YuWon met his gaze and pointed at his head with his finger.

"My body? Or this place?"

"Both."

"I'm fine. Both. My memories are clear too."

He never thought it would come to this.

Sharing his body with Tartarus.

No matter how many worlds he had encountered in his own world, he never thought it would go this far.

The power of Tartarus that had suppressed Uranus using the power of the dead was so astonishing that even YuWon, who had shared his body, was surprised.

'I'll have to be careful.'

If he tried to resist, he could have done it.

YuWon didn't think that Tartarus had taken over his body.

He had handed it over himself.

But anyway, the fact that someone else was moving his body was a dangerous sign.

It was possible that they could take his body and turn him into someone's puppet.

Especially considering Uranus's words, Tartarus was clearly a dangerous existence.

'However, the results aren't bad.'

Uranus was trapped in Tartarus.

The Giants couldn't get out. The moment they tried to leave, an invisible barrier blocked them.

Tartarus was somewhere between life and death.

The Giants who had already become dead couldn't cross that boundary without the help of a Necromancer.

"Are you satisfied with the outcome?"

YuWon opened his mouth as he saw Odin and Chronos pause.

The world came to a halt.

After all, it was a virtual world created by the System, so it was possible.

And at that moment...

"This is cheating."

Uranus, who had disappeared into Tartarus, appeared in front of YuWon.

"I never expected Tartarus to be inside you. I would have never imagined."

"So, that's cheating, huh?"

"That's right, it's cheating."

"I also had one of the abilities. Don't you have several abilities if you have a title?"

Uranus nodded at YuWon's words.

Indeed, in terms of the number of titles he possessed, Uranus had many more.

Vice Lord of the Celestial Demon Sect and King of the Dead.

Although YuWon had two titles, Uranus was a High-Ranker who possessed many more titles than that.

There were no excuses to justify what was clearly cheating.

"Besides, if I hadn't stopped you there, I wouldn't have had any chance of winning."

Kiiing-.

One of YuWon's eyes turned golden. His ability, Golden Cinder Eyes, penetrated the true nature of Uranus.

Uranus was so monstrous that even through the Golden Cinder Eyes, the limit of his power couldn't be seen.

"Ponto, the Giants of Tartarus, even the ancient Olympus."

Uranus, who had consumed all that, was completely different from the Uranus locked up in Tartarus.

"Anyway, did I pass the Trial?"

"Yes, perfectly."

Kiiing-.

Kiiingg-.

The surrounding landscape disappeared. Everything vanished as if the curtains had been drawn, and the environment turned white.

[You have passed the 'Memory of Uranus'.]

[Your control will be evaluated based on your actions.]

[You have stopped Uranus.]

[You have perfectly passed the 'Memory of Uranus'.]

[You have obtained control of the 'Uranus Heart'.]

Kiiing-.

The gloves glowed again. The items that had stopped functioning during the Trial regained their original power.

He had gained control.

A significant difference still couldn't be seen.

"Don't get too excited. Even though you have what I've obtained, you won't be able to use everything right away."

"Actually, that's better."

"Better?"

"Yes, because that means the items have even greater value."

Divine Dark Crystal, Divine Sea Crystal, and even Zeus's Divine Sky Crystal.

Those were divine items that everyone in the past had told him to collect without fail before going back to the past.

Even if only considering the value of each separately, what kind of object would be created when they were combined?

Everyone had expectations, and finally, the result was born from YuWon's hands.

"You're very presumptuous."

The landscape around him quickly changed.

Over the white background, the area near the rocky mountain where YuWon originally stood appeared.

"Don't get too excited."

Kiiing-.

The sky remained bright. It was as if it were broad daylight.

It was as if he had never changed locations from the beginning. YuWon even briefly wondered if this was all just a dream he had because nothing seemed to have changed.

But clearly, it wasn't a dream.

"We've gained a lot."

YuWon looked again at Uranus Heart in his hand, which had regained its power.

The Uranus Heart.

Tartarus.

King of the Dead.

All were achievements he had gained in this Trial.

"Wait..."

Crack-.

A golden ray flowed through the gloves.

[The 'Uranus Heart' generates a lightning bolt.]

Crackling-!

A spear of golden lightning formed in YuWon's hand.

When he infused power into Uranus Heart and visualized its shape, the lightning formed easily.

He didn't know how long Uranus had been waiting, but for now, he had to confirm what he had obtained in this trial.

However...

[You have obtained control of the 'Uranus Heart'.]

[You can configure the form of the 'Uranus Heart'.]

"The form...?"

With an unexpected message, YuWon's eyes sparkled.

Chapter 316

Being able to change shape has many advantages.

Especially when it comes to an item with almost infinite power, like the Uranus Heart.

Convenience and efficiency.

That was as important as the power of the item when choosing it.

For example...

Chijik-.

The bright light from the glove on his hand diminished.

The Uranus Heart transformed into a ring. Rings were the preferred form for all Players when it came to items, apart from weapons.

They were convenient to carry and lightweight.

'What you need is imagination. The form of use is not difficult.'

It was a familiar way of using it. Changing shape was as easy as flipping the palm of his hand, and now what remained was how to make the most of it in battle.

For YuWon, being able to change shape at will was something new.

'Now, what's left is the power.'

Chijik-.

Kwaaah-.

The Arcane Power flowing from the ring materialized into a spear, and YuWon's hand gripped it with all his might.

And the next moment...

Flash-!

The spear that slipped from YuWon's hand flew above the clouds.

-----

There was a grand event in the Demon Realm.

It was such a big event that it could be said that the demons existed only for that day.

"Let's crush them all once and for all."

"Is Michael fully recovered?"

"It seems Zeus punished him quite well."

"In short, the Archangels are all pride but no skills..."

"Any bets on who's going to kill more this time?"

The demons were excited.

Unlike the Demon Realm where they usually lived, the sky where the Demons were now gathered was clear and blue, without a single cloud.

The world of the 93rd floor, the world where the Heavens lived.

The demons gathered one after another there.

And among them.

"This Great Heaven Demon War (**천마대전**) is special."

Behemoth was more motivated than ever.

"Not only is Michael's injury fatal, but the Heavens have suffered an irreparable blow from the Ragnarok."

Smile~

The corners of his mouth curved upward in a smile, and Behemoth extended his arms towards the Demons.

"Follow me, and I will let you drink angelic blood to your heart's content! This is your chance to rise in the rankings!"

"Waaaah-!"

"Behemoth!"

"Behemoth! Behemoth!"

A fervent enthusiasm.

Behemoth, who was looking at the Demons from the cliff, nodded with satisfaction.

At that moment...

"Somehow, don't you think these empty speeches lead to no progress?"

There was a voice that cooled down the fiery atmosphere.

Behemoth turned his head with annoyance. He was so angry that he wanted to swing his hammer right at that moment, but he couldn't do it against this opponent.

"Take some responsibility for your position, Diablo."

"We, the demons, are a race that grows stronger when given freedom instead of forming groups. Why don't you stop being foolish?" he replied disdainfully.

It was Diablo, who reclined in a chair that no one knew where he had brought from.

Both had opposing thoughts.

Behemoth believed that the demons should organize more, while Diablo argued that it didn't make them true Demons.

Their ideologies clashed constantly, which never allowed them to unite as a single force.

"Why do you make such foolish decisions from the beginning...?" said Diablo, slowly raising his body as if mocking.

"This fight ends when we capture Metatron. But you always complicate things too much," he added.

"It's not just about Metatron. The angels are our enemies," said Behemoth.

The sharp voice of Behemoth startled Diablo.

At that moment, there seemed to be a dark glint in Diablo's eyes.

"What if you were a little more honest?" Diablo asked.

"What are you implying?" Behemoth responded, confused.

"It's about the ranking, isn't it? The outcome of this fight affects the ranking," Diablo explained.

For the Rankers, ranking was a matter of honor and power.

It was also the most tangible way to demonstrate one's worth in any Guild or profession.

And it was even more valuable in the Demon Realm.

The hierarchy of the Demons in the Demon Realm was determined by rank. Diablo, with the highest rank, was the leader of the Demons.

"You're thinking of forming a group somehow to increase your contribution and improve your rank, aren't you?"

Upon Diablo's words, Behemoth quickly averted his gaze.

"That doesn't interest me."

Avoiding the subject completely, he began to scrutinize the other Demons once again.

Diablo clicked his tongue in disbelief and reclined in his chair.

'Not interested.'

Behemoth.

Of all the Demons, he was Diablo's least favorite.

Although he ranked third in the hierarchy, after Diablo and Baal, his nature was completely opposite.

A type that preferred using collective power rather than his own power.

That was what Diablo found least appealing about Behemoth.

"A big, clumsy guy, how scared can he be?" Diablo murmured with a deep voice, gazing at the distant clouds.

The domain of the Heavens.

It had been twenty years since the last time he was here.

"It's almost time," Diablo thought.

The battle between the Demon Realm and the Heavens that repeated every ten years.

Initially, they bared their teeth as mutual enemies, but now the meaning of the battle had changed.

At some point, the Administrators intervened, the System was established, and young Demons began to treat the Great Heaven Demon War as if it were an event.

In an instant in Diablo's mind, scenes of the past Great Heaven Demon War rapidly passed by.

'Compared to back then, this is just child's play.'

The Demons down below did not know of the Great Heaven Demon War back then. And not only them, several Demon Kings, including Behemoth, also did not know.

The Great Heaven Demon War they experienced was simply a celebration to unleash the pent-up rage of the Demons and satisfy their craving to see blood, without reaching a resolution.

Desperation to survive? A desire for revenge? They probably did not have those things.



"I'm bored."

"I agree."

Diablo stretched his neck and looked back from his chair.

At some point, someone was looking at him from below.

And over his shoulder...

"Baat-."

A little child was perched, waving a cute little hand at him.

-----  
Diablo ordered the Demons to quickly build an improvised headquarters and invited YuWon.

The improvised headquarters, which was made in just a few minutes, looked quite large and solid. There were chairs where they could sit facing each other, so it was quite well organized.

Yuwon looked at the improvised headquarters that had been built so quickly and nodded with a surprised expression.

"They say Demons learn magic from the moment they take their first steps, seems like that's true."

"It's true for the youngsters nowadays. Even when I was young, there were many who used magic before they could even babble."

"Are you talking about yourself?"

"That's right."

Diablo shrugged and boasted in front of YuWon, who sat on the other side.

"How did you get here?"

"I came after passing the Trial."

"I suppose so. Still, it wasn't just a coincidence that we met, right? The 93rd floor isn't exactly a small world."

The 93rd floor was about half the size of the world YuWon lived in. It couldn't be said to be very large, but it wasn't a small world either.

It was too casual a meeting to say it was a coincidence. Moreover, YuWon came directly to Diablo among the many Demons.

"I have some business to take care of."

"Like in the Ragnarok?"

"That's right."

"You sure bring something interesting every time."

Diablo bared his fangs and smiled.

The Ragnarok was the most interesting event he had experienced recently. Among the dull and uninteresting events, the Ragnarok was the most thrilling.

"And you've changed a lot too."

Diablo's eyes, gazing at YuWon, were filled with interest.

When YuWon first appeared, Diablo felt that something had changed. But at first, he couldn't understand it right away; it took quite some time until he got close and became certain.

Something had changed.

It wasn't just the atmosphere or the gaze.

The flow of mana surrounding YuWon had completely changed. It was so evident that it couldn't be hidden, even if he tried to do so.

"Did you kill Indra?"

YuWon's eyebrow twitched unexpectedly at the question.

He couldn't keep this a secret forever, but he didn't expect that the news would reach Diablo so quickly.

Diablo shrugged at the surprised expression.

"It seems you've risen in rank."

"I've risen in rank?"

"Didn't you see it?"

Unlike other Rankers, YuWon didn't pay much attention to rankings. He was already familiar with it for a long time, and he knew the rankings of most Rankers.

But it turns out that his ranking had risen in a short time.

Suddenly, it seemed that the ranking system was more reliable than he thought.

"Your story is being talked about even among the Demons. They wonder how your ranking rises so fast. Probably, if you become a true Ranker, you'll rise in the rankings again."

Diablo's response didn't cause much reaction in YuWon.

Usually, when his ranking rose, he would take out his Player Kit to check it immediately, so it was an unexpected reaction.

"It doesn't seem to interest you much..."

"I can check it later, no hurry."

"You really are quite different."

Diablo grinned mischievously.

Talking to YuWon was always much more fun than dealing with the others who trembled in his presence. He was excited to see what kind of trouble would arise this time.

Those who didn't know the details might think that Odin or Surt were the protagonists of the Ragnarok, but Diablo knew.

Despite what they say, YuWon was the true protagonist who had unleashed the Ragnarok.

"So, what brings you here? Any interesting business?"

"Do you think I would have come here without a good reason?"

"Is it about the Great Heaven Demon War?"

"That's right."

Diablo had considered it, and so it was. The reason YuWon was here was for the Great Heaven Demon War.

An event that everyone in the Tower knows if they have even a minimal interest.

Yuwon was interested in that.

"It's a boring battle. I have the purpose of killing, but I have no intention of letting either side win."

Diablo lost a bit of interest.

He had experienced the Great Heaven Demon War hundreds of times. But for Diablo, the recent Great Heaven Demon Wars were nothing more than child's play, no more, no less.

That was the reason Diablo was interested in the Ragnarok.

Recently, the Great Heaven Demon War hadn't really been fun.

"If you want to participate in the Great Heaven Demon War, go ahead. But you probably won't get too excited. Both the Angels and we consider this battle to be something sublime."

"It's not that I want to fight."

A question mark appeared over Diablo's head.

The Great Heaven Demon War was a war. Recently, this war had lost its original form and had become a simple event, but that was undeniable.

A battle where one kills and is killed.

However, YuWon was saying that he wasn't going to fight in the Great Heaven Demon War.

"What do you mean?"

"There's something I must do here."

"Something you must do?"

"From this moment on..."

The most important event on the 93rd floor.

The Great Heaven Demon War.

In this battle that occurs every ten years, what YuWon must do was exactly the opposite of the Angels and Demons.

"To put an end to the Great Heaven Demon War."

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A brief silence fell over the headquarters.

That's when the wine arrived...

Ding~

The demon who entered through the headquarters' door brought two cups.

Wine as red as blood.

The Demon observed the gazes of the two individuals and stepped back silently.

"To stop the Great Heaven Demon War..."

"Silence."

Diablo opened his mouth, but YuWon interrupted him.

The Demon, who had been observing the gazes, halted abruptly. His pupils narrowed, and Diablo frowned in apparent annoyance.

"Don't you want anyone to hear?"

"For now, yes."

"Then, should I kill that guy?"

The Demon's pupils, who had entered the headquarters, trembled.

Without turning his head, Yuyuan raised his cup.

"It's not necessary. Leave quickly."

"Yes, yes!"

Even though it wasn't an order from his own lord Diablo, the Demon hurriedly left the headquarters. He instinctively realized that if he listened to the conversation that would take place next, he couldn't guarantee his own survival.

Only the two of them remained in the headquarters again.

Yuwon looked at his cup.

"What a delight. All this alcohol made with angel's blood."

"Explain what you said before."

"The Great Heaven Demon War?"

Yuwon raised his head and met Diablo's gaze.

And in that instant...

Drip~

Yuwon turned his cup upside down.

The thick liquid that had been in the cup fell to the floor.

"Let's stop drinking this stuff."

"What are you doing?"

"It's exactly what it looks like."

"I knew you weren't afraid, but..."

Grr.

The headquarters trembled.

Dark energy began to emerge from Diablo's body.

A clear intent to kill.

"I didn't expect you'd come to this."

Fire burst from Diablo's eyes.

YuWon's words and actions a moment ago were enough to irritate him.

Diablo didn't have much interest in the Great Heaven Demon War.

But that didn't mean he didn't feel aversion towards the Angels like the other Demons.

Crunch, crunch.

The chair YuWon was sitting on sank into the floor.

Under the crushing weight, YuWon didn't avoid Diablo's gaze.

"The Great Heaven Demon War must end."

"I understand that it's a futile event. But you're not so foolish as to not know what it means for us to give up the Great Heaven Demon War, right?"

The Great Heaven Demon War was a matter of pride for the Demons and the Angels.

The war itself had lost its meaning long ago, but it still remained a form of apparent conflict.

Abandoning it was no different from admitting defeat.

"Are you telling us to surrender to those guys now?"

"You didn't understand a word I said, did you?"

"What?"

"How can the disappearance of the Great Heaven Demon War mean surrender?"

"Aren't you asking for a peace treaty? That's surrendering!"

Crash!

Diablo slammed the table in nervousness.

The table split in half instantly. Diablo stood up from his seat with fury in his eyes, glaring at YuWon.

"If that's what you want, then I'll be happy, but..."

It was what he had come to look for, hoping it would happen, but apparently...

Although Diablo had no interest in the Great Heaven Demon War, after all, he was a demon. There was no possibility of him bowing to the angels before them.

"If it can't be done, then it can't."

Thud.

YuWon stood up from his seat.

"I heard that the reason the Great Heaven Demon War began was something insignificant."

"...?"

Diablo furrowed his brow, wondering what else YuWon was saying.

The reason the Great Heaven Demon War began.

It was so ancient that even Diablo, who was at the center of the Great Heaven Demon War, could barely remember it.

"At a bar, an Angel and a Demon drank together, and a fight that happened there reached here."

"Perhaps... it was like that."

"A trivial fight led to a conflict that went so far, all for a little pride."

"What are you trying to say?"

"Do you think that's right?"

YuWon's question made Diablo recall the beginning of the Great Heaven Demon War.

Yes.

The beginning was truly insignificant.

It was an era when Angels and Demons coexisted. Although they didn't get along, they didn't aim their spears at each other or seek to spill blood.

In a bar, a fight broke out, and an Angel lost his life at the hands of a Demon.

It wasn't the first incident.

Although not severe enough to spark a war, the relations between Angels and Demons hadn't been particularly good for a long time.

Occasionally, Angels killed Demons, and Demons killed Angels.

But...

'Metatron.'

Everything fell apart when he intervened.

Metatron demanded a public apology from the Demons.

He also demanded that the head of any Demon who killed an Angel be cut off and displayed in the public square, in the name of all lives being equal.

Those were unacceptable demands.

Death and killing were commonplace in this Tower, and in Diablo's view, their dispute was justified.

A fight at a bar was a fair fight, after all.

"That's not right."

"Fortunately, at least you know that much."

"Metatron challenged us from the beginning. We also knew that and joined the fight."

The beginning of the Great Heaven Demon War was so insignificant.

But even though the beginning was insignificant, its magnitude couldn't be considered insignificant.

Demon Kings rose, and Archangels stood up.

And finally, Diablo, the leader of the Demons, and Metatron, the leader of the Angels, faced off.

And so, the Great Heaven Demon War has continued until now.

"Do you think this fight has any meaning?"

"It has no meaning. We're only needlessly weakening ourselves. It's not fun either."

Diablo responded indifferently and sat back in his place.

He knew what YuWon wanted, and he had no intention of getting entangled in a verbal fight with him that would only cause more pain.

"Alright, so if you're going to talk senseless nonsense, leave quickly unless you really want to die by my hands."

"Then, just one last question."

"What is it?"

"If the Angels propose a ceasefire first, would you be willing to accept it?"

"Metatron?"

Diablo furrowed his brow.

First of all, he thought it was absurd. The Metatron he knew would never make such a proposal.

Despite not being like a typical Angel, it was Metatron who desired this fight the most.

"Don't think about the reasons. I'm just asking if it could happen."

"A ceasefire proposal, huh?"

After thinking for a moment, Diablo nodded.

"We would accept it."

An event that occurs once every ten years.

The Great Heaven Demon War, a battle between Angels and Demons, turned into a fight where the side that proposed a ceasefire first lost.

So a ceasefire proposal was practically the same as surrendering.

And Diablo was willing to accept the Angels' surrender.

"Then, that's all."

That would be enough.

Even if the fight didn't end now, if someone else stopped the fight, there was an intent to stop.

There was no longer any point in trying to convince Diablo here.

YuWon stood up from his seat.

"Where are you going?"

Diablo stopped YuWon as he tried to leave the headquarters.

"Are you thinking of seeking the Angels' surrender all by yourself?"

"I'll give it a try, no matter what."

"Why? You're neither an Angel nor a Demon."

"That's exactly why. Despite being someone insignificant, why aren't you doing anything?"

Diablo's eyes flickered slightly.

Kim YuWon, with no apparent connection, stood up to stop the Great Heaven Demon War.

And that was a great provocation to Diablo, who had considered the war of the Great Heaven Demon War as something natural for a long time.

Tap~

YuWon left Diablo in his place and exited the headquarters.

A moment ago...

YuWon noticed a slight change in Diablo's reaction.

'It seems he's realized that this war is wrong.'

That should have been enough to convince him.

Diablo was the king of a race. While he may disdain the value of a life, he still had a responsibility towards the revival and stability of his own race.

'Ten days left until the start of the Great Heaven Demon War.'

Leaving the tent, YuWon felt the gazes that watched him here and there.

They must find the presence of a Human among the Demons surprising.

It's obvious that there won't be any Player who doesn't know that the preparation for the Great Heaven Demon War is in full swing in this world.

'The Great Heaven Demon War was an event that matured slowly.'

It probably began much smaller.

But they didn't know.

As the Great Heaven Demon War repeated itself over and over, its scale grew larger and larger.

What was originally just a small dispute now is evident.

This fight has turned into a battle akin to a large-scale Guild War, with numerous Demons and Demon Kings participating.



However, the Great Heaven Demon War didn't end here.

In a far more distant future than YuWon's present, the "Great Heaven Demon War" meant a singular battle.

"A massive war where Angels and Demons annihilated each other."

Accumulated resentments and unyielding pride had become a time bomb ready to explode at any moment.

And as planned, it was the "Celestial Realm" who was supposed to press that button.

"The moment the Celestial Realm intervened, the scale of the Great Heaven Demon War rapidly increased. Even the Demon Kings couldn't bear it anymore."

'The Celestial Realm has already collapsed.'

That's why YuWon had helped OhGong capture the Jade Emperor and bring down the Celestial Realm.

If left alone, the Jade Emperor would become the seed of the Great Heaven Demon War in the future.

After the Jade Emperor's death, the Celestial Realm was regaining its former strength, led by Lee Rangjin.

While it might not be the case for others, it was a safe bet to rely on Lee Rangjin. He probably wouldn't do something as foolish as participating in the Great Heaven Demon War.

"After rescuing Son OhGong and destroying the Celestial Realm, we'll gain some time. Perhaps a thousand years will pass before the Great Heaven Demon War begins." (Odin)

Odin argued that to resolve the Great Heaven Demon War, they first had to overthrow the Celestial Realm along with Son OhGong.

His opinion seemed quite reasonable. Moreover, there was nothing wrong in terms of order.

The problem was they were too carefree.

"It seems you're thinking something wrong."

"The Great Heaven Demon War isn't just about the battle where Angels and Demons annihilate each other. They've been constantly fighting until that point."

The opinion that they couldn't afford to be carefree was led by Hercules.

"We must resolve this quickly. The time we spend indecisive will only result in more bloodshed."

It could also be considered an urgent situation.

If they rushed too much to avoid bloodshed, there was also a risk of making mistakes.

However, YuWon agreed with those words.

How many Angels and Demons would die in a single Great Heaven Demon War, and how many losses of power would there be?

Losses of power were critical on every occasion.

'We must finish this in this round if possible.'

And to do that, there were several things they must also do from their side.

"Hey, Human!"

YuWon turned his head towards the firm voice calling him.

In that moment, it felt like the problem he had been dealing with had been solved.

"Why are you wandering around here?"

An enormous bulky figure that looked like a giant. Dark skin and a single horn that reached down to his waist.

'Behemoth'.

The leader of the hardliners who had brought the Great Heaven Demon War to this point.

He approached YuWon, emanating hostility.

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"Why are you wandering around here?"

Behemoth's voice towards YuWon was filled with evident enmity.

In reality, he had not liked YuWon from the beginning.

Even in the vote to participate in Ragnarok, he had voted against it.

And this time was no different.

A being resembling the Giant Race filled the field of vision, approaching with a roar like a whale.

Thump, thump-.

"You didn't hear me?"

Although it was unpleasant due to the unfounded hostility, YuWon didn't feel uncomfortable.

They were simply different races.

The enmity came only from that simple reason.

Moreover, Behemoth considering him hostile in that manner was beneficial for YuWon.

"Humans have no place in this Great Heaven Demon War. What I hate the most is when meddlers like you, who have some power, believe that..."

"Is the Great Heaven Demon War so noble?"

"What?"

"That's what I'm saying, why are you so excited about something like that?"

Snap-.

The veins on Behemoth's forehead tensed.

His eyes turned blood-red, and his destructive power vigorously surged from his body in an instant.

'Rank 81, Lord of the Giants, Behemoth.'

He was the biggest headache on the Demon Kings' side.

"It was because of Behemoth." (Odin)

On some occasions, Odin had also contacted the Demons and asked them to stop the Great Heaven Demon War.

At that time, he was taking precautions not only against Foolish Chaos but also against the forces outside the Tower.

But the response he received was not from Diablo.

It was from Behemoth.

He responded to Asgard on behalf of the Demon Kings.

"He thought that the Great Heaven Demon War was the greatest event in the Demon Realm. He thought that fighting and war were the meaning of the Demons' existence, and he considered it absolutely necessary." (Odin)

Hardliners.

They were the faction that held that even in the Demon Realm, they should step forward and sweep the Angels.

Behemoth was the most influential Demon King in that hardliner faction. That was probably why he opposed Ragnarok in the beginning.

"We cannot afford to lose the strength of the Demon Realm in Ragnarok, do you understand what I'm saying?" (Behemoth)

He opposed due to concern that there would be issues in the Great Heaven Demon War.

Of course, ultimately, Ragnarok turned out to be beneficial for the Demon Realm.

The Angels who participated in the Great Heaven Demon War wasted a considerable amount of power, and even the key force, Michael himself, was injured.

"What did you say now? What is the Great Heaven Demon War? Something like that?"

Behemoth had risked his life for the Great Heaven Demon War.

Located behind Diablo and Baal among the Demons, he saw it as his best chance to improve his ranking.

Behemoth had an obsession with the Great Heaven Demon War.

And that obsession had now turned into anger against YuWon.

"How dare you open your mouth...?"

"I request a rank duel."

"A rank duel?"

Behemoth looked at YuWon incredulously.

A rank duel.

It was a common way in the Demon Realm for Demons to establish their hierarchy among themselves, regardless of their position in the ranking.

The rank duel was an ancient tradition in the Demon Realm, which existed long before the Ranking System was introduced with the Tower.

Over time, this culture had become somewhat forgotten in the present.

"How do you know about rank duels?"

Even for Behemoth, who was one of the Demon Kings, that was a culture that was becoming forgotten.

However, YuWon approached Behemoth, requesting a rank duel, as if he had been waiting to put him in his place.

"Is that really important?"

"No, but..."

Behemoth's forehead furrowed.

The rank duel was strictly carried out in a one-on-one fight. And that was different from the image Behemoth had painted earlier.

'This is getting annoying.'

Yuwon was a solitary presence in the Demon Realm as a human.

The demons would follow their Demon King's orders, and of course, all demons would become allies in case of conflict.

But if he were to participate in a rank duel, the story would be different.

That meant he could no longer request support from his allies.

'This guy's rank is probably...'

Behemoth's gaze shifted towards the Player Kit he held in his hand.

Yuwon's recent ranking came to his mind.

'If I lose here, there would be no greater disgrace than this.'

In case something like that happened.

If that were to happen, it would be a total disgrace to his dignity. Moreover, they were now close to the Great Heaven Demon War, so getting into trouble at a time like this wouldn't be good at all.

As he thought about that, a good excuse suddenly came to him.

"You're a human. Why would I have a rank duel with you?"

The rank duel was exclusive to demons.

And it was unthinkable for a human like Yuwon to participate in this event that only demons could take part in.

"You don't have the right. But, how dare you...?"

"I have the right."

"What?"

"I have it too."

Tsssss...

Dark energy began to emanate from YuWon's body.

Behemoth's eyes widened.

"You're a half-demon."

It wasn't much, but what he could sense from YuWon was definitely Demon Energy.

It was an energy that only demons possessed, and YuWon had it.

"How...?"

"It doesn't matter how."

YuWon also knew that the rank duel was an exclusive tradition of demons.

Despite that, YuWon could think about the rank duel because he believed he had some chance of being recognized as a member of the demons.

"Are you going to do it or not?"

At the question of whether he would back down despite that, Behemoth showed a troubled expression.

He could feel the uneasy gazes of the demons around, watching him and YuWon.

Even more...

"Are you afraid?"

Suddenly, Diablo, who seemed to have come out of somewhere, approached Behemoth from a corner of the demon group and growled at him.

"You're embarrassing yourself, Behemoth."

"Diablo..."

Behemoth clenched his teeth.

Although he tried to appear indifferent, Behemoth didn't have that much patience.

'Are you insinuating that you sent this guy to push me?'

What could they have been discussing inside that makeshift headquarters?

Behemoth thought that perhaps YuWon and Diablo were plotting something to drive him out.

If not, they wouldn't have worked together so well.

'The advantage is on their side.'

In the presence of many demons, YuWon showed the Demon Energy he possessed.

Though incomplete, that meant YuWon had the power of demons.

An ambiguous situation.

However, in that situation, Diablo, the King of the Demon Realm, spoke words that seemed to approve the rank duel.

With this, YuWon also gained the right to compete in the rank duel.

"Damn it."

He didn't like it.

This fight would only bring him losses.

And considering the opponent's rank, there was no guarantee he could win.

'Diablo, you bastard...'

Behemoth's gaze shifted to Diablo, who was feigning innocence.

Diablo was surprised to see that gaze and asked why he was looking at him like that, but Behemoth didn't even like that expression.

'I understand what you're thinking. But you're wrong.'

Behemoth looked back at YuWon and shouted.

"Everyone back up two kilometers in all directions!"

"Two kilometers?"

"Perhaps..."

"Perhaps what? Hurry up and run!"

"Why? What's going on?"

"Because Behemoth-nim..."

The demons grew agitated.

Among the demons who were watching the fight with interested eyes, some also caused disturbances and fled.

And the common feature of those people was one.

They had seen Behemoth's true form at some point, they were former demons.

"I accept the challenge."

Behemoth, who radiated intense energy towards YuWon, looked at Diablo, who seemed interested up close.

'I'm going to completely stomp on the game you've set up.'

And so, Behemoth accepted this rank duel.

[Rank duel begins]

[Defeat Behemoth, who holds the third position in the Demon Ranking]

[If you win, you will be recognized by the demons]

[Results will affect your ranking]

The demons seemed to have their own ranking system.

As time passed, a Classification Administration Office was established, and the rankings became a measure of power and authority, losing their original meaning. Nevertheless, rankings were still rankings.

Especially for the demons, hierarchy was crucial.

At this moment, YuWon was not recognized as one of them, but if he defeated Behemoth, the story would change.

'I'll also break Behemoth while I'm at it.'

Crack, crunch...

Yuwon looked at Behemoth, who started swelling in front of his eyes in real-time.

Behemoth grew rapidly, as if his body were a balloon.

In an instant, his body became gigantic.

Yuwon lifted his head and saw Behemoth's figure, which had become as huge as a structure.

But that wasn't all.

Gugu, gugugu...

Behemoth kept growing endlessly.

Bigger than a Giant.

The 2-kilometer distance was merely a minimal distance.

Even at this moment, the demons did their best to keep away from Behemoth's movements.

'Behemoth, the largest living creature with the size of a small island.'

Not the strongest, but the largest.

That nickname was given to him due to his enormous size.

Kung...

Behemoth's legs made the ground tremble.

From the nostrils of Behemoth, who had returned to his original form, hot breath came out.

Fiery red pupils. Long horns extending from one to two.

It was like the appearance of a massive bull.

From his body large enough to cover the entire surroundings, a magic as vast as his size emanated.

This living creature could destroy a city with a single move, and that claim turned out to be true.

"You're really so damn big."

Yuwon was slightly surprised by the size, which was even larger than expected.

Behemoth.

Although he had only heard about it before, it was the first time YuWon saw its true form.

-It's too late to regret now.

Grrrr-.

From between its open teeth, a bestial roar came out.

Its imposing presence was overwhelming, making it challenging to face even for those larger than Surt or Gigantes.

Indeed, most people would surrender and be afraid to fight Behemoth in this form.

"Regret?"

However, YuWon laughed at Behemoth's appearance.

"Just because of your size?"

Precisely, his position in the ranking proved that fact.

With a similar size, Behemoth ranked below Baal, not to mention Diablo.

Yuwon felt relieved to see that the size was all there was to it.

"That means, apart from your size, you have nothing else to show."

-Arrogant words...

Fzzt-.

Behemoth raised its head, feeling the energy emanating from above.

The sky above its own height.

And suddenly, there was a thick, dark cloud above it.

'Why are there clouds here?'

It was only natural to be curious.

This was the world ruled by the Heavens.

Originally, clouds couldn't exist in a world that exists above the clouds.

"Unless your only belief is your size..."

Fzzt, crack-.

A tremendous energy filled the cloud.

Until Behemoth became a being of gigantic size.

Yuwon was not known for his good behavior, so he was unwilling to patiently wait for the undoubtedly not short amount of time.

"In the end, one crumbles before an even greater force."

Swoosh-.



YuWon raised his hand upwards.

A small ring, perfectly sized for his pinky finger, glimmered on his finger.

And at that moment...

Crack-!

The ring covering his finger turned into a lightning bolt.

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The lightning that separated from the ring followed YuWon's hand's path.

Behemoth's gaze followed the lightning. It was a very short instant, but it felt like a very long time.

It was at that moment when time returned to flow normally that the finger with the ring was directed towards Behemoth.

Flash!

A yellow light filled Behemoth's field of vision.

In that instant, Behemoth felt an electric shock coursing through his entire body.

Kwang!

The sound came a little late.

-Kaaaah!

It was then that Behemoth screamed.

His body was charred and staggering. The sight of a single large creature being struck by lightning and trembling was truly magnificent.

But Behemoth didn't fall immediately.

While clutching onto his consciousness, which seemed like it was about to drift far away, Behemoth quickly searched for YuWon with his eyes.

"Where did he go?"

Surely, until just before the light burst out, YuWon was nearby.

But in that short moment, YuWon disappeared before his eyes.

From the beginning of the fight until now, YuWon had always moved out of Behemoth's reach.

And at that moment...

Zzwaah-.

A flow of mana was felt above Behemoth's head.

It was then when he lifted his head and saw YuWon.

Thump-.

An inflated arm.

[The power of a Giant accumulates in your arm]

YuWon's body was suddenly floating above Behemoth's head.

And in the next instant...

Shwack-.

YuWon's fist descended vertically onto Behemoth's head.

Jwaaah-!

Kwaaaang-!

Behemoth's head was crushed against the ground.

The upturned earth rose. The mouths of the demons observing from afar opened wide, and Diablo, immersed in the fight, deflected the flying rock fragments with his hand.

"Wow."

The frustration and anger he had just a moment ago disappeared for a moment.

YuWon's punch awakened a fighting spirit in Diablo.

"He really has become strong."

It didn't take much time.

For demons who lived much longer than humans and even for rankers with a guaranteed eternal life, it was a time as short as an instant.

And in that very short time, he had grown so much.

It was incredible that in such a short time, he could bring down Behemoth with a single blow.

Thump, thump-.

YuWon looked at the fist that had struck Behemoth's head.

In that brief moment, Uranus transformed into a gauntlet on YuWon's hand.

The fist used with the power of the Giant was covered with the sturdy gauntlet.

"My Gigantification skill has improved a lot," thought YuWon as he observed the scene before him. However, what he lacked were the necessary stats to fully control this skill. Although he had gained experience and skill in using Gigantification, his strength and stamina attributes were still insufficient.

The scene in front of him was proof of that. Behemoth slowly got up, staggering, and looked at YuWon. Despite taking a direct hit, he got up unscathed. If it had been Hercules who had hit him with that punch, the outcome would have been different.

"I'm still not good enough to handle giants."

"I still lack the skill to handle Gigantification," thought YuWon. No matter how valuable the objects or skills he possessed, if he didn't have the necessary skills to handle them, the results would be disappointing. He watched Behemoth from where he had fallen.

When their gazes met, YuWon noticed a slight tremor in Behemoth's body. Why was such a huge guy so scared?

"Do you have something else to do?" YuWon asked, slowly approaching.

**-You...** Growled Behemoth, showing his fangs. In his expression, there was more a sign of defense than threat.

Behemoth was scared.

The fight was over.

When YuWon took a step forward, Behemoth trembled and took a step back.

But due to his corpulence, Behemoth couldn't move easily. When he took a step back, the sound of the trembling earth was heard.

"Are you surrendering?" Someone asked.

Behemoth turned his head toward the voice that resonated in his ears.

Diablo.

He was looking at him with a smile and his fangs bared.

-I won't surrender!

Behemoth shouted proudly, observing YuWon's reactions.

Could he win if he continued fighting here?

Behemoth had no confidence.

No.

He was sure he couldn't win.

"Darn it. I was wrong," he thought. Losing here would be a total disgrace. Even though YuWon had become a High-Ranker in the shortest time possible, YuWon was still just a rising star.

For him, a third-ranking Demon King, to be defeated by someone like that would be very humiliating.

Moreover, it was a situation where he could lose everything.

And then...

YuWon's figure disappeared from the spot.

This time, he didn't seem to have vanished. Behemoth saw YuWon move with his own eyes and turned his horns in that direction.

Crash!

The horns and YuWon's fist clashed.

Ziiiiing!

Thwack!

The impact of the collision pushed Behemoth back a step. Above all, what Behemoth couldn't understand in any way was that he couldn't overpower YuWon's strength.

'I can't win this.'

Behemoth's advantage was his overwhelming strength and resistance emanating from his size.

However, YuWon wasn't falling behind in that strength. For some reason, YuWon was unleashing several times more brute force than usual using his abilities.

As Behemoth found himself in this situation, unable to do anything...

"Can we have a little chat?"

YuWon, who was suddenly on top of his nose, whispered.

-What...?

"Don't speak too loud, or do you want others to hear us?"

The whispering voice that sounded close sent shivers down Behemoth's spine.

But at the same time, Behemoth also felt relief.

A conversation.

Although the circumstances he found himself in only predicted his defeat, in a situation like this, perhaps a conversation could be a hope to overcome this situation smoothly.

-What do you mean?

A much softer voice than before, so only YuWon could hear it.

YuWon, standing on Behemoth's nose, opened his mouth with both feet.

"Let's make this battle a draw."

-A draw?

"In exchange..."

A condition that goes beyond the fight that can be won.

Behemoth's eyes visibly trembled at YuWon's whisper.

-That...?

"If you don't like it, then let's finish it here and now."

Kuwook~

The hand pressed Behemoth's nose.

YuWon demonstrated the difference in power once again.

If they continue fighting, the result is obvious. And more than what YuWon gains from this fight, Behemoth loses a lot.

Above all, for Behemoth, who had already been pressured once, there was no other option.

-...Fine.

A smile appeared at the corner of YuWon's lips.

He had obtained the answer he wanted. With this, he had now obtained everything he needed from the Demon Kings' side.

Only one thing remained.

"Then, now..."

As promised, only achieving the "draw" according to the agreement was left.

"Let's put on a fiery performance."

-----

Cruaaaack!

Behemoth's horns collided with YuWon's sword.

Woaaaah!

The roar of an enraged bull tore through the dark clouds of the sky. At the same time, a bright point fell from the sky.

"E-Eh?"

"It's coming this way!"

The demons who had been clustered and watching the fight from afar startled and scattered left and right.

Apparently, the YuWon who had clashed with Behemoth a moment ago was falling to the ground.

Thud!

Crash!

YuWon was thrown to the ground as he overturned the soil. Some nearby demons were dragged along, and those who managed to escape worried about YuWon's condition.

"What happened to him?"

"Is he dead?"

Thud, thud...

YuWon's figure gradually became visible among the dust and soil.

With debris of broken rocks on top of his head, YuWon was lying on the ground.

That was a natural outcome.

Look at the size of Behemoth. His size was so immense that it couldn't be described with words like "the largest creature in the Tower."

And to clash head-on against Behemoth's horns...

No matter if he had ten bodies, it still wouldn't be enough.

"The victory is Behemoth-nim's..."

Thump!

But at that moment...

Behemoth began to wobble and fell to the ground from a distance.

Of course.

After directly receiving that incredible lightning and then directly fighting YuWon, Behemoth had also accumulated damage.

Though it was apparent that YuWon was lying like that.

Behemoth stopped attacking, crouched in place, and sat down.

"What's going on?"

"So, who won?"

Who was the winner of this rank duel?

Opinions were divided.

Some said that YuWon had lost because he fell first.

Others said it wasn't a simultaneous fall.

And some said they had to wait and see who got up first.

"It's a draw."

It was at that moment when someone appeared and summed up all those claims at once.

It was the leader of all the demons, Diablo, who had been observing the fight from high above while enjoying himself.

"It was a draw..."

"A draw?"

"So, that's what happened..."

It was a disheartening reaction, but no one among the demons dared to question Diablo's decision.

The apparent result wasn't satisfactory enough to declare a victory for either side. Neither YuWon nor Behemoth moved or blinked, remaining motionless.

Above all, if Diablo said it was a draw, then it was a draw.

Because in this demon realm, where the law of the strongest is stronger than in any other world, Diablo's word is law.

[Rank Duel has ended]

[Battle between Kim YuWon and Behemoth ends in a draw]

[Kim YuWon's rank will be just below Behemoth in fourth place]

After the rank duel concluded, the Players qualified as demons received a common message.

Originally, YuWon, who didn't win the battle, shouldn't have been affected by the demon rankings.

But the result was a draw. YuWon was assigned a rank just below Behemoth.

And naturally, due to YuWon's intervention, the demon rankings gradually shifted.

However, there were no demons dissatisfied.

In fact, they were astonished and praised YuWon's skills.

"Kim YuWon is amazing too."

"Anyway, it was a draw."

"Behemoth is really incredible. Just think of all that Kim YuWon has done lately."

"Well, both are impressive."

Demons were a race that got excited over battles, and the fight between these two powerful individuals was the best spectacle worth watching, even putting their lives on the line.

Moreover, the results were considered the best for the demons.

The outcome of a draw not only confirmed that the rumors about the ascending High-Ranker YuWon were not unfounded, but also demonstrated that both YuWon and Behemoth possessed equally impressive skills.

While the demons exchanged their opinions on the battle between YuWon and Behemoth, dispersing in all directions, a voice resonated nearby.

"The stage has been set."

Thud.

YuWon slowly raised his head upon hearing the approaching voice.

Diablo, who had stealthily come closer, gazed down at him.

"How do you plan to stop this war now?"

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Chapter 320

C320

"Is it over already?"

YuWon's eyes moved slightly from side to side.

He no longer felt the presence of the demons he had sensed a moment ago. Confirming there was no one else apart from Diablo around him, he raised his head.

"Manipulating the sacred outcome of the Rank Duel. You're just a Human, yet you do such impressive things like a Demon King."

Although his words sounded like that, it wasn't a severe reproach.

After all, he had other matters on his mind.

"Have you finished everything on this side?"

"More or less."

YuWon got up from the ground, shaking off the dust covering his body.

With that, he managed to stop Behemoth, who had been rushing toward the Great Heaven Demon War. There were no worries on this side, as they had halted the major problem.

Diablo, first of all, wasn't particularly interested in the Great Heaven Demon War.

The problem was Baal.

"Baal..."

"That guy is just like me. Only, he's a deranged lunatic, jumping around like a venomous snake."

Looking at Behemoth, who pretended to be unconscious and continued lying on the ground, Diablo observed him with pity in his eyes.

Given his enormous size, he couldn't quickly get up from his position. If he did, it would quickly become apparent that the Rank Duel had been manipulated.

"We won't move until the Great Heaven Demon War officially begins."

"I'm glad to hear that."

"Anyway, I also want to finish this absurd fight."

Diablo's eyes lit up as he said that.

YuWon recalled the information about Diablo he knew, seeing that killing intent in his gaze.

"It was he who triggered the Great Heaven Demon War."

It's not that Diablo avoided or disliked the fight due to his lack of interest in the Great Heaven Demon War. His reluctance toward the Great Heaven Demon War stemmed from the fact that it was merely a formal fight, an event turned into a spectacle for the viewers.

As a result, Diablo lost interest and withdrew from the Great Heaven Demon War. He would only be willing to participate if Metatron joined.

But...

Diablo, unable to hold back any longer, finally exploded his accumulated frustration.

And that was the true lever of the Great Heaven Demon War that YuWon knew.

"I have to be careful not to provoke him too much."

Diablo was a dangerous individual.

He couldn't forget that fact.

"Are you going to leave right away?"

"Well, I'm not injured or anything."

"You look busy."

"I don't have much time."

Thanks to that, they had gained some time, but they still didn't have enough.

Ten days were too short to stop a war that had lasted for thousands of years.



YuWon got up from his seat and immediately started moving.

As he watched him walk away, Diablo muttered.

"The Great Heaven Demon War..."

A battle that occurred every ten years.

Now, it had become too familiar, but this time, the words that used to be obvious felt a bit different.

A long silence.

However, strangely, YuWon's intervention changed everything.

"This time might be different."

-----

Clank, clank, clank...

The angels moved in formation, taking coordinated steps.

They firmly grasped their shining spears, determination on their faces.

"Haaap-!"

Swish...

Force was felt at the tip of the spear.

Michael was sitting at the tip of a spear, observing that scene.

"Once again."

"Haaap-!"

"It's not enough to just increase the volume of your voice."

"Haaap-!"

The force of the angels extending their spears became even more powerful.

Michael, who had slightly opened his eyes, closed them again.

"My body has recovered quite a bit."

When he closed his eyes, he thought about the Ragnarok.

The day they attacked Asgard's Golden Castle.

The battle with Zeus was vividly etched in his mind.

"There's no excuse for negligence. Such words won't be forgiven."

Michael was very demanding of himself.

That's why he couldn't accept a single defeat and had to remember it over and over in his mind for decades or even centuries to soothe his conscience.

The battle against Zeus had been a great impact for Michael.

Thanks to that, he realized how much he had weakened.

Swoosh...

When he finally opened his eyes after a long time, the sun was already halfway through the sky.

The angels who had been training with their spears in front of him had already dispersed. Michael closed his eyes again and relived the battle with Zeus.

'...I must thank him.'

He had gained some confidence.

Zeus was the King of Olympus, yet he was in a deplorable state after losing his Lightning Bolt.

The reason Michael had lost so easily was that he had tried to face him alone, relying on his speed.

But now things were different.

There were many ways to confront Zeus.

'Now I have confidence.'

Michael, with his head held high, looked at the sky tinged with gold.

Another day had passed.

But everything was not over yet.

"You've waited a long time."

Michael, sitting at the tip of the spear, turned his head without any hesitation.

He saw someone standing at the end of a spear of the same length. For some time, that person had been approaching him and waiting behind him.

It was as if he was saying he wouldn't disturb him.

'He shows no signs of hesitation.'

Michael looked at the man who had been waiting behind him.

Balancing at the end of a spear was one of Michael's training methods.

He had made several Archangels do it, but no one else but him could sit on this narrow edge of the spear for so long without using magic.

And yet...

'It's not a chance encounter.'

The face was familiar.

A face he had glimpsed.

It didn't take him long to recognize the face.

"Kim YuWon, right?"

YuWon slightly nodded his head at Michael when his name was mentioned.

It wasn't a chance encounter.

YuWon had come to find him with some purpose.

"You've thought it through. If you had spoken to me or come a bit closer, I wouldn't have even responded."

"I thought so."

"You seemed to think that..."

Michael's eyes narrowed.

"You reacted as if you knew me well."

"It's not surprising. You're Michael, after all."

Michael.

The mightiest Archangel, the sword and shield of Heaven.

There probably isn't a Ranker who doesn't know Michael. Until now, Michael's achievements in the Great Heaven Demon War surpassed all Angels and Demons.

An obvious response if one thinks about it.

Michael nodded his head.

"That's right. What's the matter then?"

"The Great Heaven Demon War will start soon."

"It's less than ten days away..."

The afternoon darkened in Michael's eyes.

"No, one more day has already passed."

The Great Heaven Demon War starts at nightfall.

After another nine days, the Great Heaven Demon War would begin. The Great Heaven Demon War was getting closer.

"Is that your goal, the Great Heaven Demon War?"

"For now, yes."

"For now?"

"I'm still considering it."

"Considering it?"

Michael laughed ironically at YuWon's frankness.

"So you're deciding which side to be on."

"That's right."

"Unlike what I heard, you're like a bat."

Michael's gaze towards YuWon became complicated.

Kim YuWon.

His name was widely known. Recently, he had become overwhelmingly popular.

Michael, who wasn't very interested in the World, remembered that name vividly from the Ragnarok.

"In the Ragnarok, weren't you with the Demons?"

The reason Michael's gaze towards YuWon wasn't friendly.

It was because in the Ragnarok, they had fought in opposite directions.

And above all...

"It was because of you that Zeus was freed from prison."

Michael believed it was YuWon's fault that Heaven had lost in the Ragnarok.

When the Demon Kings joined the side of Asgard and it was decided that Heaven would participate in the Ragnarok, Zeus was the variable that no one expected.

And YuWon, before them, was responsible for creating that variable.

From Heaven's perspective, YuWon was practically worse than most of the Demons.

"I wasn't with the Demons, I was with Asgard."

"Weren't you the one who attracted the Demons?"

"It was to fight against Muspelheim."

"So you joined forces with the Demons to fight against the Demons... Is that what you're saying?"

"And weren't Heaven doing the same when they joined forces with the Demons of Muspelheim?"

Michael and YuWon's gazes met without backing down.

With those words indicating that both you and I were stained with the same sh\*t, Michael couldn't refute.

"It was a decision of the King. As his subordinate, I had no choice but to obey."

"It wasn't my decision, so I'm not in the wrong, is that what you're saying?"

"...I'm not saying that."

"The Heavenly King, Metatron. Do you fully trust the decisions he makes?"

"No honorifics, huh?"

Michael's gaze turned cold.

Until now, he had shown no hostility nor was he friendly, but now he showed, for the first time, a displeased expression.

"Your language is a bit impolite."

"Blind faith blinds the eyes and only devours the flesh, regardless of race."

"If you came here to fight..."

"How much do you trust Metatron?"

Fwoosh!

A killing intent covered YuWon's body. Michael's wings spread wide, and the whole surroundings turned into his territory.

"You're crossing the line."

"Who do you think caused the Great Heaven Demon War?"

"Stop right there."

"Do you really believe it's the Demons who are killing Heaven's Angels?"

"Enough!"

Swoosh.

With Michael's shout, YuWon felt a burst of wind stop around his neck.

It was a sharp wind like a blade. If Michael hadn't stopped, those gusts would have pierced his neck.

"Maybe you believe in friendship with Asgard, but if you cross the line once more, don't blame me for giving you a horrible death."

"...Really?"

Swoosh.

YuWon raised his hand and brushed away the blade that was approaching his neck.

The blade moved away without force. It seemed to be only a threat in the first place; Michael didn't seem to have intentions to attack YuWon.

Thump.

Michael gently descended from the tip of the spear.

The training ground of the Angels was already empty.

Michael turned his body under the light of the two moons shining high in the sky.

"It's your freedom to choose a side. But be careful with the words you throw here; you could lose your head at any moment."

With that, Michael left without a trace. YuWon watched him leave.

They hadn't had many conversations, but that was enough for now.

Archangel Michael.

The strongest and mightiest Angel of Heaven.

And also...

"Michael was the one who had the most doubts about the Great Heaven Demon War."

After the Great Heaven Demon War, he was the one who regretted the most.

"Convincing him at once will be difficult. He's as stubborn as a mule."

If Diablo was the key on the Demon Kings' side, Michael was the key on Heaven's side.

Although not much was known about Michael, there were several Rankers who were frustrated with his naive and straight nature.

It would probably be more challenging to persuade him than persuading Diablo.

"So, what do we do?"

"There's no rush."

The answer was simple.

Not to try to convince him all at once.

Give him enough time to think for himself.

That was the first thing YuWon had to do.

"At least, I've thrown the stone."

The calm waters stirred, creating ripples.

Now was the time to increase the current.