

With The Gods 401

Chapter 401

C401

Tremble, tremble...

A pressure weighing on the shoulders came as an overwhelming burden.

It didn't need to be spoken aloud as it was obvious.

The aura emanating from the Goblin King's body was charged with sincerity, so YuWon could feel it clearly.

Swoosh...

Within the mask that had come off, the face of a goblin was revealed.

The King of hundreds of millions of goblins.

Holding an immense club in his hands, charged with enormous strength, he pointed it towards YuWon.

"Haa..."

While YuWon had thought about training and adapting to his new stats, he never anticipated this would happen.

'Nevertheless...'

YuWon felt a surge of strength in his legs as they stood on the ground.

Strength: 148.

And with the stamina backing up that strength, it reached 151.

Unless he regulated his strength, his body seemed to be brimming with energy.

'There's no harm in checking.'

A power that could light up the eyes of even the Bull Demon King and the Goblin King.

Simply having an increase in strength and stamina stats shouldn't cause this reaction. Moreover, the Goblin King, the creator of the Physical Enhancement Ritual, knew better than anyone how a drastic increase in YuWon's stats shouldn't have resulted in this reaction.

That could only mean one thing.

He had experienced an unexpected change.

Rumble, rumble...

The muscles around YuWon began to slowly twist.

Arcane Power spread throughout his body, and that Arcane Power distributed throughout his body conveyed strength.

"Even when you put it that way..."

[A Giant's strength infuses throughout your body.]

The opponent was the Goblin King.

An opponent who had no trouble adapting to his body.

"We can also go unrestrained."

Giiiiiiing!

Fwoosh!

['Golden Cinder Eyes' reveal the truth]

['Eyes of Foreknowledge' illuminate the future]

['Sensory Field' is activated]

A red aura covered YuWon's golden cinder eyes. They were the Golden Cinder Eyes floating above the Eyes of Foreknowledge.

Many figures of the Goblin King unfolded before his eyes.

And in that fleeting moment...

Bam!

He saw the image of himself being struck by the Goblin King's club.

Woosh!

He immediately leaned his body forward and evaded the club. The future he had seen changed and revealed a different scene.

The ground collapsed.

Kwaaaaang!

The Goblin King's fist destroyed the ground where YuWon had been standing.

['Skysteps' is activated.]

[Movement speed increases.]

Jump!

YuWon leaped upwards. His fist passed over the Goblin King's head and stretched towards his side.

Thud!

The Goblin King was pushed back and flew through the air.

Kwiiiiick! Zziiiiiip!

The Goblin King dug a leg into the ground to support his flying body.

An instant confrontation.

The Goblin Servant's mouth opened as he watched the scene from a distance, atop the bamboo.

"The king..."

The Goblin King was pushed back.

It was hard to believe even after seeing it with his own eyes. YuWon hadn't used any particularly amazing techniques, but naturally, he evaded the Goblin King's attack and launched a counterattack.

YuWon was also surprised.

Crack!

YuWon looked at his fist embedded in the Goblin King's side.

Using the Eyes of Foreknowledge had become much more natural. Although only about a second had passed, seeing the future had its advantages.

In the past, his fist wouldn't even have properly embedded into the Goblin King's body.

'I can do it now.'

He had enough strength and stamina.

The use of the Eyes of Foreknowledge was also much less exhausting.

Although it was still challenging to directly confront the Goblin King in a clash of pure strength, he had a good chance if he used the Eyes of Foreknowledge.

'Above all, this wasn't a sparring match from the beginning.'

Zap!

A red sword was drawn from Kim YuWon's Inventor.

The Kusanagi Sword.

He needed a sword with enough durability and damage potential to pierce the thick skin of the Goblin King.

Rumble!

The thunderous sound when the Kusanagi Sword was unleashed.

The Goblin King advanced towards the Kusanagi Sword, surrounded by lightning.

"You know how to fight quite well."

The Goblin King, with a fully goblin face, turned to YuWon.

Then, he extended his fist towards him.

Boom!

Inside the vast bamboo forest.

Rumble, rumble!

Within it, lightning kept exploding, and flames soared.

Rumble, rumble, rumble!

The ground trembled as if experiencing an earthquake. The sturdy bamboo, which didn't even budge in a typhoon, broke and fell to the side.

Goblin Servant raised a hand to shield himself from the lightning bolts flying from afar.

Crack, crack-le!

The intensity of the lightning bolts coursing through his arm was unusually strong. There was no issue for Goblin Servant, as he had undergone his own ritual, but if caught in that, it would be different.

The light was so dazzling it was hard to see. Amidst it, a warm sensation of heat radiated through his arm to his face.

Boom!

YuWon's sword clashed with the Goblin King's club.

The sword recoiled, and finally, the Goblin King's fist sunk into YuWon's torso.

Boom!

YuWon's body flew backward.

From the Goblin King's perspective, who was fighting hand-to-hand, this was something strange. Until now, YuWon had been sliding like an eel using the Eyes of Foreknowledge, and suddenly he had become so predictable.

However, Goblin Servant, who was observing from a distance, could see it.

Rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble!

Mana Cannons filled the sky.

It was already too late when the Goblin King noticed them.

Crack, crack, craaack-le!

Lightning-type Mana Cannons fell like a torrential rain.

Although they didn't have as sharp a shape as lightning bolts, they were more powerful than attacks from most High-Rankers firing at full power.

'Was he setting a trap?'

Deliberately hinting that he could be caught or avoided, YuWon diverted the Goblin King's attention.

At the last moment, he released all the Mana Cannons he had been preparing, allowing the fists to draw near.

The battle operation was so smooth it was dazzling. There was no issue with the trap and the process of luring the opponent in.

'His ability to create Mana Cannons and his Arcane Power to control them on this scale are top-notch.'

Goblin Servant was a High-Ranker. Although his rank was low due to his inactivity and stay in Goblin Country, he at least had the confidence that he could be a High-Ranker within the top 100 once he finished all his business with the Goblin King.

But when he compared YuWon in front of him, he felt like everything around him dimmed.

However.

"Anyway..."

Crack, crack, craaack-le!

Amidst the storm of lightning bolts rushing like a hurricane due to the thousands of Mana Cannons.

Goblin Servant saw the Goblin King standing amidst it.

"He still can't match the King."

The Goblin King, touching his sore neck, looked at YuWon amidst the storm of lightning.

"This attack is quite refreshing."

Refreshing. These were not words worth spitting out after being hit by those monstrous Mana Cannons.

"I have a good instinct. Was all of this to set up this trap?"

It was quite a well-prepared strike. YuWon looked at the Goblin King with a look of annoyance.

At a glance, the Goblin King seemed unharmed.

Eventually, accumulating this kind of damage, he would collapse, but that would require too much time and effort.

And before that, it might be him who got tired first.

'Shouldn't we avoid fighting this way?'

He knew how to deal with such a resilient type.

Hercules and Satan were examples of that. They needed a unique attack for opponents with extreme resilience.

Just like Nir.

However...

'There's no time to release it.'

The problem was that there was no time to release the attack.

Moreover, Nir required a considerable time to charge and activate.

To create an opening of that kind, Sasano'o had to buy time, which would be impossible against the Goblin King.

So, there was only one option.

'I must get within his range.'

Create a sharper Lightning Bolt and deliver a strong blow within the Goblin King's reach was the only solution.

Crack!

YuWon's toe pointed towards the Goblin King.

That was the first change in the battle.

Crack!

A gigantic Lightning Bolt formed in YuWon's hand.

The Goblin King smiled as he clearly saw what he was planning.

"A head-on battle?"

With Kusanagi in hand, YuWon advanced towards the Goblin King, closing the distance between them. It was pretty obvious what that meant.

At this point, there was no way not to notice.

It no longer made sense to keep the distance and gradually accumulate blows.

"All right."

Crack, crack!

While lightning was still falling from the sky.

The distance between YuWon and the Goblin King shortened.

"It's fortunate it's not otherwise."

Twenty steps.

YuWon felt a strange unease in the Goblin King's expression, who began to smile while still out of reach of the club.

"I've also figured out how to destroy those eyes."

Swiish~

In YuWon's eyes, letters began to filter from the ground into his body.

The Goblin's letters were the omen of Sorcery. As soon as those letters caught you, you were under the Spell.

But...

Chyaah!

Densely written letters spread from the center of YuWon and the Goblin King, forming a narrow space.

It was a change that happened in the blink of an eye.

Looking up, YuWon noticed magical letters inscribed in the sky too.

'How...?'

As much as he was the Goblin King, he couldn't use magic solely with his will, without any gesture or movement. It required a certain time to perform spells.

And there was only one moment when he had enough time to do so.

"I was wondering why you didn't come out immediately even though you were fine. Were you hiding and preparing for this?"

"The only thing you can see with those eyes is about 2 seconds at most."

That meant he was planning for a distant future, avoiding YuWon's sight.

Just in case, YuWon shot a Lightning Bolt towards the 'wall' created by the Goblin King.

Baaang!

Thud!

YuWon's body staggered from the force reflected on the wall.

The wall didn't even flicker. It seemed that it wouldn't be possible to bring it down with just one or two attacks.

"It's futile."

Step!

The Goblin King took one step closer to YuWon.

"Now, you can't escape anywhere."

"...Seems that way."

He wasn't fazed at all. Anyway, YuWon intended to change the range of the fight to a closer one.

So, what changed was...

Whoosh!

In an instant, a punch came at his eyes.

Dodging it wasn't too difficult.

The problem was what came next.

Whoosh, whoosh!

Crash, bang!

Punches and mace strikes kept coming relentlessly.

Dealing a fatal blow in close combat seemed like too much arrogance.

'Going so deep into close combat was a mistake.'

Swish.

'But I can't retreat too much...'

Clang.

YuWon suddenly stopped.

It was precisely what he saw would happen if he took a step back.

'Damn.'

Blocked by the wall, receiving the Goblin King's mace attack was the consequence of retreating.

"Knowing it doesn't mean you can dodge everything."

Swish!

"...!"

YuWon's eyes widened at the punch that struck his abdomen. A direct impact on his organs seemed to induce nausea.

"Especially in such a tight space like this."

Gulp!

Knowing the tide is coming doesn't mean you can avoid it or stop it. That was the reality in this situation.

With the space blocked by the Goblin King's spell, Eyes of Foreknowledge couldn't be of much help at this moment.

Inside this confined space, the Goblin King's attacks weren't the type that could be simply dodged or blocked by foreknowledge.

'There's no other option.'

With the way to create distance eliminated, there was only one choice left.

'We'll fight at this range.'

YuWon spit out blood and clenched his fist. Escaping this situation would only mean defeat. Right now, he had to rely on his body strengthened through the ritual and fight as best as he could.

Grrrr, grrrr...

The Arcane Power throughout his body activated his muscles. In this desperate situation, his senses sharpened, and Arcane Energy flowed through his body, strengthening his muscles with its high resilience.

And so, his transformation began.

[The power of the Giants accumulates throughout your body]

[The flame of the giant and demon reaches its peak in your body]

[The 'Recreation of the Giant King' begins]

What YuWon was experiencing now was something a bit different from what he had experienced so far.

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Momentarily, it seemed like time had come to a complete halt.

The Goblin King had closed the gap to within a single step. In the face of this Goblin King, YuWon unleashed his Gigantification to the maximum.

Gigantification was the most efficient ability in close combat, one could even say it was the most effective in dogfights if exaggerated a bit.

However...

Ssshhh!

A red demon-like figure suddenly appeared in front of him.

Yuwon squinted his eyes as he saw the blurry figure forming before him.

'Surt?'

Bam!

Instantly, the punch he launched forward made the Goblin King's body recoil.

The Goblin King was also taken aback, but only for a moment. Then, as if he understood that something was amiss, he caressed the area where he had been hit as if he had sensed something.

"It's starting."

It was at that moment that he felt it.

Immediately after the strengthening ritual. The feeling of unknown power coming from YuWon.

As if there was someone else behind YuWon.

Ssshhh!

Yuwon looked at the red demon-like figure that repeatedly appeared and disappeared before his eyes.

Though it was much smaller and had a different form from the one he knew, it seemed similar to someone he knew.

'Surt.'

Despite the urgency of the situation, he felt it clearly.

This power unmistakably belonged to Surt.

The power of the Giants and the flame of the Demon.

It was the same message he had heard when he obtained Surt's characteristics through the ritual.

"Are Surt's characteristics reacting with Gigantification?"

It made sense.

Gigantification originally was the Hidden Piece Hercules obtained after slaughtering millions of Giants.

While YuWon had acquired the ability more easily through the Tutorial, that meant the effectiveness of the ability had to be qualitatively different.

However, Surt...

Extracted from the heart of the Tower's fourth best High-Ranker, the Giant who had reached the pinnacle among Giants. That meant it was strong enough to replace the portion of those millions of Giants.

Roar!

'Should I give it a try?'

Sss, sss, sss...

Power filled his body completely.

The name "Recreation of the Giant King" sounded quite grand, and YuWon decided to try out this new level of Gigantification at least once.

In this narrow space, it was the only way he could face the Goblin King.

"It seems like you haven't tidied up your things properly."

The Goblin King, looking at YuWon's expression, closed the gap again.

Though he was pushed back, it lasted only an instant.

Regaining his stance and raising his mace once more, the Goblin King exuded an even more terrifying presence than before.

"Now, can I expect something from you?"

Lifting his mace, the Goblin King prepared to attack again.

Zuuung!

At that moment, YuWon's sword flew towards the Goblin King's waist.

Craaack!

"...!"

The Goblin King's eyes widened as he felt pain he hadn't experienced before. This was the second time he had received such a massive impact in a pure strength battle; the first time was during the fight with the Bull Demon King a few days ago.

"I guess it's possible."

Crack!

This time, it was YuWon who spoke through gritted teeth.

The Goblin King clenched his fist with determination, aware of the situation.

Though he had anticipated it, YuWon's raw power was incredibly wild and overwhelming.

The Goblin King decided not to think of the opponent in front of him as a rookie who had just become a Ranker.

'Perhaps this is what it feels like to fight Hercules, as the rumors say?'

The Goblin King had heard about him. He was an impressive individual who earned the title of "Giant Slayer" after facing countless Giants on his own and massacring millions of them in the end.

This individual had earned the respect of many Rankers, and the Goblin King was not lacking in confidence in his own strength either.

However, for some reason, the figure of Hercules, of whom he had only heard, reminded him of YuWon.

Crack, Crack!

Crack!

While blocking the sword with his mace, the Goblin King's fingers wrote letters in the air.

Thud!

YuWon's sword, which had been hanging over the Goblin King's shoulder, suddenly fell down as if it had suddenly gained thousands of pounds in weight.

The weight of the sword changed in an instant. Although it wasn't so heavy that he couldn't lift it, it was enough of a change to destabilize his posture at that moment.

Whoosh!

"...!"

YuWon gritted his teeth in response to the massive impact he felt in his abdomen.

He did his best to stay on his feet, even if only for a moment.

At the same time, Uranus that he held in his hand began to emit a blue glow.

['Blessing of the Sea' resides in your body]

['Blessing of the Sea' is destroyed]

Kwaaaah!

His two legs became firmly rooted in the ground as if they were deeply embedded.

The Goblin King, sensing that his attack didn't move YuWon like an immovable mountain, frowned in frustration.

His punch had landed accurately, but YuWon hadn't even taken a step back.

Crack!

YuWon grabbed the Goblin King's wrist with his hand.

With his robust arms as thick as tree trunks, YuWon squeezed the wrist with all his strength and twisted the Goblin King.

Boom!

The Goblin King fell to the ground, and the ground flipped over along with him.

If it hadn't been for the magical protection in the surrounding area, the entire bamboo forest nearby would have been blown away due to the impact.

A dense cloud of dust rose. YuWon, with the Golden Cinder Eyes, looked down at the Goblin King, who had been thrown to the ground, and then looked at himself.

'The Blessing of the Sea has been broken.'

An ability residing in Uranus Heart.

The Blessing of the Sea automatically activated when YuWon was under a mortal attack.

As a result, it had a short duration but great defense. However, the Goblin King's punch had managed to break it in a single blow.

Of course, YuWon had contributed greatly to withstand that punch.

[You have reached 70% of 'Recreation of the Giant King']

Boom, boom!

He felt the muscle veins running throughout his body pulsating rapidly in time with his heartbeat.

It was clear that this was not a power that could be used for a long time.

'If this is really Surt's strength...'

Surt.

The mightiest Giant of all time, and Odin's ancient rival among the Giants.

Furthermore, the leader of Muspelheim, the chief of the Demons.

'I can't match that with the stats I have right now...'

Hercules was also a Ranker without equal in terms of sheer strength.

But Surt was originally an existence beyond categories.

If only brute strength were considered, Hercules might surpass him, but the power emanating from Surt's physique and presence was overwhelming and hard to face even for someone like Hercules.

Moreover, he had immense power in the form of flames that could cover all of Muspelheim.

If Surt were to gain Divinity, what kind of existence would he become?

That had been Odin's concern for a long time.

The first to become the King of Giants and Demons as the King of Muspelheim. Someone who had survived a blow from Gungnir and had power rivaling Hercules in his glory days.

That existence was Surt.

"Surt, it would be nice if that guy were on our side."

"We must give up at some point. Although with anyone else, it might be possible, with Surt, it's impossible to rehabilitate him."

"I know that. The problem with him is not a specific event or circumstance, but an innate disposition."

"Still, there must be another way."

"Isn't it about the Heart of Fire?"

"No, it's not that."

Hercules, who was discussing the matter, turned his head to look at Goblin Servant.

"I'm talking about that ritual."

At that moment, YuWon, who was present, thought it was madness.

But it turned out to be true.

"Perhaps that guy's heart could become the ingredient for 'complete transformation into a Giant.'"

Of course, there were conditions.

He had to obtain Surt's heart before receiving the ritual, that is, after completing Ragnarok.

It was quite a challenging task. Delaying the spell was also an issue, and triggering Ragnarok unprepared also had risks.

But in the end...

[Recreation of the Giant King' has been completed]

[You have obtained the body and heart of the Giant King]

[You have obtained the title "Giant King"]

Crackle, crackle, crackle-.

Yuwon could feel the muscles in his body expanding and hardening.

The characteristics obtained through Surt's Heart were beginning now.

["Gigantification" evolves into "Complete Gigantification"]

[You have obtained "Complete Gigantification"]

The skill that Hercules acquired after massacring millions of giants.

["Complete Gigantification" has a remaining duration of 3 minutes.]

[2:59]

[2:58]

Perhaps, just like with the Eyes of Foreknowledge, this was due to the ability.

For some reason, he felt a considerable burden on his body, and the duration was short.

3 minutes.

It wasn't a very long time.

'Even so...'

Thud.

Yuwon looked at the Goblin King, who was slowly emerging from the ground.

'Three minutes are enough.'

Complete Gigantification had been activated.

During these three minutes, the short distance gave YuWon an even greater advantage.

Thud.

YuWon's fist rose and struck the Goblin King's head.

Clang!

The Goblin King's head turned to the side.

In an instant, his vision disappeared, and his consciousness became vague. But...

The punch came out reflexively.

Kwahng!

The Goblin King's punch hit YuWon's head again.

There was no Blessing of the Sea.

Since it was a skill that had already been deactivated, it would take some time to restore it.

But YuWon didn't retreat after receiving that blow.

On the contrary...

Kwahng!

"Ugh...!"

As if he was expecting that, YuWon punched the Goblin King's abdomen.

Clang, clang, clang!

Fists exchanged. YuWon threw the sword he held in his hand, and the Goblin King threw his mace.

A fistfight.

Literally, a dogfight.

Clang!

Crunch.

The Goblin King took a step back.

His body trembled, and he was gradually overwhelmed by strength. He continued to stare at YuWon, but at some point, YuWon stopped using the Eyes of Foreknowledge.

This meant...

'I'm being outmatched in a hand-to-hand fight.'

It started when that mysterious ability manifested.

Slowly, the strengths became similar, but the sudden burst of power began to overwhelm him.

Although he was the one leading the strength-to-strength battle.

Now was the time to change the strategy.

'If strength doesn't work...'

Now he had only one option left.

Whoosh, whoosh...

Letters formed in the air from the tips of the Goblin King's fingers. As if saying that he wouldn't let him escape, YuWon lunged at the Goblin King.

Time was running out.

There was barely a minute left of the Complete Gigantification duration.

YuWon was in a position where he had to hurry to see the end.

Clang!

YuWon's fist struck the Goblin King's chest.

It surely would have inflicted significant damage.

Kwaahk!

But the Goblin King grabbed YuWon's arm and shrank back.

That was to use the spell he had recently cast.

"Sorcery is essentially the power to manipulate souls."

Whoosh, whoosh...

The letters began to infiltrate YuWon's body.

Using that as an intermediary, the Goblin King could see YuWon's soul, which had previously been invisible.

"When you stir the soul, naturally..."

And at that moment...

Thud.

"The power..."

The appearance of a being completely different from what he had imagined made the Goblin King's eyes widen.

'What is this?'

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The soul used to signify a person's essence.

Usually, it was only revealed after death.

However, the Goblin King's primary magic allowed him to directly see the soul hidden within a thick, robust body.

And by stirring the soul in that way, the body would finally naturally collapse.

But...

Thud-

Above YuWon's revealed soul, the Goblin King saw an existence he had never seen before.

A massive mouth and teeth.

And a huge, irregularly-shaped entity that possessed it.

Oh, heavens!

The Goblin King released YuWon's arm that he had been holding onto and staggered back.

Could it be because he had moved away too much?

The presence of the monster that had appeared before him disappeared.

"What... are you?"

The Goblin King asked YuWon, pointing with his finger.

"Behind you, what the hell is that?"

What he had just seen wasn't YuWon's soul. It was a completely different entity. It protected YuWon as if it were a God residing within his body.

Of course.

What the Goblin King saw, YuWon didn't.

"Behind me?"

At that moment, an idea crossed YuWon's mind.

"I see."

YuWon seemed to know what the Goblin King had seen. It seemed that Danpung had intervened to stop the Goblin King from touching the soul. Although it was still in the form of an Egg.

Unlike in the past, the Egg was hatching rapidly.

"Stop now."

"Why should I suddenly stop now...?"

Bam!

YuWon struck the wall as he turned around.

Crack-!

The wall trembled. The wall created by the spell shook, and cracks appeared.

And towards the place where those cracks appeared.

Crash-!

Once again, YuWon's fist struck directly. And...

Clang-!

The wall created by the Goblin King's spell shattered. When one side collapsed, the Arcane Power rapidly diminished, and the collapse spread in a chain reaction.

The wall created by the Goblin King.

Disappeared completely.

Right after that.

['Complete Gigantification' duration has ended]

['Complete Gigantification' changes to 'Gigantification']

[Within 24 hours, you will be able to use 'Complete Gigantification' again]

The three minutes given to YuWon had passed completely.

After the fight with the Goblin King, YuWon lay down for a moment.

Could it be because it was his first time using 'Complete Gigantification'?

For a moment, it felt like all the energy had left his body, and fatigue overcame him.

While lying on the ground, he raised his hand.

"Sigh."

He applied force to his hand, but as expected, it didn't have the same strength as before. This was due to the end of 'Complete Gigantification.'

"It's still too short."

Both the duration and the cooldown time needed to use it again were unsatisfactory at the moment.

Still, it was okay.

The duration and cooldown could be improved by increasing proficiency.

What he had in mind right now was something else.

"Quite... no, quite useful."

'Complete Gigantification' was such an effective ability.

After closing his eyes for a moment, he felt his energy returning to his body.

His stamina had increased, and his recovery ability had as well.

When he checked his Kit, it had been about three hours.

"Anyway, I didn't get hurt anywhere..."

Despite the intense battle, he didn't have any serious injuries anywhere.

Yuwon immediately got up from where he was lying.

"Now, should I really go?"

YuWon stopped by the Goblin King's place to say hello.

He wasn't severely injured either. He had some bruises on his body, but the Goblin King assured him that they would heal over time.

"I haven't properly paid you yet."

"Just bring me ten million points. You have debts too, you know?"

"It's quite expensive."

"I should have charged you more originally, but I'm cutting you some slack. Appreciate that."

YuWon paid the price for the strengthening ritual on the spot. While one of the reasons for visiting the Goblin King was to greet him, the most important reason was to pay the ritual's price.

"Now, do you plan to leave?"

"Yes."

YuWon nodded and looked at the Goblin King, who seemed to have nothing more to say.

"If you had gone all out..."

Or so it seemed.

"Do you think you would have won?"

The Goblin King asked with eyes that hadn't lost their competitive gaze.

It appeared that he hadn't yet closed the unfinished chapter of their fight.

YuWon reached into his inventory.

He pulled out a large bottle of wine. YuWon displayed Dionysus's wine bottle and replied.

"There's a well here."

"A well?"

"The Tower you know is only a small part."

"...Are you calling me a frog in the well?"

The Goblin King's forehead furrowed at the unexpected response.

Judging by the tense muscles that bulged, it seemed that a wrong word here could trigger another fight that couldn't be finished.

Indeed, right next to him.

The Goblin King's butler (Goblin Servant) looked at YuWon and gestured for him to stop.

But...

"Do you think the Bull Demon King used all his power when he fought you?"

Despite that, YuWon didn't stop talking.

"What are you saying?"

"I don't have the confidence to win against him in a fight."

It was a brief moment, but YuWon held the Bull Demon King's hand.

Unlike the previous Bull Demon King, the current one was even stronger in terms of pure strength. Moreover, the Bull Demon King who had acquired Divinity on top of the Tower was several times more powerful than before.

Even if YuWon had gained tens of stats through the strengthening ritual and had mastered 'Complete Gigantification.'

Until now, defeating the Bull Demon King had been an impossible task.

"He spared me, is that what you're saying?"

"You got it right."

"...Every word of yours is arrogant."

Crunch, crunch-.

The muscles on the Goblin King's forehead tensed.

It was as if he could attack at any moment with his club again.

While Goblin Servant glanced back and forth between YuWon and the Goblin King, the Goblin King, who had taken a deep breath, asked.

"Uf... in your opinion, how many people stronger than me are out there?"

It was a simple question.

There probably wasn't anyone more knowledgeable than YuWon when it came to information about the High-Rankers, except for the Administration.

"There are at least six, including Odin whom you know. At worst, around ten."

"At least six, huh?"

The Goblin King nodded as he pondered YuWon's words.

"The world has changed a lot."

Frog in the well.

YuWon's phrase suddenly made sense to him. Unlike the time when he viewed High-Rankers as insects, the current High-Rankers seemed to have risen significantly in level.

"This liquor is a farewell gift. You may have stopped drinking, but consider this your last drink."

"I appreciate that."

The Goblin King stepped forward and accepted the bottle of Dionysus's wine.

So, as YuWon was turning around to leave and heading towards the exit.

"For those 'ten' you spoke of."

The Goblin King asked his final question.

"Do you intend to join them?"

"For now, I'm out. We're still tied."

A straightforward response.

Watching YuWon's back recede as if he had nothing more to say, the Goblin King murmured with a voice full of nostalgia.

"For now, at least..."

YuWon ascended the stairs, and in the end, he saw sunlight, something he hadn't seen in a long time.

When he emerged into the city center from the alley, he saw a crowd of people.

They weren't goblins; they were regular people.

Climbing a simple staircase had completely changed the world.

"Still the same as always."

Since Shub-Niggurath's appearance, the world had remained the same.

Although there had been a great commotion for a while, and Grand Guilds like Asgard had made moves, for common Rankers and Tower residents, that was a story from another world.

YuWon headed toward his preplanned destination.

Because he walked among the crowd, no one seemed to pay him any attention.

As he walked, a Ranker passed by his side and pointed at the Kit in his hand.

"Ranking..."

"What happened in a few days for you to be so excited suddenly?"

For Rankers, the ranking was a topic of great interest.

The ranking was essentially a number that consolidated various factors like power, influence, and other elements of Rankers. Having a high ranking meant being very "successful."

Therefore, High-Rankers in the rankings were like stars to lower-level Players and Rankers who had given up on climbing the ranks.

"Have you seen Kim YuWon's ranking?... Oh, what the hell?"

A Ranker who was looking at the Kit turned abruptly.

In the eyes of the two Rankers talking like this...

"Oh?"

YuWon, who was looking at the Kit together with them, was seen by the two Rankers.

"Is... is it really him?"

"I apologize..."

The two Rankers looked at each other.

Swish~ It was a swift, Ranker-like movement. YuWon didn't know why they were apologizing, but it seemed like they were scared.

Toc. The Kit that the Ranker had dropped to the ground.

Even though he had initially been spying out of curiosity, YuWon picked up the Kit that had fallen to the ground and checked the rankings he had been looking at a moment ago.

He couldn't believe it even after seeing it with his own eyes.

[Kim YuWon: 11th]

His ranking was much higher than before.

'Hmm... 11th.'

Before going to the Goblin Country, YuWon's ranking had been 28th.

A low ranking due to the lack of proper observation of his fight with Satan. But this time, his ranking was clearly assessed according to his ability.

And this was after his visit to the Goblin Country, where his stats were properly reflected.

'Did they observe my fight with the Goblin King?'

If that were true, it would make sense.

The Goblin King's strength was so impressive that even outside the Goblin Country, he would probably be among the top ten in this Tower. It wouldn't be unreasonable for YuWon to be given a ranking like this if they had observed his fight with the Goblin King.

In fact, his ranking was relatively low, really.

Unlike other elite High-Rankers, YuWon didn't have significant influence, but he had a history of recognized potential until now.

'What does the ranking matter?'

If the world collapsed, everything would end.

Yuwon had never shown much interest in the ranking. Sure, like anyone else, he had checked his ranking from time to time out of simple curiosity, but he didn't attach much importance to it or feel particularly happy about it.

Besides, YuWon had reached a much higher place than this in the past.

Toc. After dropping the Kit he had in his hand to the ground, YuWon continued on his way.

The place he finally arrived at was...

"Yes! Welcome! This is the Olympian Sun Chariot! We'll take you for a good price!"

It was a rental station that offered replicas of Sun Chariots.

The station caretaker noticed YuWon and looked at him in surprise.

"Are you going to use it alone?"

"Yes."

"They can be used for up to ten people max. The price is the same, but..."

"I'm alone."

With a firm response, the caretaker didn't ask any more questions.

While looking discouraged, he released the reins of one of the sun chariots and asked:

"Where would you like to go? The cost depends on your destination."

"Upward."

"Upward? Where exactly upward?"

"Literal, upward."

YuWon raised his hand and pointed to the ceiling of the rental station.

"Up to the roof."

Chapter 404

C404

The caretaker followed YuWon's finger with his gaze.

All he saw was the low roof of the rental station.

"The roof...?"

Although it was high, most Rankers could jump to that height without much effort. It would be complete madness to rent a Sun Chariot just to go up to this height alone. Moreover, if his memory was correct, the person in front of him was one of the recently emerging High-Rankers.

"Climbing to the sky now?"

What could there be in that vast empty sky?

The caretaker looked up and had a moment of doubt. In Yuwon's eyes, it seemed like there was a question mark floating over the caretaker's head.

'Well, it doesn't matter if he finds out now.'

He didn't care much if they discovered him.

Instead, what was more urgent was the Sun Chariot.

"Could you please hurry?"

"Oh, yes, of course!"

The caretaker started moving quickly at YuWon's urgency.

Since the destination wasn't clear, the appropriate fare wasn't calculated. How high they would go into the sky and how long they would use the Sun Chariot depended on YuWon's decision.

"Everything's ready here. The fee is 1,000 points for now; I calculated it as the maximum fare. Then, we can adjust it based on the distance..."

"It's fine here."

[You've spent 3,000,000 points]

"...?"

The caretaker's eyes widened.

3 million points.

That was more than enough to buy a brand-new replica Sun Chariot and still have some money left over.

"Why are you giving so much money?"

"I added a little extra."

YuWon said as he patted the caretaker's shoulders.

"Then, you buy a new one for yourself instead of this. Not a second-hand one."

"Eh...?"

Plop.

YuWon boarded the prepared Sun Chariot.

The chariot started to rev up, emitting intense heat.

Finally, the chariot exited through the gate, and the caretaker still wore a perplexed expression; it seemed like he was thinking that this wasn't right, but at the same time, 3 million points weren't a small amount.

'Well, with this, it should be enough to buy a new one.'

Although it seemed brazen, YuWon also knew it was a bit rude. With 3 million points, he could easily buy a brand-new replica Sun Chariot in Olympus without any issues. Adding the fare, it was enough.

And the reason he spent this amount of money was simple.

Chiiiiing.

The Sun Chariot's wheels started to squeak under the load.

"...Ah, it has begun."

In YuWon's eyes, the city below the Sun Chariot looked tiny, like a toy.

The chariot was approaching the sun. Despite emitting blazing flames as it soared into the sky, in the end, this Sun Chariot was merely an item created by Rankers, including Hephaestus.

Chiiiiing.

The wheels began to melt gradually and catch fire.

It was the beginning of the Portal/Gate.

"The discovery of the 'Portal' was a stroke of luck."

Everyone knew that at that time.

Initially, it was the Ranker named Icarus, who wasn't very famous, who found the Portal leading to the next floor.

"My father and I were conquering the 100th-floor dungeon when we got trapped in a labyrinth. It was a maze where we couldn't tell where the exit was or if it even had one."

To escape the labyrinth, Icarus made wings. He didn't have any special flying abilities, so that was the best option for him. Furthermore, the labyrinth he was trapped in extended high up into the sky.

"I made wings and flew to escape the labyrinth. It was the first time I flew so high."

Normally, Rankers didn't head upward. It was natural, as there was nothing more "up," and all that remained was an infinite sky.

But Icarus, while flying to the sky to escape the labyrinth, discovered something floating in the sky.

"There was a Portal there."

A Portal. It wasn't something that should normally be in the sky. Naturally, it was just a symbolic name.

"I continued climbing as if I were possessed. I almost burned to death. If I had given up at that moment, maybe you all..."

"Why is this guy talking so much? Did you give him too much alcohol?"

"Hey, he looks like he's drunk. How much alcohol did you give him?"

Anyway, the point was...

"It means he's above everything."

Chiiiiing.

The Sun Chariot continued to burn. Like Icarus' wings made of wax, the chariot was melting due to the heat.

To withstand this level of heat, it would have been necessary to bring the real Sun Chariot instead of a fake replica.

But...

"Arturo."

YuWon had a way to neutralize the heat.

"Freeze."

-Understood.

Shooosh.

A freezing cold enveloped the solar chariot. Arturo's ice not only cooled the burning chariot but also made the interior even colder.

That's how they went up and up.

'The final thrust...'

Fwoosh.

The flames gathered in YuWon's hand.

[The 'Heart of Fire' responds to the 'Holy Fire.']

Flames began to sprout from the heart.

From the outstretched palm towards the back of the Sun Chariot, intense flames were released.

Hwaah!

The Sun Chariot, which had stopped for a moment, soared even higher.

The cold created by Arturo protected the Sun Chariot from the scorching heat while YuWon lifted it upward.

Of course, even with Arturo's cold, it couldn't fully protect the Sun Chariot.

Magic of opposite properties.

YuWon's flames expelled Arturo's magic.

If he tried to prevent Arturo's ice from melting, the thrust power would decrease.

As the flames burned, the Sun Chariot went up faster and faster.

How high had they gone now?

When the world felt so small that not even the city was clearly visible.

"It appeared."

In the sky above.

A small bright blue mist began to appear.

YuWon left the Sun Chariot and leaped high toward it.

['Sky Steps' is activated]

[Movement speed increases by 100% for 5 seconds]

[You can tread on the sky for 5 seconds]

An ability built into the Hermes Shoes.

Using the effects of that ability, YuWon walked on the sky for 5 seconds. And very quickly.

"I'll catch it."

YuWon reached out his hand.

The true sky of this Tower. The only 'Portal' to the top of the world.

Called the "Needle Hole to Become a God" among Rankers.

Oooong~

YuWon's fingertips touched that bright mist.

[Verifying 'Divine Will']

Immediately, YuWon's body passed through the mist and arrived in a white world.

[The requirements of 'Divine Will' are met]

The "Divine Will."

Despite its grandiose name, it wasn't so difficult to meet these requirements.

To overcome all the tests from the 1st floor to the 99th floor and reach the 100th floor, in other words, to obtain the Ranker qualification.

That was the requirement for "Divine Will."

[Verifying 'Divine Myth'.]

The "Divine Myth."

Literally, it was the story of a God.

That was what really mattered.

From the 1st floor to the 100th floor. Ascending the Tower as a player, passing the tests, and living life.

What stories did you write?

Swoosh-.

In the white world surrounding YuWon, images began to take shape.

His life, as he had lived it up until now, appeared before him one after another.

The first color that emerged was...

Purple.

An overwhelming purple.

The sky was painted purple. Undoubtedly, to YuWon, this purple sky felt more familiar than the blue sky.

After all, he had lived in that purple sky for a long time.

With a sound like a brush sliding on paper, the images unveiled before YuWon's eyes.

The next image that appeared was a giant column.

A tall column that connected the sky and the earth. And on that column were the Outsiders crushed.

Beside them were Ru Yi Bang and Son OhGong.

And in front of Son OhGong, there was the figure of YuWon.

"It's quite annoying, really."

He remembered.

He couldn't forget it.

As usual, while he fought with Son OhGong.

The sky turned purple, and the Outsiders appeared. YuWon and Son OhGong, who had stopped their fight, began to battle against the newly arrived Outsiders.

Then, the next scene appeared.

"In the end, we've all gathered here."

"There are many."

"That's right. But in the end, only the survivors are left."

Thousands of Rankers.

Gathered in the scene.

YuWon lay on a rock, indifferently gazing at the purple sky still tinted that color.

'That's it.'

The battle against the Outsiders had begun a hundred years ago.

The number of Rankers who survived was only a handful of thousands.

And since then...

"I have an idea."

The Rankers, including Odin and Mimir, began planning the Clock Movement.

The story began with the idea that this life was doomed to failure anyway.

And the corresponding results followed.

"Can you endure it?"

The image of himself being punched by Kim MyungHoon.

It was something that had happened quite some time ago. It was the moment he returned using the Clock Movement for the first time.

"Was it yesterday or today?"

"What?"

The scene quickly passed before him.

Kim MyungHoon and the Tutorial that had taken place. And the Egg he had obtained at the end of the Tutorial. The Danpung that had hatched from the Egg, the shattered Olympus, the Ragnarok, the Great Heaven Demon War.

And then...

"Now that I think about it, there was one more person."

The image of Foolish Chaos, looking at himself, was reflected in this world.

"Kim YuWon."

The reunion with Foolish Chaos.

YuWon couldn't forget that moment. Although in the future, he would be the one to kill that guy, for a brief instant, YuWon felt his hand sweating nervously.

He knew more about Foolish Chaos than anyone else.

Furthermore...

-Beeeeeh...

A bleat that sent chills down the spine, no matter how you heard it.

A huge goat appeared before YuWon, its purple eyes gleaming as it looked at him.

'Shub-Niggurath.'

After Foolish Chaos came the fight with Shub-Niggurath.

So far, everything that YuWon had experienced unfolded before him in this world.

At this point, YuWon had a fairly clear idea of what he had written so far.

He didn't think that his story would have been recorded in this world before or after his return with the Clock Movement, but fortunately, whether it was before or after the regression, there was a common point in YuWon's life.

"All my moments are related to those guys."

Long ago.

The story of YuWon's life was called "Wanderer."

Why? Perhaps because he had wandered without belonging anywhere, fighting and living in solitude.

Back then, the myth YuWon wrote was cold from the beginning, starting with the name.

But...

"Still, I quite like this."

As he watched his own story unfold before his eyes, YuWon smiled.

[Divinity () - 'The Failed Opponent From Another World' begins.]

The Failed Opponent From Another World.

Outside of this Tower. The other world.

And the Gods from that world who came here.

Outer Gods.

The story of the opponent who fought against them and failed.

At the current moment, it was a story that couldn't be written at all. However, through the Clock Movement, the world knew the story of YuWon who had returned, even in this world.

Whaah!

In an instant, all the scenes that had appeared before YuWon as a draft turned white again.

[The Trial Begins]

The "Needle Hole to Become a God" had begun.

Chapter 405

C405

"Thump!"

The sky reflected in the eyes of Son OhGong as he lay on the ground.

"Aaaaahh-!"

A frustrated scream.

His entire body had become numb after riding the Flying Nimbus for several consecutive days.

How many places had he visited in that time?

He had reached the point of circumnavigating the world in his search for the Celestial Floor.

"Where the hell is it?"

The Tower was so vast that there was no way to completely track it. As fast as the Flying Nimbus was, the Tower was large and had limits even for an individual.

And more importantly, there were no traces or clues.

Finally, after wandering aimlessly for so long, Son OhGong could do nothing but lie down.

As he gazed at the sky...

"Tremble!"

The long Golden Headband on Son OhGong's forehead began to tremble.

"Hm?"

Son OhGong suddenly got up from where he was lying.

Thanks to looking at the sky, he could tell.

"It's rising."

Although he couldn't see it, he could feel it. YuWon had started writing his next myth.

Once he passed the Trial and gained status, how much would change this time?

His motivation surged once again.

But...

"Where the hell am I supposed to go?"

The result of simply moving aimlessly was this.

He didn't even feel close to the Celestial Floor; he had simply climbed useless mountains.

When he began to feel hopeless, a soft sound appeared behind Son OhGong.

"Is it only now that you come up with that idea?"

"Eh?"

Son OhGong turned to recognize the familiar voice and smiled.

"Hyung-nim."

"How have you been?"

Jumping from where he was sitting, Son OhGong ran toward the Bull Demon King. He moved so fast he could have been stretched like a string of elastic, and then he hit the Bull Demon King with all his might.

Buuuuuum!

Son OhGong's fist was caught by the Bull Demon King's hand. When Son OhGong's fist was grabbed, their gazes met evenly.

"Your habit of acting without thinking is still intact."

"Fortunately, you're still alive, Hyung-nim."

"Your disrespectful way of speaking is also the same."

Swish~

When he let go of the fist he was holding, Son OhGong put his feet back on the ground.

Son OhGong shook his sore fist a few times before approaching the Bull Demon King.

"But how did you get here?"

"My younger brother told me. He said you were looking for the Celestial Floor, so I came to help."

"Younger brother?"

Son OhGong furrowed his brow for a moment.

And then...

"Phew..."

Son OhGong couldn't contain his laughter.

"Haha, hahaha..."

The Bull Demon King looked at Son OhGong as if it were something familiar.

He had heard that the two were quite close friends in the future. This reaction was also expected.

How long did he laugh that way?

After laughing heartily for a while, Son OhGong, who was holding his stomach, asked as he wiped away the tears that had escaped due to his excessive laughter.

"So, is he willing to admit it after talking like that?"

"It seems so, at least once."

"Once is enough, yes, that's right."

A statement based on experience.

While laughing heartily for a while, Son OhGong suddenly looked at the Bull Demon King with a surprised expression.

"Do you know about the Celestial Floor, right?"

"That's right."

"How will you help me?"

In response to his question, the Bull Demon King turned to Son OhGong.

Without hesitation, he took a step in a specific direction and pointed.

"Follow me."

The world turned as white as YuWon's consciousness, changing from white along with him.

All the views merged and dispersed. It felt as if his body floated and was thrown somewhere in the world.

The sensation in his body also became blurry.

So time passed without YuWon knowing how it flowed, as if he were dead.

How much time had passed?

Swoosh...

As if he had awakened from a long dream, his eyes opened without him noticing.

To his dismay, the sky he saw for the first time was still purple.

"Hah~"

A sigh that came out earlier than expected.

A familiar voice resonated next to YuWon.

"Don't you feel uncomfortable no matter how many times you see it?"

A loud and smooth tone of voice.

Tap, tap...

Hercules was starting a fire and roasting meat as he spoke, with a calm voice.

The smell of meat from an unknown animal, probably well-cooked on the inside but completely burnt on the outside, wafted through the air.

YuWon, who had risen as if he had woken from a long sleep, asked while looking at Hercules.

"The primitive methods remain the same."

"Skillfully cooked meat has no taste. The aroma of the wood must infuse it to truly be a meal."

"True."

Although he spoke as if it were no big deal, YuWon knew that the Hercules in front of him was not the real one.

The purple sky above was proof of that.

'It has begun, hasn't it?'

The Trial had already started.

From now on, he would be told what they were testing.

[Find the traitor and restore the failed mission to its original state.]

Mission? Traitor?

The moment he heard the message, YuWon could remember this moment.

The halfway point where he was with Hercules.

And the mission that would come soon.

YuWon's gaze turned to Hercules's left arm.

"Can we find Ubbo-Sathla?"

"Who knows? We'll only find out if we try."

In response to the reply, YuWon closed his eyes.

He knew.

The mission that the message mentioned was this.

'Ubbo-Sathla. A mission to catch that guy.'

One of the Outer Gods.

Not as strategic as Foolish Chaos but known as "The Unbegotten Source," he was one of the most active Outer Gods.

Therefore, after Foolish Chaos, it was a target that had to be eliminated without fail.

And at that time, the mission...

'It failed.'

It failed badly.

They lost many Rankers, and Hercules lost an arm in that mission. And Asura, who had three heads, lost one of them, one of his brothers.

'There was a traitor...'

YuWon recalled the situation at that time.

When they set out in search of Ubbo-Sathla's nest.

Inside that nest, Ubbo-Sathla was not alone.

As if they knew they would appear here, Ubbo-Sathla had set a trap inside the nest and was waiting.

Could there have been a leak of the mission at that time?

At that time, it was simply a problem that remained in suspicion.

The Outer Gods were such inscrutable beings.

He didn't think it was strange that it was a coincidence or that they were aware of their plans in advance.

But then...

"...So that's how it was."

"What did you say?"

At Hercules's question, who was tearing the meat, YuWon shook his head.

"Nothing at all."

"If it's something useless, eat your meat in silence. It will be difficult to have a proper meal for a while."

"Even this doesn't seem to be a proper meal."

"In this world, this is a luxury feast."

Crackle...

Watching Hercules grab the meat with one hand and tear it apart, YuWon nodded.

He's right.

In a world like this, getting decent food was not an easy task.

That's why they had to do their best to prevent this world from becoming a reality.

'Ubbo-Sathla...'

It was a more challenging Trial than he had imagined.

If the mission were limited to finding the traitor, it would be fine. But if it also included eliminating Ubbo-Sathla, the story would be different.

Unlike Shub-Niggurath, the fight with Ubbo-Sathla would take place in its territory.

Crackle...

While thinking about the fight with Ubbo-Sathla, YuWon bit into the burnt meat.

It seemed he had to fill his stomach solidly.

After traveling with Hercules, they reached the end of an arid terrain.

They weren't far from a wall marking the world's limit, a place near the end.

There, as agreed, the other group members were waiting for their arrival.

"The protagonists have arrived."

A middle-aged man with dark brown hair approached with a wide smile, extending his arms to greet YuWon and Hercules.

Originally, the architect of this operation was Icarus's father, Ddalo (Daedalus).

"Protagonists? What does that mean?"

And the person who refuted Ddalo's words was...

Clang...

A Ranker with four sword sheaths on his back and a sharp sword in his hand, Asura.

Three Heads and Six Arms. Or rather, Asura, who now had only two heads and four arms, as he had lost one of the heads he used to have.

And on the opposite side of Asura...

"These two are the strongest, you know? Why? Are you envious of something?"

A woman with pale skin and beauty similar to that of Dark Elves, Kali.

"Do you want to die?"

Asura looked at her with a severe expression.

"Don't confront her."

Another head of Asura restrained him.

Asura's personality was like fire; once he drew his weapons and started to fight, he wouldn't stop until an appropriate level of combat was reached.

For a brief moment, as Asura glared threateningly at Kali, Hercules, who was observing to intervene in case of a fight, asked.

"Is this the number of members?"

"It's not much, to be honest."

Ddalo complained, and YuWon nodded.

Indeed.

There weren't many members in the plan to capture Ubbo-Sathla.

Asura, Kali, the Lion King of the Zodiac Guild, the Dragon Slayer War Hero, Sigfrido, the architect of the plan, Ddalo, and Hercules and YuWon.

A total of seven people in the plan.

"But each member is valuable."

Sigfrido, who was sitting in silent meditation with his eyes closed, spoke these words.

"Hercules, Kim YuWon, Asura, Kali... Each one is a key asset."

"Hey, what about me?"

A team member who had expressed concern from the beginning.

A Ranker who once led the mighty Zodiac Guild, the Lion King.

"Are you excluding me?"

"We're not underestimating you. It's just that..."

"Just what?"

"I think it's something that will only happen here."

Shrugging, Sigfrido's gaze turned to Hercules.

That was when the Lion King shuddered.

Hercules, who had been conversing and inquiring about Ddalo's well-being for a long time, coincidentally locked eyes with the Lion King.

The Lion King's gaze shifted downward. He had been humiliated in a fight with Hercules in the past.

As he observed the team members, YuWon thought.

"Is one of them the traitor?"

One by one, YuWon examined the team members.

First, Ddalo.

"The probability is the highest."

He was the architect of this plan. He knew the Tower better than anyone and played a crucial role in setting traps and planning the operation.

Since he knew this plan better than anyone and had personally designed it, he had the highest probability of being the traitor.

"Then there's the Lion King."

He had a hostile relationship with Hercules. Although they had temporarily allied against a greater enemy, it was well known that the Lion King and his guild, Zodiac, had been hounding Hercules.

Of course.

"Even so, I can't help but suspect the others."

Yuwon had experienced situations where he had to suspect everyone present to save his comrades. Unless it was Hercules or Asura, who had sacrificed their arms to save their comrades in a small-scale plan, he had no choice but to consider everyone present as potential traitors.

"It's not Hercules. Of course, it's not me either."

The plan was small-scale.

Yuwon's gaze went through each member of the team.

"Well, who will it be?"

Chapter 406

C406

After a day of rest.

"First, we need to determine our positions," called Daedalus (Ddalo) to the team members.

In the empty space, there was a plan drawn with his Arcane Power that represented Ubbo-Sathla's nest.

"This is Ubbo-Sathla's nest. It has an area of approximately 3 kilometers. It's not that big."

"3 kilometers isn't big?" asked the Lion King.

Daedalus, who had seen Ubbo-Sathla in person, laughed at the Lion King's question.

"If you consider the size of Ubbo-Sathla, you wouldn't say that."

Before carrying out this plan, Daedalus and dozens of Rankers had inspected Ubbo-Sathla's nest. However, only about five people returned alive at that time. In that search, Daedalus had already investigated and understood the structure of Ubbo-Sathla's nest and its surroundings.

"I'll have Hercules and the Lion King in the vanguard. Asura and Siegfried will be in the middle..."

Daedalus continued with his explanation.

In total, there were seven team members.

Among them, Daedalus was excluded from being a combatant. Originally, his role was to be the designer of the plan and determine the team's positions.

"And Kim YuWon."

"Yes."

"Do you know how to throw a spear, right?"

In response to Daedalus's question, YuWon nodded.

"I do."

"Hephaestus made a weapon for you. You will use that from the rear..."

Crack, crack-le!

An explosion of electricity emanated from YuWon's hands.

The Lion King, taken aback by the sudden surge of power, rose from his seat.

"What, what is this?"

"A spear...?"

The team members looked in astonishment at the spear created by YuWon.

It was a type of ability they had never seen before.

But there was someone in the group who had seen the spear created by YuWon before.

"Lightning Bolt..."

It was Hercules.

Hercules had played a crucial role in overthrowing Zeus on Olympus. Of course, he had seen the Lightning Bolt created by Zeus many times.

But that was impossible.

"My father and this boy have no connection," he thought.

No matter how he thought about it, YuWon and Zeus had no relationship. When Zeus was dethroned from his seat on Olympus, YuWon was still a rookie recently turned Ranker.

Of course, that was only relevant at that time.

Crack, crack-le.

The spear generated by YuWon became blurry in his hand.

Then, he looked at Daedalus and scratched his head.

"It would really be better if I had a real spear. It seems that this power alone is not enough in terms of physical strength."

"U-uh... yes, I suppose."

Even he was baffled by the unexpected ability.

"This seems much better than I initially thought. I had no idea you had this ability."

"So, am I on the team with Kali?"

"Yes, because we can't put Kali in the front."

"True."

Kali was rank 17 in the High-Ranker ranking. She had a formidable ranged attack means, wielding the most Mana Cannons in the Tower.

Of course, that didn't mean she was weak in close combat.

"Now that the positions have been more or less determined, let's try to coordinate our efforts. Apart from Kim Yuwon and Hercules, none of us have fought together before."

Swish, swoosh...

Daedalus began to draw on the ground.

His ability as a designer allowed dungeons to materialize.

YuWon looked at Daedalus, who was starting to design, and thought he was the most suspicious person. The structure of the dungeon that Daedalus had designed and Ubbo-Sathla's actual nest seemed to have different shapes.

"It seems it will take quite some time to design this."

Asura, who was getting bored, got up from his seat.

Then, he looked around and his eyes lit up.

"Anyone want to spar with me?"

After circling the team members, his eyes stopped on Kali.

"If you want so badly, go ahead."

It was at that moment that their gazes met.

"Hey!"

Daedalus, who had been sweating while working on the design, shouted at them.

"Don't fight each other! Don't you realize that this won't end well if you two specifically fight?"

At Daedalus's call, Asura drew his sword but then put it away. Despite his combative personality, he wouldn't interfere in the impending battle. After all, Daedalus was the team leader at that moment.

"...So, who else wants to?"

Asura's gaze then turned to YuWon.

But at that moment...

"Kim Yu... Mmm?"

Before he could finish his sentence, YuWon had already walked over to Daedalus.

Trot, trot...

Daedalus, who had been focused on the design for a while, raised his head at the sense of a nearby presence.

By then, YuWon had approached close enough to look at the drawing on the ground.

"What's up?"

"Here, in this part..."

YuWon's hand pointed to the drawing on the ground that Daedalus had made.

"It looks a bit off here."

"Here?"

Daedalus looked in the direction that YuWon was pointing with his finger.

"Are you sure you drew it correctly?"

"Why? Are you worried now?"

Daedalus laughed as if he didn't care about YuWon's concern. But soon, he was surprised to see YuWon's eyes staring at him.

"Remember correctly. Make sure to do it right."

"Correctly...?"

Daedalus pondered for a moment at YuWon's words. He began to review the floor design again.

While the drawing would become a dungeon centered on Ubbo-Sathla once it was complete, ultimately, it was only a virtual dungeon based on his memories.

If his memories were wrong...

The practice of position formation through this simulation would be meaningless.

"Wait a moment, wait a moment..."

Could he perhaps remember something new?

Daedalus brushed YuWon aside with seriousness and sat on the floor.

The design process started again.

Moving away from Daedalus, YuWon watched as the design began anew.

The design progressed steadily.

The modified version of the design closely resembled Ubbo-Sathla's nest as YuWon remembered it.

As the design was nearing completion...

"Wait a second, I need to talk to you."

Hercules called YuWon.

Trot, trot...

Hercules led YuWon to a spot near the forest, where he thought no one else could hear.

"Even if I think it over..."

Hercules looked at YuWon's hand.

That was Zeus's Lightning Bolt.

Given that he had withstood that Lightning Bolt several times in the past, Hercules reacted more sensitively than anyone to YuWon's Lightning Bolt.

"It's not a simple imitation. It was identical down to the power source."

"So what?"

"What the hell was that?"

As if telling him to explain, Hercules looked at him.

"I've known you before."

"When?"

"Not here."

"Not here?"

"Clock Movement."

YuWon's response momentarily furrowed Hercules's brow.

That had been discussed in detail by Odin, Chronos, and others for a long time. Why, all of a sudden, now...?

"No way?"

Hercules's doubtful gaze.

"Don't overreact."

YuWon's eyes burned red.

In YuWon's eyes, which surveyed his surroundings with his Golden Cinder Eyes, a blurry and indistinguishable shape appeared.

['Golden Cinder Eyes' has found 'Kali's Eighth Eye']

As expected, there were eyes watching this area. YuWon thought Kali, at least out of curiosity, would be paying attention to this area.

Yuwon made a gesture toward Kali with his finger.

Crack...

Kali's eyes were pierced by a narrow bolt of electricity. After this action by YuWon, Hrcules, who had noticed Kali looking in this direction, asked.

"What are you doing?"

"It's not good to have eyes watching."

"Are you trying to keep it a secret?"

"For now."

"...In the end, were you chosen? Well."

Hercules nodded.

From Son OhGong to Hercules and now YuWon. These three people were the most mentioned candidates for traveling back in time using the Clock Movement.

And among them, Hercules was the person who most insisted that YuWon should be the chosen one, so he naturally accepted this result.

"So, is this your past? It doesn't seem like you've gone back too far in time."

"It's the past, but not the original past."

"What do you mean?"

"It's more or less halfway, I suppose."

"Halfway?"

Hercules found it a bit strange and scratched his head.

Although he didn't have the intelligence of Son OhGong, he wasn't so ignorant either. Certainly, what YuWon said sounded so abstract that it would be hard for anyone who wasn't Mimir or Odin to understand.

And in moments like this, it was fortunate that Hercules' head wasn't particularly bright, as it allowed YuWon to skip the explanation and move on.

"Anyway, I more or less understand."

Hercules didn't ask why YuWon was here in the first place or how he had acquired Zeus's Lightning Bolt.

Yuwon had everything, even the Golden Cinder Eyes. Moreover, those who were going to travel back in time through the Clock Movement had to become perfect individuals who possessed everything.

Zeus's Lightning Bolt was more or less an insignificant detail.

However...

"So, why are you here after returning in time? And why are you telling me these things only?"

So far, Hercules' doubt hadn't been dispelled.

Fortunately, the answer to that was simple.

"At the very least, it's not you."

"Huh? What are you saying?"

"This plan... failed."

"...What did you say?"

"Shh. Keep your voice down."

"Hmpf."

Hercules raised his hand and covered his mouth.

The truth was that the other team members didn't need to know this information. Rather, if they shared it, it would only lead to greater chaos in teamwork.

"Alright. So that's what happened. And that's why you're trying to change this first..."

"Well, it's more or less the same..."

Technically, this was neither the past nor the future.

It was just a reconstructed world based on the stories that YuWon had been writing.

"So why? Why did it fail?"

There's a traitor here. YuWon decided not to disclose this. Hercules was a man further removed from lying than anyone YuWon knew.

"Just try to provoke the Lion King."

"The Lion King? Why?"

"Don't ask why. Just try to stimulate him without him noticing. It shouldn't harm the team."

"Could it be... because of him?"

Hercules' expression turned menacing.

Hercules also knew that the Lion King had resented him for a long time. If this plan's failure was somehow his fault, he wouldn't sit still.

"You'll find out more details later."

"There you two are!"

Daedalus' voice reached them.

The heads of YuWon and Hercules turned in unison.

"It's complete! Come over here!"

Ubbo-Sathla's nest.

Yuwon planned to use the virtual dungeon created by Daedalus as the stage.

'It would be great if we could find the traitor here.'

To find out which of the seven team members was allied with Ubbo-Sathla.

Chapter 407

C407

Daedalus's Dungeon was known for its almost perfect recreation of reality.

Being a former member of Olympus, his primary function used to be creating traps in battles, but strangely, these traps didn't work on the Outer Gods.

Therefore, Daedalus's role focused on assisting team members in coordinating strategies, like some sort of support.

Daedalus had created a detailed design for Ubbo-Sathla's nest inside the dungeon, based on his memory.

"Is this really Ubbo-Sathla's nest?"

"It's probably almost identical to what I remember. There might be some differences in the details, but overall, it should be similar."

"You don't need to remember all the details. The structure and abilities of that thing are what matters."

"I've meticulously taken those details into account."

With a gesture of Daedalus's hand, a drawing appeared in the air.

A design resembling a labyrinth.

It was a simplified blueprint he had created for the siege of this nest.

"Remember this well if you want to conquer this nest."

Upon these words, YuWon and the others began memorizing the design Daedalus had crafted.

Yuwon didn't just memorize it but also compared it with his own memories.

"It looks quite similar."

Although his memories were hazy due to the passage of time, the design matched up fairly well with what he remembered.

"Have you all memorized it?"

"Yes."

"For the most part."

"We'll understand it better once we experience it."

"Then, I'll be on my way now. Good job, everyone."

Daedalus's figure became blurry.

His role as a designer had reached its end. It was now the responsibility of the other team members, who were fighters.

Hercules glanced at YuWon.

He was obviously acting openly, but his expressions and gestures seemed somewhat forced.

"It looks like he's not really good at acting."

Fortunately, the other team members didn't seem to pay much attention to Hercules's performance.

Anyway, now that Ubbo-Sathla's nest was ready, it was time to shake up the team members.

Slash!

The thing cut by Siegfried's sword writhed on the ground before dispersing into purple smoke.

Watching as the Outers dissolved into smoke, the Lion King bared his teeth while muttering.

"These annoying types are causing trouble even here."

"And their numbers keep increasing. It's quite substantial."

"To this point, the path is the same as I remember. There doesn't seem to be anything particularly dangerous here."

The team members continued to advance while sharing their opinions.

They did so slowly to avoid detection by Ubbo-Sathla. Hercules and the Lion King stood in front of the Outers, pushing them back, while Siegfried and Asura cut down the Outers that scattered in all directions.

YuWon and Kali, who were at the end of the formation, didn't have much to do for now.

It was a brief respite.

Or, more precisely, a moment to inspect.

Siegfried drew a line on the ground with his sword, saying, "This is the midpoint."

Ubbo-Sathla's nest was scattered with numerous Outers.

And perhaps this is the environment that Daedalus came to know in advance with the other Rankers.

"In the map that Daedalus drew, this area was marked in red. It means that the dangerous zone begins here."

So far, they had only been at the beginning. The real challenge would start from here.

"Ubbo-Sathla's ability is related to the mind. From now on, stay alert."

Siegfried's warnings made the Lion King bare his teeth in a smile.

"Anyway, isn't this a fake world right now? Why worry so much?" **(Note: Remember that they are now simulating the siege of Ubbo-Sathla in Daedalus's Virtual Dungeon)**

Hercules's gaze sharpened at that moment.

"So you'll fight carelessly because of that?"

"What?"

Maybe it was the word "carelessly" that irritated him.

The Lion King's expression abruptly changed as he looked at Hercules.

YuWon, who had been alternately watching them, silently applauded the quarrel that seemed more natural than expected.

"It's not a bad thing."

It probably wasn't an easy word to let slide.

Normally, if Hercules had been in his usual state, he might have overlooked it. However, now there was another reason.

"Do it right. Stay focused. If you make a mistake, the other team members will suffer the consequences."

"Are you calling me a nuisance now?"

"At least you understand the words correctly."

The atmosphere quickly became tense.

"Come on, guys. Stop this."

Siegfried, who acted as a mediator, intervened.

Originally, this was Hercules's role, but now Hercules was an active participant in the fight.

"If two people in the same position fight, the team's formation breaks down. Let's set aside personal emotions for now."

"That guy started it first!"

"Hercules didn't say anything wrong. You know that, don't you?"

Click.

Siegfried's comment made the Lion King grit his teeth.

Certainly, Hercules hadn't uttered words without reason. First of all, his personality wasn't so capricious as to start a fight for no reason.

"Calm down a bit more, and you too, Hercules."

"Why?"

"I know what your intention is, but tone it down. Your current actions only divide the team."

The confrontation between the Lion King and Hercules stopped for a moment due to Siegfried's intervention.

"The probability of it being Siegfried is low."

Anyway, the traitor the System mentioned wanted to make team division his objective by joining Ubbo-Sathla.

However...

"We'd better be sure after entering the actual battle."

For now, they were still inside Daedalus's Dungeon. Activity inside the Dungeon was safer than speculations.

Just then...

"So you plan to stay still after hearing words like that?"

The Lion King, who had been cooling his head for a while, couldn't bear it any longer and raised his fist at Hercules.

Physically, he was as formidable as Hercules.

Boom!

When the Lion King struck with his two fists, the ceiling trembled.

"Anyway, isn't this just training at the moment? In that case, wouldn't now be better?"

"What are you saying?"

"Don't you and I still have things to settle?"

The Lion King showed his willingness to fight openly, straightforwardly.

And under the Lion King's direct gaze, Hercules looked at him without playing along.

In an instant, sparks flew between the two.

A fight could have broken out at any moment.

"How about we have a duel between us here and now?"

Sssh.

Siegfried drew his swords and aimed at Hercules and the Lion King with a fiercer look than usual.

"With Gram and Balmung, I will join in that dance as well, if you allow."

From Hercules to the Lion King and now Siegfried as well.

At that moment, when it seemed like a three-way battle could erupt at any moment...

"We'll let it go."

Hercules slid his hand and pushed aside Balmung, which was pressing against his throat.

The sword that could easily cut through even a Dragon's scales. Siegfried narrowed his eyes as he watched Hercules holding the sword so effortlessly.

While doing so, Hercules looked back at the Lion King.

"I'm sorry. My words were a bit exaggerated."

Hercules extended his hand to the Lion King.

After looking at his hand for a moment, the Lion King, who hadn't yet wiped his grim expression, abruptly turned away.

"It's fine. Go."

Although he didn't accept the apology, given the Lion King's stubborn nature, this was quite accommodating.

And so, they walked away.

"Huff..."

The Lion King, who had distanced himself from Hercules and his team, exhaled the air trapped in his chest.

"Wow, I thought we were really going to fight," he muttered to himself.

"Wow, I thought we were really going to fight."

YuWon lifted the corner of his lips as he saw the Lion King's face reflected in the Yata Mirror.

Even though he thought it would be easy, they didn't come away empty-handed in the end.

'The Lion King is out.'

From the beginning, the fight started due to pride. The Lion King had never planned to fight seriously against Hercules from the start.

It was understandable.

As strong as the Lion King was, his opponent was Hercules. When two forces clash, the stronger and more resilient one typically wins.

And in this Tower, there was no one stronger and more resilient than Hercules.

"We've rested enough; it's time to move again," Siegfried said after a short break, leading the team.

YuWon looked at him for a moment.

Something about him wasn't as usual.

"It's strange for him to act this way."

YuWon looked to the side.

In the rear was Kali, a Ranker assisting the team.

"Do you think the same?" YuWon asked.

What could be her intention?

YuWon, who was sitting and resting, stood up first and followed Kali, watching her figure as she moved behind the other team members.

"I'm not sure..."

Once they started suspecting, everyone seemed suspicious.

Hercules and the Lion King with flushed faces.

Siegfried, who was mediating the fight and leading the team naturally.

Kali, who wasn't doing anything at all.

And Daedalus, the designer of this dungeon.

Everyone seemed suspicious in YuWon's eyes.

But at this point...

Now, slowly, they seemed to take shape.

YuWon's eye began to glow with a red light.

He was fortunate to be assigned the spear-thrower position.

From the rear, he could observe the other team members at a glance.

A giant hallway stretched before them.

Something twisted and approached.

"It's coming!"

Siegfried shouted as he spotted the tentacles extending forward.

"I'll go first."

Asura tried to break formation and move. He had been restless for a long time because he hadn't had a chance to wield his sword.

"No, hold your position."

"Useless..."

"Asura!"

Siegfried's firm voice made Asura lower the sword he had in his hand.

"It's okay."

Clang!

Hercules and the Lion King moved first.

They clashed head-on.

Asura and Siegfried moved a bit later.

Splaat!

As if it were waiting, Asura leaped.

Asura's divine forms multiplied rapidly, like stretching fingers.

Not all the clones were genuine, just like Son OhGong's clones. But Asura's shapeshifting technique was considered legendary in the Murim World.

Moreover, Asura's skill in this technique was unparalleled.

Squaaaak!

Swish, swish, squawk!

The tentacles twisted and split into thousands of pieces under Asura's cuts. In an instant, Asura looked like a battle-hungry spirit, slashing thousands of times with his sword as if he were fighting a battle-hungry evil spirit.

Although there were many tentacles, none of them were too formidable.

From the beginning, it would be impossible for them to capture Hercules, Asura, and the other team members with just this number of tentacles.

Unless Ubbo-Sathla got directly involved.

And in this battle...

"What is this?"

Fireeee~

['Golden Cinder Eyes' reveal the truth]

Finally, YuWon was able to figure it out.

"...So that's what it was."

It was a different outcome than he had imagined.

Chapter 408

C408

Slash, slash, slash-.

Asura's sword resonated.

The four swords trembled and began emitting Arcane Power. Their faces were already filled with maniacal grins.

"Asura!"

The Lion King exclaimed in surprise at Asura's reaction.

That was because he knew what Asura was about to use.

And Hercules knew the same.

"He's lost his mind already."

There was no way to stop Asura in that state.

They had to prevent him from going berserk.

Swish-.

Hercules moved.

In between the team members and Asura.

He was willing to block Asura's ability with his own body.

[Asura Pacheon Sword (Asura Heaven Destroyer Sword)]

A massive wave approached.

The red waves swept away intruders and rampaged through the entire dungeon.

And upfront...

Thud-!

Hercules stood in the path of Asura's ability, stretching out fully.

Just as the red wave was crashing upon Hercules.

Swooooosh-.

He felt a refreshing sensation in front of him.

Kwaaaauuuu-!

The blue waves clashed with the red waves. Asura's sword strikes nullified the force of the wave that appeared in front of Hercules.

Hercules turned to YuWon with his head tilted.

This refreshing sensation felt familiar to him.

"It's Poseidon this time, right?"

In terms of defense, Poseidon was considered the best among the Three Gods.

Shwooooosh-.

The wave that blocked Asura's attack sank.

The Arcane Power-composed water evaporated quickly and dispersed.

The team members' gazes centered on YuWon.

"Let's take a break."

It was the first time since they began the attack that YuWon voiced his opinion.

"Again?"

The still-energetic Lion King asked in response to YuWon's question.

"We need to rest."

"...?"

YuWon seemed to be in good shape.

Well, there was no reason he shouldn't be.

Most of the fight had been carried out by Hercules, the Lion King, and Asura.

What YuWon did was limited to throwing spears from the rear and shielding his companions from Asura's sword strikes.

"Okay, then."

Thump-.

Hercules gripped the Lion King's shoulder.

"Let's go."

"Don't pretend to be close."

Hercules and the Lion King, who were standing at the front, turned back.

Kali turned around without saying a word, and Siegfried and Asura started to move as well.

"What are you trying to do?"

That was Asura's question as he passed by them.

He wore a dissatisfied expression on his face, as if the excitement of the previous battle had not completely faded.

Indeed, Asura was a passionate fighter. If it was about enjoying the fight, he was probably even more passionate than Son OhGong, if not more.

"Watch."

"If you're just wasting time..."

"Anyway, you'll get tired of fighting soon."

Swish-.

YuWon gazed at him with determination.

"So, when that time comes, don't go crazy like before, and keep your position."

"Did I go crazy?"

"That's right, if you fight that way again this time..."

Chirp-.

YuWon gripped Asura's shoulder.

"It will be a complete defeat."

"What?"

YuWon's threatening reaction baffled Asura and made him look puzzled.

He wondered why YuWon was reacting this way for some reason.

Asura's surprise momentarily faded, then turned into an intrigued expression.

"I don't know why you're reacting like this, but if you interfered for some unnecessary reason after my body was fully relaxed, I won't let it slide."

"Don't worry."

YuWon headed towards one of the team members who had gathered in one place.

"You'll be able to fight until you get tired soon."

"Eh?"

Siegfried, with whom he had made eye contact, looked puzzled

He, still holding Gram and Balmung in his hands, looked at YuWon's red eyes and asked, "Are those Cinder Eyes...?"

Cinder Eyes made their way through Siegfried's body. It didn't feel good to be pierced by them.

The others were also slightly surprised to see the Cinder Eyes.

"Cinder Eyes?"

"Did Kim YuWon also have them?"

"Something has changed..."

Asura was taken aback, and the Lion King was bewildered.

Kali, who had less surprise on her face than the others, had been observing YuWon since they entered the nest. She was probably the first to notice the changes in YuWon among the team members.

"It's not Kim YuWon, it's Son OhGong."

The Lion King spoke these words after deep thought.

Son OhGong also had an ability to transform into someone else, in addition to the Cinder Eyes. He didn't use it frequently, as it would take time to adapt to the target's body, and his strength would drastically decrease after the transformation.

However, the Lion King had no choice but to think that Kim YuWon was Son OhGong.

Son OhGong was the only one with Cinder Eyes in this Tower.

"What? So would that mess up the positions, wouldn't it? Is that why you called him...?"

"It's not Son OhGong; it's Kim YuWon."

The Lion King turned his head at Hrcules' explanation, with an expression that seemed to say, "Do you know something?"

"There's a way."

"A way?"

"The Clock Movement."

Even Asura noticed the clue. Not only Hrcules felt strange; even the other group members were aware of the change in YuWon, although they didn't ask outright.

And now, through the Cinder Eyes, their certainty was correct.

"The... Clock Movement?"

The Lion King was in the same situation. Despite joining the group relatively late, he had hardly heard of the Clock Movement. An item that could turn back time. Even if Chronos existed, the Lion King thought it was an absurd story.

But...

"Did you really create it?"

YuWon didn't deny his teammates' words.

"The Clock Movement..."

There was a crunch in Siegfried's fist, holding Gram and Balmung.

"It seems you finally succeeded. But why are you looking at me like that?"

"It was hard to recognize immediately."

Everyone present here was a high-level High-Ranker. Despite the existence of the Cinder Eyes, it was not easy to penetrate their thoughts. Moreover...

"I'm not so familiar with these eyes yet."

Currently, YuWon's Cinder Eyes were not as powerful as Son OhGong's. Son OhGong's Cinder Eyes could penetrate most people, except for a few like Odin.

Indeed, in front of Son OhGong, lying was dangerous, and Son OhGong didn't even deliberately use his Cinder Eyes with close people. There was nothing less interesting than seeing through people's lies.

But that's precisely why YuWon thought that if Son OhGong were here, it would be better.

"It was difficult to recognize them all here. But for one or two people, it's a different story."

"What are you saying now?"

"Where's Siegfried?"

"What?"

The surprised Lion King turned to look at Siegfried.

And there, Siegfried was no longer present.

"Where did he go...?"

Clang-!

A resonating metallic sound echoed in the nest.

The Lion King's head turned to the side. Sensing an imminent threat, he instinctively raised his fist and extended his long claws.

In the place where he turned his head...

"Siegfried?"

It was Siegfried, who threw Gram and Balmung toward YuWon, and Hrcules, who blocked Siegfried's sword.

Crack, crack!

Clang-!

Using his strength, Hrcules pushed Siegfried along with the sword. At the same time, Hrcules raised his arm high.

Buuuuuuuuuuuum-.

As Siegfried leaped backward, a drop of blood fell to the ground.

It was a small wound on Hrcules's arm.

That meant he had used all his strength in wielding the sword. In an instant, the team members spread out around Siegfried.

Krrrr...

Siegfried, who distanced himself from the group, dropped the two swords he held to the ground.

"Where did you start noticing?"

"The fact that you have memories doesn't mean you can imitate their personality."

YuWon's gaze went to the two swords that Siegfried had dropped to the ground.

Of the four members, excluding himself, Hrcules and Asura.

YuWon had found the person with the highest probability.

Initially, he thought of the Lion King. After all, they had a clear enmity with Hrcules.

But his thoughts changed as it progressed.

"The Siegfried I know is not the kind of person who draws his sword before a fight."

He felt something strange when the dispute between the Lion King and Hrcules broke out some time ago.

Siegfried.

He was a comrade who had a personality closer to righteousness than anyone else on the team.

While his action to prevent the team's division was undoubtedly Siegfried's own, his approach was somewhat excessive.

Especially drawing his sword first...

It was behavior that didn't seem like Siegfried's own, and if Hrcules hadn't stepped back first at that time, it surely would have ended in a fight.

"What's going on here?"

"Kim YuWon, explain in detail."

"Are you saying Siegfried betrayed us?"

The team members' question was answered by Asura, who was standing with them.

"That..."

Ssssssss-.

A chilling energy was felt behind Siegfried.

Wuuuuuuuuuuuuuu-.

Four arms and swords unfolded behind Siegfried.

"We'll find out if we confront him."

Clang-!

Asura's sword cut through Siegfried's body.

A body was cut with extreme ease.

Although the situation was urgent, it seemed like he had acted too hastily.

Even YuWon, who had anticipated this possibility, was surprised.

'Certainly, it's Asura.'

His rash temperament was still present. Asura had a sharp-tempered personality like a sword, and he never hesitated to use violence against those he considered enemies, even if they were allies.

Even if it meant treating an enemy within the team the same way.

And sometimes, Asura's hasty hand proved useful.

Woosh-.

The image of Siegfried, who had been cut, flickered in a blurry manner.

Siegfried's form, wavering without a defined shape, furrowed Asura's brow.

"What is this?"

It didn't feel like he had cut something correctly in his hand. It was as if he were cutting an indistinguishable substance, like water or fire.

Of course, Siegfried didn't have this kind of ability.

Siegfried's form, which had been cut by Asura's sword, transformed into a purple liquid.

It was a form similar to when the tentacles cut by Asura's sword melted a moment ago.

"Ubbo-Sathla."

"Ubbo-Sathla?"

"This guy?"

YuWon's explanations increased the caution among the team members toward Siegfried's blurry form.

Ubbo-Sathla.

One of the Outer Gods of the highest rank and the team's target in this mission.

However, since Siegfried turned into this Ubbo-Sathla, it was natural for everyone to be on guard.

"In fact, it's just one of the many facets of the creature that devoured Siegfried."

"What are you saying?"

"According to the information Daedalus brought, Ubbo-Sathla..."

As he spoke.

Hrcules' eyes widened. Two people, including Hrcules, realized the situation.

"That's right."

Guguuguugu-.

The nest began to tremble.

"According to the information Daedalus brought..."

"Me! I want to join too!"

Before the team was formed.

While they were choosing team members to capture Ubbo-Sathla, Son OhGong raised his hand.

He wanted to join the group as well.

"If we add Son OhGong, we'll be strong. He can take the same position as the Lion King, and in case of a shortage of similar members, he can compensate..."

"So we'll include the Lion King, Kali, Kim YuWon, Asura, and Son OhGong, correct?"

Son OhGong's participation was almost certain.

There was no reason to object.

However...

"I think Hrcules would be better than Son OhGong."

Daedalus expressed a different opinion.

"Hrcules?"

"He and the Lion King probably won't get along very well."

"Hrcules also holds the same position. Furthermore, his strength and defense are superior."

"But why?"

The discord with the Lion King.

Despite that, Daedalus recommended Hrcules instead of Son OhGong.

"Still, it's necessary. And..."

That was Daedalus's opinion.

"What if the other member is Siegfried?"

YuWon looked at the shaking nest ceiling.

The deeper he went, the more uncomfortable he felt.

"It wasn't false."

"If I remember, it's probably more or less the same. However, the details may be a little different."

Daedalus's words were wrong.

This Dungeon was identical to Ubbo-Sathla's nest as YuWon remembered it.

Even in the smallest details.

"This place is real."

The traitor was not just one.

Chapter 409

C409

Rumble, rumble~

The nest began to tremble.

Daedalus looked down.

In the deepest part of this land.

His teammates were being buried.

"...It's done."

No matter how magnificent his teammates might be below him, his opponent was Ubbo-Sathla. Despite deceiving them with a replica, this nest was not an easy place to enter without proper preparation and survive.

Whooosh-.

Daedalus turned around.

There was nothing more to do by staying here.

But at that moment.

"Why did you do it?"

A shiver ran down Daedalus' spine.

From beneath Daedalus's feet, a stone pillar rose to protect him. It was to shield himself from someone emitting a presence from behind.

But as if mocking it...

Sshooosh-.

The stone pillar, as hard as steel, was cut as easily as if it were butter.

Slash!

Thud~

The wall split and collapsed to the sides.

Behind it, Daedalus saw a face he never expected.

"Sus... Susa..."

Glup~

Daedalus swallowed hard.

"Susanoo...?"

-There aren't many like you who are weak and survive after meeting me. You're a lucky guy.

Susanoo. Although he disappeared a long time ago, he was recognized as one of the Three Precious Children and was evaluated to be ranked among the top 10 if he were still alive.

However, seeing Susanoo here was incomprehensible to Daedalus' common sense.

Disappearing from the rankings meant death.

The Administration wouldn't make such an absurd mistake...

"No way... Not dead...?"

-What I hate the most is guys like you.

Susanoo had no intention of answering Daedalus' questions.

Instead, he looked at Daedalus as if he were an insect.

This situation right now.

It didn't feel so strange.

Amaterasu's actions, who attacked him from behind. The way he acted and Daedalus' appearance in front of him overlapped.

"I'm not very curious, but I'll ask..."

Daedalus hesitated and stepped back.

Despite the tense atmosphere, he had to get out of here somehow.

As Susanoo had just said, surviving after facing him was lucky.

'I have to escape before it all ends...'

Jiik-.

The moment he took a step and moved his feet...

Shriek-.

Susanoo appeared next to Daedalus.

"Why did you do that?"

"Aaaahhh!"

Daedalus, who had lost both legs, screamed. Susanoo continued as he watched Daedalus, who had fallen to the ground and struggled.

"Tell me. Why did you betray your comrades?"

Of course, Susanoo had no intention of letting Daedalus go.

He cut off his legs first to ensure he couldn't escape. It was a tactic Susanoo used when he needed to extract information from someone.

"Please, please... forgive me."

"I have no intention of forgiving you. Instead, I will let you go without pain."

Kusanagi moved.

Ssskk...

Daedalus's eyes widened as if they were about to tear apart.

Right under both legs, the flesh was cut once again. Susanoo didn't kill Daedalus immediately; instead, he tore him apart slowly, cutting him into pieces.

"If your answer is delayed, I will cut off a part of your body one at a time, from your legs to your head, until you feel your head is completely detached."

It was a horrifying sound.

Anyway, there was no way to escape. But that didn't mean anyone wanted to die painfully.

Daedalus screamed, driven by the pain.

"They don't know... they don't know!"

"What don't we know?"

"Ubbo-Sathla, who he really is..."

Daedalus was a survivor who had returned from Ubbo-Sathla's nest.

In the first place, the reason this team could be formed was because Daedalus brought information about Ubbo-Sathla's nest.

"You joined the scarier side. That's it."

It was a simple story.

Ubbo-Sathla was so terrifying that Daedalus betrayed his comrades. There were always one or two bats who joined the winning side.

Sswwish...

Susanoo's sword tip was directed at Daedalus's head.

"Then, speak. Who is Ubbo-Sathla?"

"He is... uh..."

Daedalus's body twisted as if he were suffering.

Daedalus's pupils, which were writhing as if in pain, lost their focus. And in an instant, Daedalus's body turned into liquid and melted into the ground.

Drip...

The body spread and dripped along the floor.

There was no time to react.

Thud...

Susanoo stepped on Daedalus's liquefied body.

"It seems he had a prohibition."

It seemed Ubbo-Sathla had taken measures to prevent information about him from leaking.

"Well, it doesn't matter."

Ssck...

Susanoo sheathed his sword again.

He didn't get adequate information about Ubbo-Sathla, but that didn't matter.

After all, his primary role was to eliminate Daedalus if he turned out to be a traitor and, if possible, discover the reason for his betrayal.

Actually, the most important information was the least priority.

Because...

"Anyway, the Master comes from the future."

Yu Won knew more about Ubbo-Sathla than Daedalus.

"Well, now that the fun part is over..."

Sss...

Susanoo began to gradually fade away.

"It's time to run errands."

BAAAM!

A Lightning Bolt shot out from YuWon's hand and filled the passage of the nest before spreading.

The tentacles of the Outers swirling towards them burned to a crisp.

"They're coming more!"

"I'll take care of the opposite side."

"Don't move. Let me..."

"Asura, don't lose your post."

It was a real battlefield.

[You have eliminated the traitor 'Daedalus']

[You have identified two traitors]

[The mission 'Assassination of Ubbo-Sathla' has returned to normal]

[The first trial has ended]

[You have obtained the title 'The Rival from the Other World']

[Do you wish to continue with the Trial?]

Siegfried was one of the roots of Ubbo-Sathla. And Daedalus, who put his comrades in danger with false information and a simulated dungeon.

YuWon had identified two traitors. That meant Susanoo, who was outside, had taken care of Daedalus.

Two options presented themselves.

Continue the Trial or stop here?

The Divine Status that could be obtained in this Trial would vary depending on its results. To get the Divine Status they hoped for, a suitable result had to be achieved for someone called 'The Rival from the Other World.'

"I continue."

[You will continue with the Trial.]

"Kim YuWon!"

Along with the message, Hercules's voice was heard.

Juuaaaak!

It was at that moment when the tentacles of the Outers approached so closely that it would be difficult to react...

Pumfwaak!

The tentacles reaching towards them exploded. It was the result of an impact from the inside rather than from the outside.

"What are you waiting for?"

Kali was the one who assisted YuWon.

"Get your senses back."

"It doesn't matter. Let's finish this quickly."

Thud!

The tentacles that exploded under Hercules's punch fell to the ground.

In the time YuWon checked the message, the Outers who had gathered in large numbers calmed down. The Lion King who had been at the forefront, defending them, was breathing heavily as if he were exhausted.

"Damn it... Daedalus, just wait for me to get out of here."

"Then get out of the way."

"What are you going to do?"

"We'll create a passage that reaches the surface."

Kwajik!

Hercules struck the ground with his foot.

"First, let's get out of here."

A solid body like a rock. At the same time, his muscles began to swell.

Creak, creak...

So began the transformation into a Giant.

Bam!

Hercules, who had risen with all his might after hitting the ground he stood on, raised his fist towards the ceiling.

Kwaaaah!

Gugugugu...

The force emanating from Hercules's punch shook the entire nest through the roof. The team members braced for an imminent collapsed roof due to the ground vibration, as if it were an earthquake.

But...

"What happened?"

What they expected didn't happen.

The roof was intact.

The roof was intact, without even a slight tremor after Hercules's punch, despite the fact that it was said there was nothing in this world that he couldn't destroy with just his two fists.

"What the hell is going on?"

"Even if it's not Daedalus's dungeon, this is too resilient..."

Giiiiing...

It was then...

When the red magic started to flicker, and a sharp sword extended.

Asura's sword was imbued with Arcane Power. He was trying to cut the roof that Hercules couldn't break.

But the roof he was trying to cut...

Swoosh...

Was blocked by YuWon's hand.

"Do you think I can't cut it?"

"You can't. This is not the ground we know."

"Then?"

"Daedalus didn't design this Dungeon. He transferred us to Ubbo-Sathla's nest."

"...So, this is really Ubbo-Sathla's nest."

Everyone had somehow anticipated it.

The ever-increasing number of Outers and the overwhelming sense of reality emanating from them.

Although Daedalus was an exceptional designer, it was impossible for him to carry out such an implementation.

"Still, we can't give up without trying at least once."

Asura was Asura.

He decided to take on the task that Hercules couldn't accomplish.

However...

"Didn't I say before? That we could fight whatever we want."

Stop~

YuWon's words made Asura halt.

"What are you saying?"

"There's no need to waste energy trying to pierce the roof. Instead, we'll attack this nest."

"Kim YuWon...!"

Hercules protested.

The situation was already confusing. Originally, the plan to capture Ubbo-Sathla originated from the information Daedalus brought. But with Daedalus's betrayal, all the information he had brought became an enigma.

Furthermore, even Siegfried, who played a crucial role in the team, had also disappeared.

"At this moment, the first thing is to escape. We can't confront Ubbo-Sathla in this situation."

"No, we can do it."

"You can't do it without information."

"The information is in my hands."

"What?"

Hercules, who didn't understand what he was talking about, then thought of the Clock Movement and asked.

"Have you faced this situation before?"

"I didn't know Daedalus was a traitor. In the future, we attacked the wrong Dungeon without knowing the correct design."

The change in the future was probably due to YuWon interfering with Daedalus's design. Daedalus, instead of completely changing his design, changed his plan to throw the team into the nest without any preparation.

"We failed at that time, but this time it will be different."

"What's different now?"

"There is a method of attack."

Ubbo-Sathla.

After Foolish Chaos, it was the hardest to attack among the Outer Gods.

YuWon recalled the failed operation at that time when Asura lost his mind and Hercules lost an arm and spoke.

"Let's capture Ubbo-Sathla here."

It was the beginning of a full-on assault on the nest.

Chapter 410

C410

"Siegfried!"

YuWon yelled.

A gigantic, unrecognizable slime. YuWon looked at his companions trapped in it.

Behind him, Hercules pulled his arm.

Now, the only survivors were YuWon, Hercules, and Asura.

"We need to get out of here first."

"We can't."

"Only the three of us are left. Asura has also lost a head, he's practically incapacitated."

"We can capture it here. If we wait a little longer..."

"Kim YuWon!"

It was a shout that made his ears feel like they were going to burst. How long had it been since Hercules had shouted so loudly? YuWon, who had been running wild, covered in blood and lost in rage, finally regained his sanity.

Hercules shook his head.

His gaze finally turned to Asura, who was staggering with a sword in hand.

The evil spirit, who now only had one head, had been unconscious for a long time.

What he was doing was simply a reflex of the experiences his body had memorized. Moving while unconscious meant he was also pushing his vitality to the limit.

Asura would die like this.

That was a fact.

"...Understood."

YuWon gritted his teeth.

He had to stay calm. He always told himself that over and over again.

The angrier he got about someone's death, the faster his remaining comrades would die.

So, what would he do if he couldn't regain his sanity in a situation like this?

"Get Asura out."

YuWon raised his head.

Without him realizing it, Hercules was already turning.

From inside the nest, Ubbo-Sathla was slowly approaching.

It was obvious what he was going to do.

"Don't overdo it."

"Do you want us all to die?"

"We want to survive together."

"Right now, you're just getting in the way."

A statement that hit the key point.

But YuWon couldn't refute it.

His energy was also dwindling. Asura had long been exhausting his strength to stay alive, and only Hercules had enough remaining energy here.

It seemed that he had impressive endurance, just like his brute strength.

"If I'm alone, I can survive. Don't worry. I promise. I will come back alive."

It wasn't someone else making this promise, it was Hercules.

He said it with such confidence that he probably made some judgment saying it that way.

More than anything else...

"...Understood."

YuWon couldn't refute Hercules' words that said, "you're just getting in the way."

Finally, YuWon lifted the semi-conscious Asura onto his shoulder.

There was a slight resistance, but it was brief.

Whack!

When Hercules punched him in the back of the neck, Asura twisted his body and then collapsed.

YuWon left the place.

Hercules kept his promise.

When Asura, who had been unconscious for a long time, began to slowly recover.

"Hercules, Hercules has returned!"

Finally, they could hear the news they had been waiting for.

YuWon hurriedly left. In the distance, he saw Hercules stumbling while being supported by other companions.

When Hercules saw him, he spoke in the same voice as always.

"I told you. That I would come back alive."

Despite having lost an arm, Hercules smiled as if he was saying, "Look."

YuWon opened his eyes.

He was sitting quietly, trying to rest as effectively as possible, but unnecessary thoughts invaded him.

Was it because they were inside Ubbo-Sathla's nest?

Unconsciously, he began to remember things from the past.

"At a time like this... Cheongseung ()" (Note: 'cheongseung' is a native word that means: 'a miserable, lamentable, and unpleasant attitude or behavior')

YuWon got up from his spot.

It was a brief rest of less than ten minutes.

However, depending on how effective the rest was, it could make a difference in the body's recovery.

Furthermore, YuWon hadn't even spent much energy in the previous battles.

"Well, isn't it just Cheongseung?"

This fight was one they had already lost.

Both the attack on the nest and Hercules' escape.

Both had failed.

And that's precisely why they could try it again.

To succeed.

"Is everyone rested?"

This was Hercules' question as he leaned against the wall with his arms crossed.

"Yes."

"Then, let's move immediately."

YuWon and Hercules began to move.

The other members of the group were out of sight.

Each of them was moving to their assigned positions.

"The map that Daedalus showed us, is it real?"

The Lion King asked the question several times.

As he had a poor memory, he was the last to memorize the nest's map.

He was afraid that the map he had memorized so painstakingly might be wrong.

"The map is real. Fortunately."

Perhaps it was a bit of conscience, or maybe he simply didn't care. Daedalus, who had been pointed at the map, showed the true structure of the nest identified by YuWon, Hercules, and Asura, who were survivors at that moment.

Perhaps he didn't want it to be discovered that he had betrayed them in that way.

"So, what's the plan?"

YuWon asserted that they could assault the nest.

From the beginning, YuWon never said things without a basis. Almost everything he proposed had a success rate of 50% or more.

Therefore, the team members trusted that it would be the same this time.

But...

"From now on, we will separate."

YuWon's plan unfolded differently from what everyone had anticipated from the beginning.

"I don't know if this will be okay."

"It will be. You also agreed to this method."

"I... didn't..."

Hercules, who was about to say he had never said such a thing, stopped.

"I seem to forget it frequently. That you came from a different time than ours."

In fact, that didn't really matter.

Among the companions who came together, there was no one who didn't trust YuWon.

Even if YuWon hadn't come back with the Clock Movement, if he had kept saying to continue, everyone would have responded the same way.

They leaped, step by step.

YuWon and Hercules moved through the long passage of the nest.

Strangely, they walked a good distance and didn't encounter any enemies.

"There's something that intrigues me."

The reason Hercules brought up that question he had been doubting was precisely that.

"Have we failed after all?"

Tick.

YuWon's steps stopped for a moment.

Just a few seconds. YuWon, who had stood as if time had stopped, started walking again as if nothing had happened.

"We are still alive. You, me..."

"I'm not denying that."

"My return is a trial. If we had succeeded, there would be no need to come back."

"For Ubbo-Sathla? Or Shub-Niggurath? Foolish Chaos?"

"No."

The reason YuWon stopped for a while.

"It's none of those things."

The long-forgotten memory, or rather, the one he had tried not to think about, suddenly surfaced.

"Then, what is it?"

"I don't know its name."

"Something like Foolish Chaos?"

"I caught that guy. The problem is another."

"Who is that guy?"

"It's difficult to explain in words. That's..."

YuWon whispered as he raised his head.

What he was seeing now was not the obstructed ceiling but the purple sky that stretched beyond.

A purple sky.

If they weren't in the situation they were in, they would have considered this color quite beautiful.

But when they saw its true nature with their own eyes, YuWon and his companions had no choice but to give up on winning this fight.

"What made us give up the assault was the sky itself."

"The sky?"

There's nothing you can do about it if you know it in advance. Now is the time to focus on assaulting Ubbo-Sathla."

Tick.

YuWon stopped in front of a wall in front of them.

"We've arrived."

"This is it."

Grunt.

Hercules clenched his fist tightly.

YuWon did the same.

[The strength of giants is infused in your right arm]

[The flame of the Giant King manifests in my arm]

Whooosh.

The flames and strength of Surt infused their arms.

In an instant, Hercules looked at YuWon's arm.

"You have completely mastered Gigantification. It's much more than I expected."

"Let's talk about that later. Focus. If we don't pierce through it at once, it could get more difficult."

"Understood."

At the same time.

Boom, boom, boom.

The nest's ceiling resonated above the floor where YuWon and Hercules stood.

Their eyes focused on the wall in front of them.

The map that Daedalus had shown them only marked up to this point.

But...

"There was a wall."

"A wall?"

"It's the room Ubbo-Sathla most wanted to hide. It was the place where Kali discovered it while we were searching for an escape route."

"Me?"

"Your eyes may not be as penetrating as the Golden Cinder Eyes, but they can see through walls to some extent."

Beyond the nest that was not marked on Daedalus's map.

Kim YuWon and Hercules extended their fists to that place at the same time.

Rumble...

Kwaaang!

The wall trembled.

It was like when they hit the ceiling. The wall didn't break.

But the situation was different now since they had no intention of leaving the nest in the first place.

Bang, bang!

Thump, thud...

YuWon and Hercules continued to pound on the wall. At first, the wall didn't even budge, but when they both struck it together, cracks finally began to appear.

"Step back."

At Hercules's signal, YuWon stepped back without hesitation.

He knew that if he stayed close, he would be dragged along with the wall.

The crack they had created together...

Whoosh!

Hercules extended his fist forcefully toward the center of that crack.

Kwaaang!

It was a single blow.

With that final blow, the crack and the entire wall were blown apart.

The energy radiating from his fist pierced the wall. Beyond the thickly rising smoke, a vast space was glimpsed.

Keeping his fist extended, Hercules looked at that space.

"...It was real."

Thump...

A giant circular space.

In the center, a purple sphere pulsating steadily like a heart.

And even a stone slab within it.

Hercules looked at the ground he was standing on. Then, he looked at the ceiling connected to the wall.

"The entire nest was Ubbo-Sathla."

"Why are you marveling so much?"

Boom...

A dazzling lightning bolt exploded from behind.

Crack...

It passed by Hercules at an astonishing speed.

The Lightning Bolt instantly flew toward the sphere surrounding the stone slab.

But...

Crack, crack-le...

The Lightning Bolt finally vanished before touching the stone slab.

It literally dissolved. The sphere surrounding the stone slab seemed to absorb the Lightning Bolt launched by YuWon like a sponge absorbing water.

"Clearly, it's protecting that."

Could that really be a heart?

At first glance, it appeared to be a stone slab, but Ubbo-Sathla was desperately guarding it.

From the beginning, the whole purpose of hiding this room seemed to be to conceal that stone slab.

Drip...

The liquid dripping from the ceiling began to fill the floor. Soon, it gathered and transformed into single-celled slime-like forms that moved.

They didn't attack YuWon and Hercules.

Instead, like the sphere surrounding the slab, they filled around them, trying to protect the slab.

"Do you know what to do?"

"Yes."

Crack!

YuWon created another Lightning Bolt in his hand.

To reach that slab, they first had to get rid of the other beings around it.

Thump!

Hercules clapped his fists together.

In his pupils, Ubbo-Sathla's slab glowed intensely.

"Let's snatch that slab."