

## Great Mage 61

### Season 1 Chapter 61: Trowman Rings (6)

“Did Frey leave the village last night?”

“Yes. I think he left right after speaking with Master Benieng. I thought you knew...”

“...I see.”

Benieng sighed with a gloomy expression on her face.

Did he really leave without saying anything?

He didn't seem to be that type of person, but she couldn't deny what had happened.

There was a magic array in the forest, but for a Wizard at Frey's level, it would not be difficult for him to leave it.

“The timing was not good.”

Benieng agreed with Gisellan.

As soon as he'd arrived, he'd witnessed their artifacts being taken by the Basilisk Tails.

They had shown the worst possible appearance to a guest who was prepared to see the best they had to offer.

Beniang forced a smile to negate the sour atmosphere.

After experiencing so many troubles, it became second nature for her to make such an expression.

“Hey. Don’t give up! We’ve been doing great so far on our own.”

“You’re right.”

Gisellan and Fianne bowed their heads.

They both noticed Beniang’s forced smile, but they did not comment on it.

It was then.

“Master Beniang.”

“Ah.”

A sudden voice made Beniang turn around.

Frey was standing there.

Gisellan, who was a Magic Warrior, was especially surprised.

This was because even with his superior senses, he did not notice Frey's presence before he spoke.

"F-, Frey? Didn't you leave already?"

Frey tilted his head as if he'd heard something strange.

"I wouldn't just leave without saying anything. I just had some business to take care of."

"...business?"

Gisellan was puzzled.

Business?

Could he have business in this area?

The only things of note in this region were the headquarters of a few circles.

“Now that I think about it, I didn’t inform you before I left. Sorry. I was in a rush.”

“N-, no. It’s fine!”

Frey looked at Beniang before speaking in a quiet tone.

“...I’d like to speak with Master Beniang for a moment. Is that okay?”

“Yes. That’s fine. Then shall we go to my house?”

“Yes. And I hope that Honor Fianne and Honor Gisellan can join us.” (TL: Frey can’t take a hint...)

They nodded at the same time.

“That’s alright with us.”

When they arrived at Beniang’s house, Frey sat at one end of a large table, facing them, and he looked at them with calm eyes.

Gisellan swallowed his saliva.

He didn't know why, but whenever he looked into Frey's eyes, it felt like he was looking at the previous Circle Master Osel Argento.

No, it wasn't just Osel.

The faces of the Circle Masters of the Three Great Circles flashed in his mind.

"Honor Fianne, your story was truly impressive."

"Yes? Ah. Yes."

Recalling the conversation they had in front of the statue, Fianne nodded his head dazedly.

"I-"

Frey started, looking at the three before him.

"Intend to erase Demigods from this world."

"W-, what..."

It was an unexpected statement.

Beniang started in surprise, but when she caught Frey's eye, she subconsciously closed her mouth again.

Frey slowly continued.

"It's impossible to do it alone. So I need allies. But I can't rely on the Circle."

"What do you mean you can't rely on it?"

"With the way it is divided and the fact that the circles always try to keep each other in check, there is no way that it will triumph."

To become one.

The first steps to defeating the Demigods could only happen after that was achieved.

However, the expressions of Beniang and the other executives were stiff.

This was because they knew just how impossible Frey's words were.

It was impossible to tell just how many years had passed since the Circle had become the way it was.

At least, in the records left behind by their ancestors, there was no mention of the Circle ever having been a singular entity.

“It will be difficult.”

Beniang also spoke in a serious tone.

It was hard to say if it was possible, and it was too much to call it truly impossible.

In fact, had it been anyone else from the Circle instead of Beniang, they would have already called Frey crazy.

Frey took note of that.

Even though he was saying such absurd things, Beniang was still taking him seriously.

This was very important as it could become an advantage in the future.

“I know.”

“Won’t you bend in the end?”

“My aim will never change.”

“...!”

A strange emotion seemed to swirl within Beniangu, Gisellan and Fianne when they heard those words.

No matter how they looked at it, those words were not something they expected to hear from a young man just over twenty years old.

Nevertheless, instead of feeling awkward, it felt natural.

“The Trowman Rings. I’m considering using this circle as the center.”

“The center...?”

“That’s right. The center of the Circle. To stand above not only the small and medium circles, but even the Three Great Circles.”

“Th-, that...”

Gisellan was in a state of disbelief.

What he was saying was impossible even when the Trowman Rings were at their peak.



Even when Circle Master Osel was still alive, they had only managed to match the Three Great Circles.

Step over them and stand at the top of the Circle?

That was nothing more than a fanciful dream at the moment!

“It will be difficult enough to describe it as hell. We will need to work till we are worn down to our bones. It will truly be a miserable task. But you need to be prepared for it.”

Frey took out his bag and poured its contents on the table.

“...!”

“Th-, this...!”

“I don’t believe it...”

They couldn’t hide their amazement.

The items that he had just poured out of his bag were all the artifacts that they had lost to the other circles.

No, it wasn't just their artifacts.

There were also things that they had never seen before.

"I'll take care of that part."

"So the reason you left last night..."

Frey nodded.

"I've subdued the six small and medium circles in the area. They will no longer pressure or even be hostile toward the Trowman Rings."

Then he turned to the artifacts.

"I'll return these artifacts to you."

"...are there any conditions for your help?"

Frey shook his head.

“No. This is just a small repayment.”

“A small repayment...we haven't done much for you.”

“Then take it as a favor.”

“Huh?”

“I'm making it clear. I don't want you to feel pressured. It wasn't difficult for me to do this, and I don't have much use for these artifacts.”

It was an arrogant statement.

How many people in the Circle could say such words without hesitation?

Yet Frey remained calm since he was only telling the truth.

It wasn't that he was bragging after completing a hard task or lying even though he coveted these items.

These were his actual thoughts.

“ ... ”

Frey calmly spoke again.

“I will give you a day to think about it. I don’t have a lot of time to waste.”

“W-, wait.”

Beniang stopped Frey as he was about to get up from his seat and asked with a serious expression.

“...Frey, you understand that what you just said is hard to believe, right?”

“Of course. That is why I’m giving you time to organize your thoughts.”

“...I don’t need time. Please answer one question.”

Beniang took a deep breath before looking at Frey with determination in her eyes.

“Can it really be done?”

That question seemed to contain all her emotions.

Of all the people in the Circle, how many of them truly believed that they could defeat the Demigods?

Beniang recalled that even her father, Osel, had a slightly apprehensive expression whenever he talked about them.

It wasn't just Osel.

The circle executives had an even worse expression whenever a Demigod was mentioned, including the Circle Masters.

This was the first time that she'd ever encountered someone who could speak about the Demigods with such determination.

A 7 star Wizard who had yet to meet the peak no less.

While they might appear to be monsters to the other small and medium sized circles, they were only executives in the large ones.

However, it did not feel like Frey was a frog in the well who had overestimated his own power.

Only

Yes, Beniang might consider him crazy, but she was truly fascinated by what Frey had said.

She wanted to walk that path with him.

This was the same for Gisellan and Fianne as well.

If it was a trick then they would have been able to notice it immediately.

But how could it be a trick when his eyes and tone were clearly filled with unyielding determination.

“I will bet everything to achieve it.”

Beniang made up her mind then.

It was the day that the Trowman Rings' struggle for freedom truly began.

### **Season 1 Chapter 62: Trowman Rings (7)**

The next day.

Early in the morning, all the circle members who were in the town gathered in front of Beniang's house.

This was something that Gisellan had ordered the night before.

“What's going on? It's so early.”

“There is an important announcement.”

“I hope it’s not a declaration of dissolution...”

“That wouldn’t happen.”

Although they said so, the gathered members were all feeling uneasy.

When Master Osel Argento died and the Circle Rounder left, it triggered the downfall of the Trowman Rings.

Following that, even the members who had a strong sense of belonging to the circle also left.

Now, the only ones who still remained in the circle were those who valued the continuation of the circle more than their very lives.

That was why they were anxious.

No matter how much they wanted to keep the circle from falling apart, it was useless if Benieng declared that it was being dissolved.

At this point, she was the only one who was talented enough to handle the duties of the Circle Master.

“The burden might have been too heavy for Master Benieng.”

“Damn those Basilisk Tails, we should’ve destroyed those bastards.”

“Who could have known that they would be able to form an alliance so quickly?”

“Master Pelik is a crafty woman. By the time we noticed what was happening, everything was almost finalised.”

While the members chatted amongst themselves, the front door of the house opened and Beniang walked out.

She stood in front of the door and slowly observed the crowd.

“Good morning, dear members of the Trowman Ring Circle.”

Her voice reverberated in the morning air.

The members liked her voice.

Especially in this place that was surrounded by dense forest, it was not enough to say that Beniang’s voice was as beautiful as the morning sun.

“I have an important announcement to make today, which is why I’ve called all of you here so early in the morning.”



When they heard the word announcement, the circle members once again began discussing loudly among themselves.

They also looked at Beniang's face to see if they would find any hints about the nature of said announcement.

Beniang smiled in a bid to ease their anxiety.

"I would like to happily introduce a new Circle Rounder to our circle."

"Huh?"

"A Circle Rounder?"

"Th...this is too sudden."

It was totally unexpected.

The Circle Rounder was the second in command in a circle, but at the same time, they shared a closer relationship with the circle executives and members than the Circle Master.

In addition, they were more likely to take part in external events than the Circle Master so in a sense they could be considered the face of the circle.

That was why the Circle Rounder was usually the most talented member of the circle.

It was to show a strong face to the other circles.

“Is she promoting Honor Azeg?”

“He hasn’t returned yet. He is still completing his long term mission in Geotanbul.”

“Then it must be Honor Gisellan.”

“Indeed...he deserves it.”

Gisellan was the member who had stayed the longest in the circle and was like a father to the other circle members.

So the members would understand if it was him.

But they were skeptical about whether he was talented enough for the role.

His character and experience were flawless, but it was his lack of talent that held him back.

'Master Beniang knows that, that's why she'd been keeping the Circle Rounder position vacant...'

'What exactly is she thinking?'

They all paid attention to Beniang's words while they were filled with their own doubts and expectations.

Once more, the door to the house opened, and another person stepped out.

This caused the faces of the members who had thought it would be Gisellan to be filled with surprise.

"This man..."

"Isn't he our guest, Frein Blake?"

"Isn't it Frey Blake?"

"Anyway. Why is he coming out of Master Beniang's house?"

Frey stood near to Beniang without paying much attention to the gazes of the dozens of people before him.

Gisellan and Fianne, who followed him out of the house, settled on both sides of him.

“...”

“...”

The expressions of the circle members became stranger.

The scene reminded them of executives escorting their superior.

Then Beniang’s voice rang out again.

“Let me formally introduce you. This is Frey Blake. Starting from today, he will be the new Circle Rounder of the Trowman Rings.”

“Wh-, what was that...”

“From outsider to Circle Rounder...?”

This was something that most of the circle members gathered immediately began to protest against.

Frey looked at Beniang who nodded slightly.

“My name is Frey Blake, and from today onward, I’ll be your Circle Rounder. I’m sure that many of you have complaints about me becoming the Circle Rounder. After all, this is not something that you can easily accept.”

Most of the circle members were staring at Frey with dissatisfaction.

Even if they pretended, there was no way they could accept this informally speaking youngster as their superior.

Beniang saw this and silently clenched her fist.

She recalled the words that Frey had told her the night before.

‘The circle members won’t be easily convinced. I have an idea, so leave it to me.’

Beniang, Gisellan and Fianne all looked at him nervously.

‘You have to speak well, Frey.’

“But you don’t have the qualifications to question me.”

“...huh?”

Beniang subconsciously made a sound of surprise while Gisellan also stared at Frey in shock.

“It is only because there is no talent in this circle that a rookie like me, who only joined yesterday, was allowed to become the Circle Rounder.”

“What did he just say?”

“He just said...”

The faces of the circle members became grim.

However, while receiving their fierce glares, Frey only smiled.

“If you have any complaints, I will accept them. I just need to prove my ability. If there are any of you who can manage to even touch my collar, then I will resign from the position of Circle Rounder and even give you a gift.”

He pointed at his earrings.

“These are Typhoon Earrings. A relic created directly by Lukas Trowman whom you respect dearly.”

Frey looked at the glaring eyes of the circle members.

“Now then, shall we begin?”

\* \* \*

“...do you have any idea what Frey is up to?”

Gisellan tentatively nodded his head at Fianne’s question.

“This decision had a very high chance of being resisted by the circle members. And yet, Frey...no, Rounder Frey, insisted on doing it. I think there are two reasons for this.”

“Two?”

“One is to concentrate the circle members’ dissatisfaction onto himself. This was probably out of consideration for Master Benieng. And the other...I think he wants to test the circle members himself.”

Gisellan shrugged.

“However, this is only my guess. So let’s just wait and see. Haven’t we already decided to bet on him anyway?”

Fianne nodded and turned his complex gaze back to Frey.

\* \* \*

Frey stood in a wide open space.

The angry circle members surrounded him, their eyes filled with pride and indignation.

Even if they were members of a crumbling circle, they still had their pride.

“I’ll go first please.”

“Name.”

“Fio Guntar.”

“Class.”

“I’m a Wizard.”

“Go ahead.”

“...are you not going to prepare?”



Frey, who had his hands hanging at his sides, looked very defenseless at that moment.

It was natural for Fio to ask such a question, but Frey's expression remained unchanged.

"If I think your attack is threatening, I will."

"...Fireball!"

It was a basic 2 star spell. However, Fio's specialty was Fire Magic.

Frey didn't move.

To be precise, he did not even move his eyebrow.

But that didn't mean that he did not do anything.

Crackle.

Just before the Fireball reached him, Frey also cast a fireball.

Same size, same power.

The two Fireballs collided midair, forming a large explosion that quickly dissipated.

Fio silently shuddered.

“Ch-, Chantless Magic!”

“H-, he’s at least 5 stars! No, he’s probably a 6 star Wizard!”

If that was the case then he was an excellent candidate to be the Rounder in a crumbling circle.

Rather, from the perspective of the Trowman Rings, he was a talent that they would want to acquire, even if they had to beg.

The circle members now understood Benieng’s unconventional move.

“Fio Guntar, is Fire Magic your specialty?”

“Th-, that’s right.”

Fio’s became subconsciously filled with nervousness. A sense of awe had replaced the indignation he had felt before.

This was a 6 star Wizard after all.

“Tell me the characteristics of Fire Magic.”

“Yes? Ah. I-, it’s destructive power.”

“Right. The most common characteristic is that it is much more destructive than other magic attributes. Of course, that also means it is more difficult to control, but it’s obviously attractive enough despite that risk.”

Fio nodded.

Frey’s words were something that every Wizard who walked the path of Fire Magic knew.

“That Fireball you just showed me had a pretty good degree of perfection. You must have practiced day and night.”

“Th-, thank you.”

Fio’s heart was instantly filled with pride.

After all, it was a 6 star Wizard-he thought- who was praising him directly.

Fio felt as though his hard work had been validated.

“Of course, there are still some things you need to work on. It felt like you were putting more effort into maintaining its shape than was necessary. You should pay more attention to increasing the power. After all, making a perfectly shaped Fireball doesn’t increase its power.”

It was extremely practical advice. At least it wasn’t the type of advice that you would be able to learn even from the best teachers at an academy.

Frey knew that what they needed was not a stereotypical education.

“I don’t know how to increase the power...”

“Image training comes first. The imagination is the most important thing for a wizard. In the past...”

Frey shook his head while looking at Fio with a somewhat distant expression.

“...one of my friends had suffered terrible burns all over his body. The burns were so severe, that they could not be completely healed, even with magic. After that incident, he became afraid of fire, but eventually, he overcame it, and after working hard, he became the most powerful authority in Fire Magic.”

Fio listened to Frey attentively.

Frey’s voice, which seemed to sound indifferent at first, rested gently on his ears like a soft breeze in the forest.

Come to think of it, when last had he been personally taught by someone?

“This was possible because he’d felt the fierceness of fire with his entire body. Of course, that was an extreme case, but it’s important to think about the image to that extent. From today, you should try to create a concrete image of fire while also keeping the risks in mind.”

“Th-, thank you for your teaching.”

“Go back now.”

Fio respectfully bowed his head at the gesture from the 20 odd year old man in front of him and stepped back.

Then one of the members at the side approached him and poked his side.

“What was that? Didn’t you shout out that you would put him in his place.”

“N-, no. That’s what I planned to do...”

“How strong is he?”

Fio sighed deeply before whispering.

“...I don't know. No, he should be a 6 star Wizard. He's the talent our circle needed badly.”

“Did you lose your pride and start bowing your head?”

The circle member was being sarcastic but Fio still shook his head.

“That's not it. But I can't explain it. You should also ask for his teaching. Rounder Frey will help you.”

“Oh boy.”

He was already calling him Rounder?

The circle member frowned slightly.

“Worthless guy. I'm different. No matter how amazing a Wizard that guy is, I will never bow my head to him. You stay here and watch the way I mess up that Circle Rounder's face.”

Laughing, he turned and walked toward Frey.

Fio simply watched with his arms folded.

Only

After a while.

“...Rounder Frey is the treasure of our circle.”

“...”

Fio stared at him with a dumbstruck expression, but the member didn't notice since he was staring at Frey with a clenched fist and expression filled with admiration.

### **Season 1 Chapter 63: Trowman Rings (8)**

“That's all for today. For those circle members who still need advice, I will be here tomorrow as well.”

Some people were disappointed at Frey's words.

Not even a day had passed, but their expressions were distinctly different.

Most of them were looking at Frey with respect.

‘A wizard with tremendous skill.’

‘He accurately recognized my flaws and told me how to solve them.’

'His words are very easy to understand. Strange. A 6 star Wizard at that age must be a terrifying genius...'

It wasn't true for all geniuses, but most of them have trouble teaching others.

This was because they usually could not understand the perspective of ordinary people.

But Frey was different.

He adjusted his perspective to that of the circle members, made easy to understand analogies and descriptions, and taught them straightforward ways to train.

Timely advice for a Wizard was a treasure that could not be measured even in gold.

Only a day had passed, but because they were Wizards who walked the path of magic, the way they looked at Frey changed greatly.

"Is Rounder Frey an Elf?"

"His ears are round."

"You can hide that with magic."



“Or he could’ve signed a contract with a Devil.”

“Now that you say that, the Circle Master of the Phisfounder Armlets looks like a young man without any wrinkles.”

Frey returned to Beniang’s house under the warm gazes of the circle members.

Then he spoke to Beniang who was staring at him with a dumbfounded expression.

“I’m going to invest three months to teach them. Not just the circle members, but Master Beniang, Gisellan, and Fianne.”

“Is there a reason for the three month deadline?”

“At that time I’d like to have a friendly battle with the medium and small sized circles around us.”

“A friendly match...”

Beniang looked worried.

If it was the small and medium sized circles near them, then the Basilisk Tails would have the most power.

“Not a Relic Battle. They’re already been subjugated by the Trowman Rings. In short, they are now our subordinate circles. The idea is that a friendly match will be held for mutual exchange, but...”

To be precise, it was an individual called Frey Blake and not the Trowman Ring who had subjugated the surrounding circles, but there was no need to point that out.

“Master Benieng can’t participate, so Gisellan and Fianne’s skills will need to improve. We can’t afford to lose this friendly match.”

“Isn’t it just a friendly match?”

It was Fianne who asked this question with a confused expression on his face.

Since they didn’t have any experience with such a task they weren’t able to predict the consequences of defeat easily.

“Even if they don’t show it on the surface, they will be dissatisfied. They will want to know why those who are weaker than them are above them. It’s not easy to get rid of such thoughts when they appear. It’s better to stop them from budding in the first place.”

Of course, they wouldn’t make it obvious in front of Frey.

But Frey couldn’t always stay in the circle.

He would have to leave the Trowman Rings at some point to strengthen himself, and these were not problems that could be solved right away.

From then on, the Trowman Rings would be the leader of the Small and Medium Circle Alliance.

And in order to do so, it was necessary for them to clarify the relationship between the top and bottom.

“It is not possible to do it by force. We need a perfect victory, to the point that it is overwhelming.”

The room became silent following those firm words.

Gisellan and Fianne looked worried.

“...I don't think that will be easy with my current skills.”

“To be exact, it's impossible. But don't worry about that right now. You will win as long as you follow my advice. Of course-”

Frey smiled.

“It will be very painful. Even the word hell might be enough to describe it. Especially you, Honor Fianne, you better be prepared. You seem to be wasting your talent, which I can't allow.”

The moment he saw Frey's smile, Fianne unconsciously had goosebumps.

The next person he turned to was Beniang.

"Master Beniang, can you follow me for a moment?"

"Ah, yes."

Frey led Beniang out of the house and soon arrived in the center of the forest.

Then he turned around and looked at Beniang who was staring at him with a curious look at her face.

"Cast a spell."

At that moment, Beniang realised that Frey was going to teach her magic.

'Even my father couldn't teach me properly...'

Beniang looked like a human, but inside, she was more like a Dragon on the inside.

And the magic that Dragons used was very different from that of humans.

Even Osel, a Circle Master, hadn't been able to teach her properly.

Frey knew that she was half Dragon.

Did he think that he could teach her magic?

Though Beni-ang was skeptical, she had never met anyone who knew as much about Dragons as he did.

She decided to listen to Frey's words first.

"Energy Ball."

Woowoong.

The most basic spell.

A bluish round mass of energy floated above her hand.

Frey squinted at the Energy Ball.

'Hm...'

It was like forcibly wearing clothes that didn't fit.

Frey realised that Beniag was already used to using magic like.

“Master seems to have made a Mana Room by force.”

“Yeah. Without this, I can't use magic at all...”

She had made it forcibly to use magic.

She had no other means at that time, but considering how the Dragon's bodies were made, it was too inefficient.

Originally, Dragons knew how to handle mana from birth...

Well, she was half Dragon.

“Dragons don't need to store mana in their bodies. You can take control of the mana around. Unless it's not a special location, you can fight more efficiently than humans.”

“Special location?”

“Where the mana distribution is extremely low. Like land that is already dead.”

“Ah...!”

“Has Master Benieng ever experienced mana exhaustion?”

“N-, no. Never...’

“You’ll have to experience it today. Use all the mana in your mana room right now. You can release the mana through.”

“...”

Benieng looked embarrassed.

“Is there a problem?”

“I...I don’t know how to release my mana through my skin.”

“...”

Frey was speechless for a moment.

Beniang had just declared that she did not know how to do one of the first things that one needed to learn before becoming a Wizard.

“...then we will need to use a slightly idiotic method. Start to chant spells, but don’t finish them. The mana will escape but the spell won’t be cast.”

“Okay. I will try.”

Beniang closed her eyes and began to chant spells while Frey watched silently from the side.

About thirty minutes later, when her mana had been expended, Beniang gasped for breath and said

“D-, done.”

Her face was flushed and she was panting, but it wasn’t because she was tired.

To be precise, Beniang’s body was under the illusion that it was difficult. This was also a side effect of her Mana Room.

Frey looked on in interest.

He wondered just how strong Beniang would become after she fully digested the Dragon’s strengths.



“Turn around and sit down.”

“Yes...”

Beniang sat down and Frey placed his palm on her back to look inside her.

‘...’

There, he found something similar to a Mana Room.

However, it was weaker and smaller than Mana Rooms found in humans.

‘Beniang is 6 stars. Perhaps she was able to reach this level faster than anyone else. But it’s impossible to become an Archmage this way.’

Frey spoke to Beniang.

“Don’t talk, just listen. Master Beniang, from now on, I am going to destroy the incomplete Mana Room that you built in your body. You have to stop the small amount of mana in your body which will try to prevent the destruction.”

Beniang nodded.

Frey then immediately injected his mana into her.

It carried the cold of the Frozen River.

“...!”

Beniang shivered involuntarily.

This was a natural reaction.

For her, it felt like freezing cold water was being poured into her body.

Still, she followed Frey’s instructions.

Despite the cold, she did not loosen her control of the mana that wanted to prevent what he was doing.

Thanks to her efforts, the cold mana reached her Mana Room without a hitch, and the Mana Room became frozen in an instant.

“It will hurt a little from here on, but you need to endure it.”

Clang!

“...mm!”

Beniang grunted and Frey frowned.

‘It’s more deep-rooted than I expected. This...I’m going to have to shave it away slowly.’

If he tried to do it hurriedly, then it could damage Beniang’s body.

If that happened, it would be the end of the story.

Therefore, Frey slowly and carefully wore down the Mana Room.

Every time a piece was removed, Beniang would flinch, but she was taking it much better than most could.

Although the process was extremely painful, she did not make a single sound after that grunt at the start.

Another thirty minutes passed.

Finally, Frey moved back and wiped his sweat while Beniang collapsed, exhausted.

"I-, is it over?"

Only

"For today."

"F-, for today?"

There was a little fear in Beniang's eyes.

However, in order to maintain the dignity of a Circle Master, there were some things that she had to endure.

Frey spoke in a calm voice, unaware of her thoughts.

"At the very least, we'll have to continue this for a month. Once a day, every day. Master Beniang, please take care of me."

"U-, uhh..."

Beniang collapsed in despair, feeling that Frey's face looked very much like a Devil's at that moment.

**Season 1 Chapter 64: Trowman Rings (9)**

The next one that Frey instructed after Beniag was Fianne.

He stared at Frey with apprehension as he recalled the dull and lifeless look in Beniags eyes when she returned home.

Without noticing Fianne's anxiety, Frey asked.

"What is the name of your martial art?"

"It is called Baekwangwon(White King Boxing)."

"..."

It was a tacky name.

He couldn't understand why the practitioners of martial arts liked to use 'king' in their technique names.

If they deviated from the stereotype, he was sure that they would be able to come up with some better sounding names.

Frey shook his head, remembering Kasajin.

"First let's spar. So that I can know your skills."

Fianne nodded with a stiff expression.

He had seen Frey teaching back at the village.

Of course, among those who had been dissatisfied, there were a few Magic Warriors.

They had attacked Frey with extreme determination but they had not even managed to touch his collar.

It was then that Fianne had realised.

This young man before him was not just a talent Wizard, but he was also a First Class Magic Warrior.

At the very least, he was an opponent that Fianne had no guarantee he could beat.

“Come.”

Tat.

Fianne quickly narrowed the distance, his fist outstretched towards Frey’s face.

Huk.

Frey avoided the attack simply by moving his head.

'Fast.'

It was a fierce attack.

If it had landed, his face would definitely have been deformed.

Fianne wasn't disappointed when his attack failed to connect, instead, he quickly retracted his arm and attacked Frey's abdomen with his left hand.

Fianne knew that because he was so close, such an attack would be in his opponent's blind spot.

However, Frey caught his fist as though he was expecting the attack.

"Kuk..."

How did he know?

No, there was no time to think about that.

Fianne twisted his body and roughly shook his hand free.

And using the rotational force, he turned and fired a kick.

Although it was called Baekwangwon, that didn't mean that it only consisted of fist techniques.

There were times when one would use their feet, knees, elbows, hands and even their forehead to attack.

Kwak.

"...!"

It was blocked again.

Frey had managed to stop Fianne's attack with just one arm.

If it had landed, he might have been able to end the fight at once.

He clenched his teeth and pulled his foot back.

Frey didn't pursue him and remained standing in the same spot.



'I need to understand your skills.'

This was what Frey had told him and that's what he was demonstrating right now.

It was not time for him to make a move yet.

Instead, it was time for Fianne to show Frey just what type of martial art his Baekwangwon was.

Taat.

Once again, Fianne rushed forward and delivered a flurry of blows.

Frey avoided all of these attacks with only minimal movements and blocked the ones that he couldn't avoid.

'This is frustrating.'

That was truly how he felt.

Obviously, it was his first time fighting Frey, but it felt like he was fighting against someone who had carefully examined all of his strengths and weaknesses.

No matter how he attacked, it didn't seem like he would be able to do any damage.

'It's like punching a rock.'

Fianne continued his attacks for nearly a full minute.

His body was covered in sweat and he was panting slightly.

"That's enough."

"..."

Fianne stopped his attacks.

He didn't expect that he wouldn't even be able to land one hit.

Frey looked at Fianne's expression of indignation and shame before speaking.

"Honor Fianne, you have the skill of a Second Class Magic Warrior or below."

Fianne was much weaker than Liamson who could be considered to be a peak Second Class Magic Warrior.

Although this level was quite impressive, it was not enough for an executive of a circle.

He should at least be able to be him(Frey) who only learned martial arts in passing.

“...”

Fianne bit his lip fiercely to the point where it became white.

Frey approached him and patted him on the shoulder.

“This wounded your pride.”

“...yes.”

“That’s a good thing. Fianne, never forget the resentment you are feeling right now. Pride is very important for those who walk the path of magic. Others might not understand, but sometimes you will even have to risk your life to defend that pride.”

“There are situations where you would have to put your pride before your life?”

“That’s right. It’s not that hard to imagine. You are prepared to risk your life to defend the honor of the Trowman Rings. The details might be different, but the determination is the same in this context.”

“...I see.”

Fianne nodded as he felt that he understood what Frey was saying.

Then he looked at Frey with a strange gaze.

“Are you a Dragon, Round Frey?”

“Why do you say that?”

“It’s because it doesn’t feel like you are younger than me. They didn’t say it, but I’m sure the circle members and Master Benieng think the same.”

Frey laughed.

“Is it because I helped Master Benieng who is half Dragon?”

“Yes.”

“Your reasoning is amusing, but I am human. I just know a bit more than other people.”

Fianne recalled their previous engagement before asking.

“Is martial arts one of those things?”

“That’s right. Of course, my martial art skills are lackluster. I can barely be considered a Second Class Magic Warrior.”

“Huh? Is that true? I could’ve sworn you were a First Class Magic Warrior...”

It was not unreasonable for Fianne to be mistaken.

However, it was true that Frey’s skills could only pass as a Second Class Magic Warrior.

Nevertheless, it was his eyes and his experience which allowed him to beat Fianne in such an overwhelming manner.

“Anyway. Did you say the name was Baekwangwon? It seems to be a standard martial art. There are no anomalous attacks and few tricks.”

Fianne smiled bitterly.

“That’s correct. This makes it easy to read, which means that after a few exchanges, someone can recognize the patterns.”

“That’s because of your lackluster skills. A standard isn’t called a standard for nothing. The Baekwangwon will grow stronger as your level increases. Even a First Class Warrior might not be able to find a flaw in your movement. On the other hand, your attacks will crush your opponent’s guard.”

“Really?”

There was a flash of joy on Fianne’s face.

This was because he was happy that the martial art he practiced was recognized.

“Your martial art would be able to show results regardless of whether your opponent is weaker, stronger, or the same strength as you. This can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. Well...it’s a bit of a headache.”

“What do you mean?”

“Because of the nature of Magic Warriors, there are no shortcuts on your path. You have no choice but to climb the stairs one step at a time.”

It was very different from Benieng who would be able to achieve explosive growth after simply destroying her mana room and correcting a few mistakes.

Fianne nodded to show that he understood.

“Ah...I see.”

“Of course.”

Frey let out a laugh.

“There are ways to help you climb the stairs quickly.”

“...yes?”

“One of my close friends had a method of training for Magic Warriors, if you are able to digest it, you can become a First Class Magic Warrior in three months.”

If you can digest it.

Frey said this again in his head and let out a short laugh.

Unfortunately for Fianne, he failed to notice this.

The image of Beniang’s staggering figure had already disappeared from his mind.

Instead, he looked at Frey with a burning gaze.

“Can you teach it to me?!”

\* \* \*

Basic Physical Strength Enhancement.

Although the name sounded simple, Fianne felt that the name should be changed to ‘Torture of the Twisted Executioner instead.’

Fianne was laying face down on the hard ground.

No, that was wrong.

The truth was that he had collapsed and no longer had the energy to move even one finger.

‘I’ll just pretend to be unconscious...’

Splash-

Cold water landed on his face and Fianne hurriedly got up.



“You’re not even halfway done. How can you be this tired already?”

Only

“Kill...”

“Kill?”

“You might as well kill me...”

Frey smiled and said.

“Stop being a crybaby. Don’t worry. I’ll relieve your muscle pain with my mana. I also picked some nutritious herbs on the way, so you can eat those to recover faster.”

‘I’m not a crybaby!’

Fianne wanted to shout with all his might, but at that moment, he did not dare.

### **Season 1 Chapter 65: Trowman Rings (10)**

The last executive to be taught by Frey was Gisellan.

Frey looked at him and spoke.

“Honor Gisellan, you are a 5 star Wizard.”

“That’s right.”

5 stars wasn’t bad.

However, it wasn’t good either.

There were many scattered problems, but above all, there were a few major flaws.

“Did you know that that’s your limit?”

“I’m fully aware of that.”

Frey looked at Gisellan who nodded calmly.

There was no way for Frey to avoid that.

The reason for this was more attributed to missing the best timing instead of a lack of talent.

Frey noticed that Gisellan had begun studying magic at a fairly late age.

While this might not seem like a big deal at first glance, this was, in fact, very detrimental.

'I don't know if I should give him an elixir.'

If he was given a suitable elixir, then the impurities in his body could be cleared away, and his mana sensitivity would increase explosively.

However, this was a problem that needed thorough consideration.

It was not very efficient for Gisellan to take an elixir.

To maximize effects, it would be better if it was given to Fianne or Benieng instead.

After thinking about it for a moment, Frey handed something to Gisellan.

"Take this."

It was Kungunil's Dagger.

When he saw the dagger, Gisellan's expression became filled with surprise.

“This...looks like an amazing dagger...”

“It is a relic from the Age of Light. It has two runes, Blink and Return, engraved on it and the dagger itself is quite sharp. If you use it well, then it would prove to be quite helpful.”

“But why would you give such an item to a Wizard like me...”

“How many years have you been using daggers?”

“...!”

A look of surprise flashed through Gisellan’s eyes.

“...how did you know?”

“Your physique is not innate. Your muscles are still taut... I don’t think you’ve missed even one day of training.”

Gisellan smiled bitterly.

“I practice every morning. If I miss even a single day, I begin to feel uneasy. As Rounder Frey knows, I was once a mercenary. I probably did that for more than ten years.”

“Ten years. With that much experience in the mercenary world, you can be considered a veteran...did you start learning magic during that time?”

“Little by little as time went by. I only truly focused on learning after I turned thirty.”

There was no need for him to lie about that.

It was a shame.

If Gisellan had begun learning in earnest at a younger age, then he would have reached a higher level by now.

Of course, it was still quite amazing that he had been able to reach 5 stars.

This was something that was impossible without backbreaking hard work and determination.

“I think you’d be better off as a Magic Swordsman.”

“A Magic Swordsman...”

“At only 5 stars, it would be impossible for you to win in an overwhelming manner during the friendly competition. But if we make use of your physical ability, it would be an entirely different story.”

Frey looked at the dagger in Gisellan's hand.

"That dagger requires a tremendous amount of skill to use, but if you are able to make it your own, it would be incredibly helpful."

"...I'm not confident I can do that."

Frey smiled.

It was the same smile that Frey had given to Benieng and Fianne, and it gave Gisellan goosebumps.

"You will be."

\* \* \*

Two months.

That was how long it took for Frey to be completely accepted into the Trowman Rings.

It wasn't just acceptance.

There was no longer any circle member who dared to complain about Frey's position as Circle Rounder.

Instead, most of them were even proud to have Frey as the Rounder of the Trowman Rings.

“A total of five people will be participating in this friendly competition. With the exception of Honors Gisellan and Fianne, I will need to pick the other three members.”

Frey looked around at the gathered circle members as he said these words.

“Of course, I will thoroughly select the participants by order of skill, and they will be given a reward.”

After saying this, he pulled out a few items from his bag which greatly shocked the circle members.

“Heroes’ Relics!”

“Surely these benefits...”

“That’s right. I’m going to award these artifacts to the participants.”

The circle members were in an uproar.

At the same time, their faces were filled with enthusiasm.

This was natural.

Artifacts were so precious that few medium and small sized circles had any of them, and the few artifacts they had were in the hands of their circle executives.

That was why these ordinary circle members were shocked to learn that just by becoming a participant, they would be given these items that they couldn't get even if they were willing to risk their lives.

This was an opportunity that they might never get again!

Becoming an executive would no longer be just a dream if they were able to grasp this chance and make steady progress.

Frey smiled as he watched the circled members become filled with excitement.

Fianne, who was standing at the side, could only watch with a tired expression on his face.

"He's very good at dealing with people. It was almost at the point where the circle members were becoming complacent, but now, he has lit a fire in them at the best time."

"What's more, we might be able to fill the empty executive positions. In fact, there were a few talented members who stood out after receiving Rounder Frey's advice. If they are refined a bit more, they would be good candidates for Force Honor."

"He's the perfect Rounder for the circle members."



Fianne looked at Frey with fearful eyes.

“But he is merciless.”

“Fianne’s right.”

Beniang had the same expression on her face.

They had managed to successfully remove her mana room, but it was impossible to get rid of a habit developed over so many years in such a short time.

Of course, Frey noticed this immediately, which meant that she had to experience a new type of hell.

Gisellan let out a dry laugh.

“Rounder Frey is a great teacher.”

“Huh?”

“The way he teaches depends on the personality of the person he’s teaching. Strict to some, gentle to others. He knows what approach to use to help every person the most.”

“Huh...so you think the strict teaching he gives to Master Benieng and I is the most effective method?”

“Don’t delude yourself when you know the truth.”

“...”

Fianne, who was about to say more, closed his mouth immediately.

This was because he could not deny the fact that his skills were rapidly improving because of Frey’s teachings.

“By the way, isn’t today the day that Honor Eizek returns?”

“Now that you mention it, it should be around this time.”

“Do you think he will accept Rounder Frey?”

“It’s hard to say, but we will know soon enough.”

At that moment, Benieng, who had been quietly listening at the side, smiled.

“It’s scary that you just brought it up. I think Honor Eizek is here. Hmm. He even brought someone who is usually hard to meet.”

After a while, two people appeared in the distance.

One was a man in his thirties, and the other was a woman with a stern expression on her face.

When they came near, the man bowed toward Beniang.

“Master Beniang, I’m back from my mission.”

“Good work, Honor Eizek. Was everything all right?”

“Of course. More importantly, how is the situation with the circle?”

“There was a crisis, but it has been resolved now.”

“What crisis?”

Then Eizek’s gaze turned to Frey, who was standing in the empty lot, surrounded by circle members.

Frey was in the middle of teaching the circle members.

Eizek became confused.

It didn't seem like this person was a guest.

"...who is that man?"

"He is..."

"Huh? Isn't that Frey?"

The woman behind Eizek finally spoke.

Gisellan nodded.

Only

"It seems Adelia knows Rounder Frey already."

"Of course I do. I was the one who told the Master about him. No, wait a minute. Rounder...Rounder?"

Adelia, who was tilting her head in confusion, suddenly shouted in surprise.

“Frey is the Rounder?!”

**Season 1 Chapter 66: Trowman Rings (11)**

Now that all the Force Honors of the Trowman Rings, Gisellan, Fianne and Eizek were gathered, Beniang held a meeting.

It was mainly to introduce Frey and Eizek to one another and to address the circle’s situation.

Eizek was the one who opened his mouth first.

“I never imagined that you would find a Circle Rounder while I was away.”

“The situation was urgent. I’m sorry if I offended you.”

Eizek shook his head at Beniang’s words.

“It’s not that. I’m just worried about the circle’s future.”

“...”

Eizek looked at Frey with calm eyes.

“Rounder Frey, if Master Benieng and the other two Force Honors acknowledge you, then I have nothing to say.”

Frey did not believe that Eizek truly accepted him, but that he would simply watch the situation for the time being.

In fact, Eizek never had any intentions of opposing Benieng’s decision.

Apart from that, it would be strange if he was not wary of this strange man named Frey.

From the start, Eizek had been looking at Frey with a searching gaze.

And Frey was the same.

‘So this is Honor Eizek.’

Frey inspected him quietly.

He then realised that the man in front of him was neither a Wizard nor a Magic Warrior.

Eizek was a Contractor.

If one was to be blunt, he was more suited for the Phisfounder Armlets than this circle.

‘Everyone said that he is unrivaled among the Trowman Rings’ executives.’

He was the man who played the role of ace before Frey’s arrival.

Frey felt that this reputation was most likely not an exaggeration.

Then Adelia crept up to his side and poked him in the ribs.

“Hey. What the hell happened in two months that allowed you to become the Rounder?”

Before Frey could even respond, Gisellan spoke up with a stiff face.

“Adelia, be more polite to the Circle Rounder.”

“...it’s driving me insane. He became successful in a flash.”

Adelia grumbled.

But her reaction was understandable.

A cute(?) student who used to address her politely had suddenly become her superior.

For Adelia, who had been agonizing over a way to trick Frey into becoming her disciple, this was really too shocking.

“...”

Gisellan’s eyes became filled with anger when he saw her grumbling.

Then Adelia sighed and pouted.

“Alright, alright. Rounder Frey. Do I need to address him like that?”

“Use honorifics.”

“...am I doing it right now?”

Frey found her reaction to be quite amusing.

This was because Adelia, who could even address the 3rd Magic Tower’s Master as ‘old man’, behaved like a mouse before a cat in front of Gisellan.

Adelia sighed again at the unfairness before changing her way of thinking.



'...wait a second. Doesn't this mean he's not a student anymore?' (TL: oooh I like where her mind went)

While Adelia seemed to be staring at Frey with a different look in her eyes, Eizek began to speak.

"Master Beniang, if it's okay with you, I'd like to give my mission report before learning about the circle's situation."

"Go ahead,"

"Thank you."

Eizek nodded before continuing.

"As you know, my mission was to find any traces left behind by the Successor of the Magic Warrior King. And I found a clue near the Great Reynolds Forest, the territory of the Elves. I immediately gave chase...and I made contact with him."

"A-, are you serious?"

Those words make Gisellan and everyone else's eyes widen.

The Successor of Magic Warrior King Kasajin!

His whereabouts were something that was of great interest to the Circle.

Many had been able to find traces of his movements, and there were even a few circles who had successfully made contact with him.

Nevertheless, he had yet to join a circle and was still acting alone.

Eizek knew why.

Even though he had not been careless, he'd still managed to receive considerable injuries.

"He's not the kind of person you can talk to."

Sik.

Eizek took off his coat and revealed a horrible wound.

"H-, hup...!"

"A-, are you okay?"

His chest was sunken as though he had been crushed by something heavy.

The severe bruising and red, swollen veins caused even the former mercenary, Gisellan, to frown.

That was because it was much worse than it appeared. Several of his ribs must be broken, but it seemed that Eizek had done some preliminary treatment.

Eizek put on back his clothes before continuing.

“I’m fine now. I was near death for four days, but it was luck that saved my life...just as it is said within the Circle, he has an unpredictable personality. He said that he had no intention of talking to anyone unless he acknowledged them.”

This caused the expressions of those who knew of Eizek’s prowess to stiffen.

If it had been any other circle executive who had been sent to complete the task, they would have already become a corpse.

“He already knows about the Demigods. However, he didn’t seem interested in the subjugation of the Demigods or the Circle. He said that seeing the end of the martial arts path is his top priority.”

Even though he knew about the Demigods, he refused to cooperate.

Frey frowned at that.

He didn't like the idea that such a person was using the title 'Successor of the Martial Warrior King'.

However, his personal opinion aside, it was very clear from Eizek's wounds that he was proficient in the Warrior King's Fist. (TL: translation it is)

'Now that I think about it, Kasajin wasn't that interested in the Demigods at first either.'

When he had first created his group, it was Kasajin who had been the hardest to persuade.

But when he joined their side, he was more determined than anyone else.

Frey felt like he needed to meet with this Successor of the Magic Warrior King.

No, he didn't think.

He *had* to meet him.

'He doesn't need to be on the same level as Kasajin. If we could get the help of a First Class Magic Warrior proficient in the Warrior King's Fist...'

They would be a great help when he tried to defeat Demigods in the future after reaching 9 stars.

“Is he staying in the Great Reynolds Forest?”

“I don’t think so...it doesn’t seem like he stays in the same location for more than a month.”

One month.

He didn’t know how long he had been staying in the Great Reynolds Forest, but he figured that there was not much time left.

After pondering for a while, Frey opened his mouth.

“How far is the Great Reynolds Forest from here?”

“Do you intend to meet him?”

“That’s right. It would be very good if we could get him to join our circle.”

Eizek fell silent.

It wasn’t wrong.

Well, the words weren't wrong.

In fact, there was nothing that Eizek could say about it because he had also been confident that he would be able to persuade that man.

But when he met him in person, it was more like meeting a wild beast instead of another human being.

And that was when he realised why the man was more comfortable being alone instead of in a circle.

From the Circle's perspective, it did not look good when the Successor of the Magic Warrior King ran around doing whatever he wanted.

There were many extremists who thought of capturing him and then getting rid of him after they pried the secrets of the Warrior King's Fist from him.

Nevertheless, this man was still able to frolic all across the continent.

This was because both their main plans and their contingencies failed.

It wasn't just the Three Great Circles.

Many small and medium sized circles, some of whom were even stronger than the Trowman Rings, also sent many scouts.

And all of them failed.

Not a single one of them had been successful.

Although he had these thoughts, Eizek still took out a map from his bag.

The Circle Rounder's question could not be ignored.

Chuk.

Eizek pointed to the map while speaking.

"I'll show you the shortest route. This is the location of our circle. First, follow this road south to 'Grode'. It's a bit closer to us than Uthiano, and it has a Warp Stone. Then, using the Warp Stone there, head to 'Pillat'. Pillat is one of the closest cities to the Great Reynolds Forest. From here to there, it takes about three days."

Pillat.

The moment he heard that, Frey's expression slightly changed.

This city, on the eastern end of the empire, was none other than the home of the Blake Family.

“From there, you can only go by foot. Of course, the mountain path leading to the forest is quite long and rough...if you use a carriage, you’d be able to save time and energy.”

“I can hire a carriage?”

Eizek nodded.

“There is a caravan of peddlers who trade with the elves. It seems like there are transactions every month. Of course, we can’t use them to enter the forest.”

“So the fastest way would be to join their group.”

“That’s right. The peddlers are always looking for mercenaries to accompany them. Someone with Rounder Frey’s skills would be very welcomed.”

Eizek did not know exactly how strong Frey was, but he did know that in order for him to become the Rounder, he had to be at least 6 stars.

There was no reason for Frey to not join the caravan since the mercenary world treated anyone who had reached 5 stars like nobility.

“...”

Frey pondered for a moment before turning to Benieng.



“Master Beniang, I think I will go meet the Successor of the Magic Warrior King.”

“Yes. I thought you would.”

Beniang nodded as she agreed.

“For now, the circle is fine. The foundation has been solidified, and even those who were wandering have found a path to follow. And Honor Eizek should be healed in time for the friendly competition in a month.”

“Friendly competition?”

Fianne was the one who responded to the confused Eizek.

“I will tell you later. Anyway, Rounder Frey, you don’t have to worry.”

Frey looked at their faces before nodding.

“Alright. Honor Gisellan, when is the Circle’s next biennial meeting?”

“In one year and six months.”

“...”

One year and six months.

It was enough time.

The Trowman Rings were still not ready for such a meeting.

Of course, it might not be enough time for him to achieve his goal.

‘9 stars.’

Frey was thinking about reaching 9 stars before the next meeting.

Or at least have enough power to unite the scattered circles.

Of course, that alone wasn’t enough.

Frey recalled the Golem core he had retrieved from Schweiser’s dungeon.

‘The faster I create Anastasia, the better.’

To reach 9 stars and to create Anastasia.

Neither one was easy.

If he stayed in the circle, then it would be quite difficult, but if he moved around on his own, it might be a different story.

Frey looked at Beniang and said.

“I will return before the meeting.”

“...are you saying that the Circle Rounder will be away for that long?”

Eizek was the one who spoke up with a stiff expression.

His reaction was natural.

The Circle Rounder was very different from the Force Honor.

Except for special cases, they rarely left their posts for such a long time.

It was Gisellan, not Frey, who answered him.

“He told us that it might happen from the beginning.”

“I don’t understand. I know that the Trowman Rings situation is dire. And that Rounder Frey’s abilities are excellent. But...”

“I know what you want to say. You’re worried that Rounder Frey might have requested a lot from us on the condition that he joined our circle. However, I can swear on my name that something like that never happened. In fact, we owe him a debt that we could never pay back.”

“...”

“You will understand soon enough. For now, trust me and let it go.”

Eizek sighed.

Since it was Gisellan who was talking, he was forced to believe him.

He was not as gullible as Beniangu or Fianne.

He was a thick-skinned old man who had spent more than a decade in the ruthless mercenary world.

Gisellan's presence was the only reason he could take long term missions without worry.

"Alright. Rounder Frey, please forgive my rudeness."

Frey, who was looking at the map, simply nodded.

"It's fine. Rather than that, would it be possible for me to take this map with me?"

"Sure. It's not that expensive."

"Thank you."

Frey put the map away as he said this.

"Master Benieng, I'll take my leave now."

"Huh?! A-, already?"

"I think I need to leave as quickly as possible. I think it would be better than missing him by a small margin."

"I, I see."

Frey observed Benieng for a moment before saying.

“Please take good care of the circle, Master Benieng. I’m sorry that I won’t get to see the results of the friendly. Ah. But I don’t think I need to worry...”

When Frey’s eyes fell on them, Benieng, Gisellan and Fianne all flinched.

“...it shouldn’t be a problem, but if you don’t win by a landslide or at least by a large margin...”

“That won’t happen!”

“O-, of course! Isn’t that right, Honor Gisellan?!”

“Naturally!”

“I’ll take your word for it.”

Frey smiled.

“Then I look forward to when we meet again.”

\* \* \*

[I look forward to when we meet again.]

She blinked.

It felt like she was in a dream for a long time.

She slowly woke up.

It was the middle of the night. The pale moon was high in the sky.

She felt like something was missing.

Looking down at her body, she immediately realised what it was.

“Ah...”

Feathers.

No feathers.

She couldn't understand.

Why the hell did she have skin without feathers?

The shape of her body had also changed drastically.

She had no beak, no wings.

Did that matter?

It wasn't like her power had weakened.

She could still spew out the flames that she was so proud of.

No, it felt like she had gotten even stronger than before.

She got up from her seat.

Flame-like hair cascaded like a wave down her back.

[Follow the footsteps of Torkunta and become the ruler of these mountains. Protect my friend's dungeon.]



A warm voice filled her head.

It was that person's voice.

She immediately understood that she should listen to what it said.

First of all.

To become the ruler of the mountains, she just had to put this area under her control.

She was reluctant to follow the footsteps of that unlucky Drake King, but there was no helping it.

And it wouldn't be difficult. The strength she had now was more than enough.

Second.

Only

Protect that person's friend's dungeon.

He was probably talking about that space inside the mountain.

That was easy too.

Naturally, as long as the area was under her control, it would ensure the safety of that space.

So, when she had achieved both of those things...could she go find that person?

[You will reign.]

She closed her eyes as she quietly remembered those words.

### **Season 1 Chapter 67: Mercenary (1)**

Frey called Gisellan aside and asked him for a favor.

When Gisellan heard what he wanted, he rubbed his chin.

“Hm. You want to disguise yourself?”

“Right. Pillat is the home of the Blake Family. Have you heard about Isaka Blake?”

“Yes. It’s highly likely that he is connected to the Demigods... that’s what you meant isn’t it?”

“That’s right. And he’s after me right now. The Blake Family is a place that I must visit someday, but it is too soon. So I’d prefer to avoid meeting them.”

“...I see.”

It was an unquestionable fact that Frey stood out because his grey hair color was rare on the continent.

If he was to walk around Pillat as he was now, it was guaranteed that Isaka would find out about it in less than a day, which would definitely lead to a confrontation.

“I can change my appearance with magic. The problem is that I do not have any proof of identity.”

In order to travel around the continent, one needed to have proof of identity.

All Frey had now was his student ID from the Westroad Academy.

However, that wasn't enough.

For the time being, he wanted to hide 'Frey Blake', so he needed a disguise.

After pondering for a moment, Gisellan finally spoke.

“Honor Eizek should have the means. He often takes missions in foreign countries, so he has a few fake identities.

After a while, Gisellan came back with Eizek.

Gisellan must have informed him of the situation beforehand as he immediately brought up the main point.

“I have something that can help you.”

As he said that, he stretched out his hand.

In it, there was an old card which appeared to be made of bronze.

“It’s a C-rank Mercenary. The name is Kain Rixton. 26 years old and lives in a city in the far south called ‘Temigo’. It’s okay to update the rank in the Mercenary Guild whenever you like.”

“Can you tell me more about his background.”

“Of course. It would be better if you memorize everything I’m about to say.”

Eizek started talking about Kain Rixton’s personal story.

Frey paid the most attention to the appearance as he would need to make the illusion as accurate as possible.

After listening to all of the information, Frey received the Mercenary Card.

Then, after giving Eizek his sincere gratitude, he immediately began packing his luggage.

It was time to leave.

Frey opened his door and stepped out, but he was forced to stop.

The circle members had gathered in front of his house.

At the front was Fio, who was the first person to receive Frey's teaching.

Compared to the rest, the gaze that he was staring at Frey with was particularly emotional.

He was one of Frey's most adamant followers within the circle, and he had decided to disregard the age difference and consider him as his mentor.

This was why he was especially disappointed by the approaching separation.

"Rounder Frey, we heard that you were leaving on a long term mission..."

“That’s right, I don’t think I can come back until the next Biennial meeting.”

“The next meeting is a year and a half from now...”

“Well, if it wasn’t that long, could it still be considered a long term mission?”

“What can we do without Rounder Frey, what can we do...”

The circle members all looked at Frey with sad faces.

There were even a few members who were crying.

Frey smiled gently at their goodwill.

“You can do well without me. Honor Eizek said that he would not be taking any missions for the time being.”

“Still...”

Frey’s expression became serious.

“The Trowman Rings have completed all the preparations we need to soar. It’s up to all of you whether we can spread our wings and completely shock the world or if we become a shabby figure with no feathers. And I believe in you all.”

The circle members bowed their heads with enlightened expressions on their faces.

“We will wait.”

“Rounder Frey, I wish you good luck.”

“Please come back safely.”

“Come back soon.”

After that, Frey immediately left the village.

And for a moment, he seriously wondered if he had developed a habit of wandering.

Since he had returned, Frey had not stayed in a location for more than one year.

‘I’m sure it’ll be the same in the future.’

He would probably continue to move around unless something special happened.

After leaving the village, he found the southbound road Eizek had told him about.

Its condition made it a bit of a stretch to call it a road, but he was still able to find it.

'He said it was a two day walk.'

He had no problem with that as there was camping equipment along with a large amount of food and water in his bag.

Frey walked at a leisure pace.

Occasionally, monsters would appear on the mountain road.

Usually, Frey would threaten them or kick them away, but for those who could not understand his warnings, he killed them.

After a while, he just used flight magic.

There were no threatening flying monsters nor people around him, so he didn't have to worry about anyone seeing him.

Frey's current mana capacity was so outrageous that it would not be emptied even if he used the flight magic, which had poor cost-effectiveness, all night.



Thanks to that, he was able to reach Grode within a day.

Grode wasn't a very big city.

In fact, it was a bit strange that such a small place could have a Warp Stone. Perhaps it was its geographical location which made it necessary to give it a Warp Stone.

Although Frey had arrived at the city much faster than he expected, he still couldn't go to Pillat right away.

The number of places available for the Warp Stone was just as small as the size of the city.

Frey found an Inn.

Then after entering the room, he stood before the mirror and began practicing changing his appearance.

He didn't do a very good job at first.

It was just an illusion spell. However, it was so complex, that even if someone was at 8 stars, a level higher than him, they would not be able to notice.

First, he changed his hair to dull blonde.

This was the color that was most common within the Kastkau Empire.

He made his eyes dark brown and then he slightly altered the structure of his face.

The entire process took about ten minutes.

Frey looked at his face in the mirror.

Standing there was a young man with a gentle expression.

He matched the description of 'Kain Rixton' as provided by Eizek.

'This is enough.'

Frey went to bed right after that and the next morning, he left the inn while the waitress stared at him with a confused gaze.

Then he headed straight to the Warp Stone to go to Pillat.

When he arrived and was asked to provide identification, he handed out Kain's Mercenary ID.

The guard confirmed his identity before returning the card without feeling any suspicion.

With this, there would be no way for anyone to trace his travel using a Warp Stone like the last time.

Frey's whereabouts would have been cut off at Uthiano.

Woowoong.

“...”

Immediately after suppressing the special feeling that came with Warp Stone travel, Frey began observing his surroundings.

He had a sense of familiarity and unfamiliarity to everything around him.

‘So this is Pillat.’

It was the largest city in the east, and home to the Blake Family.

At the same time, it was the closest city to the Great Reynolds Forest, east of the empire.

Frey ignored the strange nostalgia he felt and headed to the Mercenary Guild.

As it was near to the forest, there would naturally be a large number of monsters.

Although it wasn't as high as Ispaniola, Pillat was also one of the cities with a large floating population(1) of mercenaries.

However, Frey did not feel the same tense atmosphere like the one in Ispaniola.

Pillat had incredibly strong walls, and they were not something ordinary monsters could easily destroy.

This led to the citizens having absolute confidence in their safety, so their expressions were much more relaxed.

The Mercenaries were all gathered to collect materials from the nearby forest or to hunt rare monsters to obtain precious materials rather than to subjugate the monster population.

Pillat had dozens of Mercenary Guilds.

Frey was heading to one of them with the name 'Vulcano'. (TL: yes, 'u' not 'o')

Click.

When he opened the door, he was greeted by an obnoxiously loud noise.

This building served as a Mercenary Guild, and at the same time, it functioned as a bar, a restaurant, an inn, and even worse, a brothel.

It smelled like bad alcohol and cheap tobacco.

Although it was the middle of the day, the Mercenaries held bottles of alcohol in their hands with many more on their tables.

Several of them glanced at Frey as he entered.

“I’ve never seen this face before. Is he a rookie?”

“He’s wearing a very pretty robe. Hihhi. Maybe he’s pretending to be a Wizard.”

“No! Isn’t this proof that the status of our Vulcano has risen to such a height that even a noble Wizard would come here in person?!”

“Puhahaha!”

There weren’t many of them who actually believed that Frey could be a Wizard.

There was a higher probability that he was just an admirer who liked to follow their style.

Their reaction wasn't surprising.

It was extremely rare for Wizards to enter the Mercenary world.

They didn't do so unless they needed a lot of money badly.

The more prestigious the family, the less likely they would resort to doing this.

This was because even the shortest tenure as a Mercenary could become a shame that would last a lifetime.

Frey ignored them and headed to the counter.

Standing there was a young woman who did not seem to fit in with the tough atmosphere in the Mercenary Guild.

She seemed to be one of the employees.

She had a pretty face, but she was wearing a dress that showed her deep cleavage and bare thighs.

It seemed she served as eye candy for the Mercenaries.

“Hello, how may I help you?”

“I’m here to receive a mission.”

“Are you a Mercenary?”

“That’s right.”

“Show me your identification please.”

Frey handed her the Mercenary Card, however, she only read the information at the back.

“This is a card issued from Temigo in the south. Your name is Kain Rixton. Are you a C-rank Mercenary?”

“Yes.”

“I’ve confirmed your information. Please wait a moment.”

Then she rummaged through something below the counter before showing him a few flyers.

“These are the currently available missions. The more difficult ones are to the left...”

Frey shook his head.

“I’d like to escort the peddlers to the Great Reynolds Forest.”

“That mission can only be taken by B-rank Mercenaries and higher.”

“Then I would like to apply for an advancement.”

“Right now?”

“Yes.”

“...okay.”

The employee looked at Frey with a strange gaze, but she could not interfere with his wishes.

On the back of every Mercenary Card was the date of issue, and it showed that this man had become a C-rank Mercenary three years ago.

It was possible to become a B-rank in three years.



“You can go to the counter in the basement and apply for an advancement. Please note that you need to pay 10 silvers as an application fee.”

Frey nodded and immediately headed to the basement.

The basement was actually quite deep.

As he walked down the staircase illuminated only by candles, the sounds from the first floor slowly began to fade away.

And once he reached the bottom, even his footsteps began to sound loud.

Tap tap.

The underground space was quite large, or it might have looked that way because there were only a few people there.

The corridor was long, and there were doors on both sides.

Frey walked down the hall.

At the end of it, there was a chair and a desk, behind which a one-eyed man sat.

The man wore an eyepatch which reminded Frey of the pirates he'd encountered back on the Cortez, but the aura that the man exuded was completely incomparable to those weak pirates.

"Did you come to take an advancement test?"

"That's right."

"What's your current class and rank?"

"Wizard, C-rank."

"I see. You know there are two ways to advance, right? Mission or demonstration. What would you like to choose?"

Eizek had already explained this to him.

Choosing Mission literally meant that he had to prove his capabilities by completing an assigned quest.

It had the advantage of allowing you to get help from others, but it could take a lot of time depending on the type and difficulty of the quest.

Demonstration meant to show your skills to the examiner assigned by the guild.

It didn't take a lot of time, but most Mercenaries chose the first method even if it took a long time because the examiners were known for their strictness.

Frey didn't hesitate as he didn't need to think about it.

"Demonstration."

"...Hmm. It's been a while since someone chose demonstration."

"..."

"Good. Follow me."

Frey followed the man without a word.

The one eyed man walked down the hall that Frey came from and opened one of the doors.

A fairly large space was revealed.

That wasn't all.

Frey also recognized the presence of several large, overlapping protective spells in this room.

In this room was another door.

The man walked through the door, and after a while, he came back, followed by another person.

This time, it was a young woman.

Like Frey, no.

Like Kain, she had dull blonde hair and wore a robe.

Frey realised immediately that she was a Wizard.

“I never thought we’d have guests so early in the morning.”

“It’s work time. Irene, act a little more respectably.”

“Yes yes, boss.”

As she said this, Irene yawned loudly.

“You said you want to advance to B-rank, right? Then shoot a spell at this wall.”

She tapped the wall beside her.

“Ah. Of course, you don’t have to worry about breaking it. These protective spells were cast by the only 5 star Wizard in our guild, so I’m sure even this muscle head beside me would have to swing a sword at full force a few times to break it.”

Frey turned to look at the one-eyed man.

“Are you an A-rank Mercenary?”

“That’s right.”

“Then if I break this wall, would I become an A-rank Mercenary?”

“Puhahaha!”

Irene let out a loud laugh.

“Right. I like your confidence. But this wall is even more resistant to magic than physical attacks. If you can break it, then I will use my name to have you recognized as an A-rank Mercenary.”

“Then I think it would be better if you stepped back a little.”

“Ahhh. Whatever you like.”

Irene shrugged and stepped back a few times.

Then she looked at Frey with her arms crossed over her chest.

“Flameball.”

“...huh?”

Wait, wasn't that a 5 star spell?

Before Irene could open her mouth.

Boom!

“...!”

The Flameball hit the wall, and the tremendous force of the explosion forced her to close her eyes.

Only

On the other side, the one-eyed man watched this scene with wide eyes. (TL:...do I feel bad for the pun?...a little bit...do I feel like it was worth it?...ohhhh yeah..)

The dust cloud soon subsided.

Patter.

There was a large hole in the wall.

The one-eyed man muttered in a disbelieving tone.

“...congratulations on becoming an A-rank Mercenary.”

### **Season 1 Chapter 68: Mercenary (2)**

Frey immediately received a new Mercenary Card.

Unlike the C-rank card which appeared to be made of bronze, the A-rank Mercenary Card seemed to be made of sparkling gold.

The one-eyed man, Domki, gave him a warning. (TL: you guys can't understand the forbearance it took to not give him a dumber name)

“As you can see, this Mercenary Card is made of gold, so it's worth a lot. They can be sold for dozens of gold at a general store so they also cost a lot to reissue. So you should pay attention not to lose it.”

“I understand.”

“...are you a 5 star Wizard?”

“Yes.”

Domki’s eyes flashed with amazement.

Looking at his reaction, Frey thought back to Eizek’s advice.

Eizek told him that it would be the most convenient to act like a 5 star Wizard whenever working externally.

This was because it made it easier for him to have people recognize his strength without raising any suspicions.

If it was a wizard who was above 5 stars then it would be strange for them to be a mercenary who wasn’t already a part of a group or well known.

Especially if it was a young Wizard like Kain.

Therefore, while Frey donned the face of Kain, he did not intend to use any spells above 5 stars.



He didn't expect to encounter anything that would force him to.

"You're amazing even without a staff."

Staff.

Now that he thought about it, Frey realised that he had forgotten to find a staff.

This was because he already had the Staff of the Great Sage.

'A Wizard without a staff would raise some doubts.'

Because of this, he would need to carry a staff, just for appearances.

Frey decided to get one that very day.

Fortunately, Domki didn't say anything else about the staff.

"Are you a part of a Mercenary Group?"

"I'm not, and I don't intend to join any groups at the moment."

“I see.”

Domki smacked his lips with a slightly regretful expression.

As the leader of a Mercenary Group, he desperately wanted this young man standing before him.

No matter which Mercenary Group they wished to join, a 5 star Wizard would be welcome with open arms and treated like royalty.

This was because there was always a lack of Wizards in their line of business.

That was why even 3 star and 4 star wizards were paid more than ten times other Mercenaries in the same rank.

Domki’s Mercenary Group already had a 5 star Wizard which was already impressive, however, no matter how he looked at it, Frey was much stronger.

Of course, he couldn’t force him since Frey had already told him his thoughts.

“A-rank Mercenaries are given free accommodation within the Mercenary Guild and you can request free equipment repair once a month at any affiliated blacksmith. In addition, there are no restrictions when entering or leaving the borders of the empire and its allies, and you can create a Mercenary Group of your own. There...”

Domki began explaining the benefits of being an A-rank Mercenary.

Frey listened to Domki.

A-rank Mercenaries made up less than 1% of the Mercenary population, and it was the goal that most Mercenaries aimed for.

This was because they knew that the S-rank and SS-ranks which were filled with monsters were dreams that could never be achieved.

After listening to the benefits, Frey understood why so many Mercenaries would risk their lives to reach the A-rank.

“...that’s it. Do you have any questions?”

Domki’s voice was gentle and it was nothing compared to the cold and harsh tone that he’d used before.

Frey felt like the man in front of him was trying to obtain his favor.

“I have a request I’d like to make.”

“What is it?”

“There is a mission to escort a group of peddlers to the Great Reynolds Forest.”

“Great Reynolds Forest...at this time...”

“Huh?”

Domki shook his head.

“There are much better missions for you to choose.”

“Is it difficult?”

“It’s pretty standard, but something terrible happened recently.”

“Something terrible?”

“I’m sorry but I can’t talk freely. It’s confidential for now. If you really want to take the mission then you can directly talk to the person who made the request.”

“I understand.”

“If it’s money you want, then it’s not a bad mission. I’ve heard that that mission pays quite well.”

The pay.

Although he still had one platinum coin left, Frey intended to wander the continent, so the more money he had, the better.

Frey decided to tell Domki his plans and seek a second opinion.

“I’m afraid I won’t be able to return with them after taking them to the forest...would that be okay?”

“One way escort...hmm. It’s a tricky condition, but...”

For an A-rank Mercenary and a Wizard at that, the requestor would be willing to accept a few conditions.

After doing some calculations, Domki nodded his head.

“I’ll tell you in advance. The pay will drop to less than half. Are you fine with that?”

“Yes.”

“Stay in the guild today. I’ll inform you as soon as the date of departure is coordinated with the peddlers.”

“Thank you.”

It didn’t matter because Frey could use Warp whenever he wanted to anyway.

What’s more, he had memorized the coordinates of the places that he’d visited before.

He knew the coordinates for Uthiano, as well as Grode, Pillat, the 3rd Magic Tower, and even Drake Mountain.

Frey returned to the first floor where he showed his new Mercenary Card to the girl at the counter.

“You became an A-rank Mercenary...”

Not even an hour had passed.

The man in front of her turned out to be much more amazing than she’d expected.

“I heard that I can rent a room for free.”

“O-, of course. Here’s the key.”

Frey took the key from the employee and put it in his pocket. He didn't have any intention of going upstairs just yet.

Instead, he looked around.

Mercenaries.

In a sense, there would be no one who was as sensitive to the surrounding situation than this group of people.

The more skilled a Mercenary was, the better their understanding of the happenings in the world.

"A few days ago, I saw the S-rank Mercenary Elsie, and her face really is amazing. If I didn't know it was her, I might've tried something."

"Your fingers would've gotten cut off. Hehe."

"They said there's going to be another civil war in Silkid. It's dangerous but it's also a really good place to make a killing. Wanna come with me?"

"Geotanbul is also a great place to earn nowadays. I heard that there are pirates there that are working with undead so they are trying to draw in as many escorts as possible."

“Undead again? Damn skeleton bastards. We’ve been seeing them a lot lately.”

There were many interesting stories, but they weren’t what Frey was looking for.

It was then.

“Did you hear that Count Isaka might step down from his post as the 5th Magic Tower’s Master?”

“Huh? Really? What for?”

“Well. I’m not sure. I just heard about it from my friend who does chores at the 5th Magic Tower.”

“Come to think of it, he has been staying at their family home for a long time. Hasn’t it been about two months?”

“It doesn’t make sense for the Tower Master to be away for such a long time. I feel like he will be fired.”

Frey got up from his seat and headed over to those Mercenaries.

There was a gentle smile on his face.

“Hello, seniors.”



“Huh?”

“Who the hell are you?”

The Mercenaries looked at him with suspicious gazes.

“I’m just an ugly junior who knows nothing about the world. I’d like to ask you some questions.”

“Well...”

“Of course, I can’t hear your experiences if your mouth is dry. Please bring plenty of beer and snacks.”

Frey made an order to a waitress who was passing by and the Mercenaries’ faces brightened immediately.

“Junior really has good eyes.”

“There is probably no one else in all of Pillat who has as much experience as our party.”

“Right. What do you want to know?”

It was much easier than Frey expected.

There were two reasons for this.

One was that Kain Rixton's appearance gave people a good impression.

Kain's face allowed him to easily gain people's favor simply by giving them a gentle smile.

The other was the simplicity that came with people who were called Mercenaries.

Most of them lived in the present and enjoyed the simple pleasures in life.

The Mercenaries in front of him were either C-rank or D-rank but they would not find his actions strange.

Instead, they would only think that he was in a good mood that day.

"Are there any rumors about the Blake Family recently?"

"Rumors?"

"Even small things are fine."

“Why do you want to know about that?”

Frey thought about it for a moment and made a slightly hesitant expression.

“I want to become one of the Blake Family’s guards.”

Taking a hint from Frey’s memories, he knew that there were always many people who desired to become the Blake Family’s guards

The Mercenaries laughed and nodded at his words.

“Well. The salary is high and it’s a stable job.”

“Sometimes those guys can even eat what the nobles eat and enjoy other luxuries.”

“Except for the intense competition, it is a great job.”

Most of their words were useless, but Frey still smiled and waited for them to finish their chatter.

When the beer was finally brought out to them, a large man sitting on the right began speaking.

“Well, come to think of it, Hans did say that he saw several wagons entering the Blake Family property at dawn.”

“Why was that? Were they supplies from the capital?”

“There were too many for that. And I heard someone’s voice from inside. Sounded like they were screaming or something.”

Frey’s gaze became sharp.

He immediately thought about human sacrifice, but the other mercenaries simply laughed at those words.

“Puhahaha. Screaming? That’s a pretty good ghost story.”

“That sort of thing is common for those aristocratic families. It’s probably a servant from another province or country.”

“Well. I don’t think we need to take it seriously.”

After that, they told Frey a lot of information about the Blake Family, but most of it was unimportant.

They mainly praised the amazing talents of the eldest and second sons Mischael and Heinz, as well as the head of the family Isaka’s tremendous magic skill.

'Frey Blake's name was not even mentioned once.

Was he simply forgotten, or was simply not important enough to discuss?

He didn't think too deeply about it because he wasn't that interested.

After asking the Mercenaries for forgiveness, Frey stood up from his seat.

Then he went to a nearby store and purchased a suitable staff.

"That will be 10 gold."

The price of a staff had been ridiculously expensive 4,000 years ago and it remained the same now. It was the same for all magical items.

Frey paid the bill without complaint.

Then he decided to explore the city of Pillat since he had nothing to do until it was time to sleep.

He also had the slight expectation that he'd be able to receive a clue about Isaka's actions.

But, of course, he found nothing.

The next day.

A waiter approached Frey after he came down to the first floor after washing his face.

“Mr. Kain Rixton, Mr. Domki asked me to pass this to you.”

It was a flyer.

On it, was the information about the escort mission to the Great Reynolds Forest.

‘It’s a union of peddlers. So they handle many kinds of goods.’

It ranged from simple clothing and local specialties to precious metals, magic items, and scrolls.

If there was such a large collection of precious goods, then it was understandable why thieves would target it.

“There will be a total of twenty-five Mercenaries.”

This was a mission with a fairly large number of people.

The specific numbers were 1 S-rank, 7 A-rank, 12 B-rank and 5 C-rank Mercenaries.

Frey tilted his head slightly when he saw the 5 C-rank Mercenaries, but then he realised that they all had specific professions such as Scout, Priest and Herbalist.

Such professions did not need to have a high combat ability.

‘But 7 A-rank Mercenaries?’

Turk.

Then someone sat beside him.

Turning his head to look, he found that a bearded man who appeared to be in his thirties was looking at him.

“Are you Kain Rixton?”

“And you are?”

The man smiled cheerfully and stretched out his hand.

“I’m Alkon, leader of the Great Reynolds Forest escort mission.”

The leader.

If that was the case then there was a high chance that this man was the sole S-rank Mercenary on the mission.

Frey grabbed his hand/

“I am Kain Rixton. Please take care of me.”

“Haha. We weren’t able to leave because we lacked a Wizard, but you arrived just in time. Domki is famous for being incredibly strict, but he couldn’t stop praising you.”

Alkon laughed as he shook his hand.

His grip was so tight that not even a needle would be able to fit between their hands.

He carried a large axe on his back, so it was almost certainly his weapon.

‘If he’s an S-rank Mercenary then he should be at least a First class Magic Warrior.’



This meant that this person was stronger than the Dark Elf Liamoson, or Honor Fianne from the Trowman Rings.

Of course, there were not many people who had reached such a level of strength.

From what Frey had heard, the number of people on the continent who had done so didn't surpass 100.

"Is this mission so dangerous that it requires an S-rank Mercenary?"

At Frey's question, Alkon's face became a bit solemn.

"Something terrible happened recently. Have you heard about it?"

"I only know that something bad happened."

This was because Domki did not tell him what happened.

Alkon nodded.

"I see. Well, you will need to know since you are now a part of the group. A group of peddlers who were headed to the forest to deliver their goods was annihilated."

“Including the Mercenaries?”

“That’s right.”

“Who did it?”

Then he heard something that he would never have expected.

“Undead.”

“...?”

Frey’s expression became a bit strange.

At most he thought that it would be a monster or a bandit who was after the goods.

Alkon sighed.

“These days, undead are being spotted all over the continent. They say that sometimes they join hands with other races. Either way, it’s not good.”

'Come to think of it...'

Frey recalled the Lich who had attacked the Cortez.

The 6 star Undead who had joined hands with the pirates to attack the ship was a creature that had an unreasonable hatred toward living beings.

The stronger an undead was, the more intelligent, but they could never get rid of the hatred they felt.

Frey frowned.

It wasn't about the problem with the undead.

Only

The problem was that they might slow him down.

'I don't think I'll have to worry too much about this mission because the guild is paying a lot of attention to it.'

He spent the rest of the day conversing with Alkon.

Alkon seemed to like Frey. No, he simply pretended to feel that way so that they could be closer

Perhaps it was because he was a Wizard.

It was almost as though he was afraid to show any dissatisfaction.

Frey simply conversed with him while maintaining a certain distance.

And the very next day, Frey got onto a carriage and headed toward the Great Reynolds Forest.

### **Season 1 Chapter 69: Mercenary (3)**

There were five carriages in total, and they carried a group of 40 which consisted of Mercenaries, merchants and coachmen.

The number of carriages was small, but that was because they were able to maximize space through the use of subspace bags.

Frey was seated in the fourth carriage.

This was the carriage he'd stay in for the entirety of the journey.

As he found a comfortable seat and watched the passing scenery, Frey felt someone staring at him.

“ ... ”

It was an old woman with an ugly appearance.

She had an aged face that was stained black, a hawk-like nose, wrinkled skin and crooked, yellow teeth.

From the staff in her hand, he guessed that she was one of the two Wizards on the trip, including himself.

'Illusion Magic.'

She was hiding herself the same way he was.

Her spell was at a pretty good level, but he could still see through it.

Shik.

When he concentrated his mana into his eye, the real appearance of the old woman was revealed to him.

She turned out to be a dazzlingly beautiful blonde woman with blue eyes. However, Frey was not paying attention to her face.

Long ears, an Elf.

Her blonde hair and fair skin were also tell-tale signs that she was a High Elf, the most noble among the Elves.

Frey got a complicated look in his eyes.

'What is a High Elf doing here?'

He also wondered why she was looking at him.

She shouldn't have been able to notice his illusion. Her level wasn't high enough.

Was she interested simply because he was another Wizard?

When he thought this, his expression became a bit strange.

While he was trying to understand the reason for her staring, Alkon spoke.

"Kain, how are you feeling?"

He was still acting friendly.

"Fine."

“That’s good. You can relax for a few days while we cross the grasslands. Nothing will really happen until we enter the forests.”

To get to the Great Forest, they had to go through a long stretch of grasslands before arriving at the forest.

The grasslands were flat and open on all sides, so it was easy to spot if there was someone approaching, but the forests would cause their field of view to narrow.

It could be said that most of the encounters with monsters and bandits intending to steal their goods happened within forested areas.

“Alkon, who is that old woman over there?”

By then, she had stopped looking at him and had begun fiddling with her staff.

Alkon stroked his chin as he responded.

“She’s a 5 star Wizard, just like you are, and she’s also an A-rank Mercenary. Her name is Syax. I don’t know her last name.”

“Hmm...”

“If you ask someone else, you’ll get the same answer. She’s a bit unapproachable because she is always in a quiet and gloomy mood. How should I say...it’s like talking to a wall.”

Alkon shrugged.

“Among the Mercenaries, there are many who are like that. The kind of people who have strong personalities.”

“Has she been a Mercenary for a long time?”

“As far as I know, she’s been one for at least 5 years. You can say she’s a veteran. It’s been a while since I’ve been around Pillat, but she’s quite famous around here, she’s called ‘Green Wind Syax.’

He wasn’t surprised that she decided to hide herself.

In the past, Elves’ appearances were always conspicuous, so they always wore a robe.

‘Elves have learned magic now. There may be more worlds hiding in the world like she is.’

Frey didn’t look at her.

Perhaps because he expected her to approach him first.



And that evening, while dinner was being served, Syax approached him.

Frey had deliberately chosen to sit a bit further away from the others while eating his soup.

Fortunately, Alkon had gathered the other mercenaries.

“Do you have a second, young man?”

Fey glanced up at her and nodded calmly.

“I do.”

“Thank you. I’m just an old lady called Syax. You must be...Kain Rixton, was it?”

Frey felt a bit weird seeing Syax call herself an old woman.

This was because, in his eyes, Syax was just a young, beautiful woman pretending to talk like an old lady.

For him, it was very strange.

From her appearance, Syax should be a High Elf younger than 100 years old.

“I am Kain Rixton. I’ve heard rumors of your name, Green Wind Syax.”

“...well. It’s nothing much.”

She scratched her cheek in embarrassment at the blatant compliment.

She certainly didn’t have the character of a Mercenary.

“So what business do you have with me?”

When Frey asked that question so bluntly, Syax, who hesitated for a moment, finally opened her mouth.

“Are you a Spiritualist?”

“Huh?”

“I felt your spirit energy. That...is a very rare type of energy.”

‘Ah.’

Only then did Frey realise why Syax was interested in him.

She had noticed that he'd signed a contract with the Dark Spirit 'Dark Ming'.

High Elves had great affinities to spirits. The especially talented members among them were even able to contract Spirit Kings who could be considered transcendent beings.

Perhaps she herself had a level of spirit power.

Because of this, she could easily see that he had signed a contract with a spirit.

It was not something he could hide.

"Is Ms. Syax a Spiritualist?"

"...well, you could say that."

"I have a contracted Spirit, but I am not a Spiritualist."

Syax waved her staff slightly and her expression became strange.

"Which Spirit did you contract?"

"I can't tell you that. Rather, how did Ms. Syax know that I had a contracted Spirit?"

“...”

This question caused Syax’s expression to become a bit strange.

It seemed that she had asked impulsively before thinking of an excuse.

Frey sighed inwardly.

He knew that she was an Elf anyway, so there was no need for him to question her further.

“If you can’t say the reason, it’s fine.”

“Thank you.”

“Is it okay if I ask another question?”

“Sure. I’ll answer if I’m able.”

“I would like to know why Ms. Syax took this mission.”

“...”

Syax hesitated for a moment.

It was a question that was so easy to answer, she wondered if there was a special meaning behind it.

“I’m worried about the undead that appeared in the forest.”

“The undead?”

“Yes. It is unusual for undead to appear near the Great Forest. It has not happened in the last thousand years or so.”

Frey let out a low laugh.

“A thousand years.”

Syax flinched.

She realised that such a long time frame was not one that humans often used.

Frey could see why Syax chose to avoid interacting with others and stayed alone.

She was very bad at lying, and she knew it well.

She chose not to interact at all rather than to say strange things by accident.

This was why she chose the appearance of an ugly old woman.

'This was probably the reason why Elves don't like lying in the first place.'

Still, this was an improvement.

She was much more flexible than the Elves from 4,000 years ago.

"Your soup will get cold."

"...right."

Syax let out a sigh of relief and began to eat her soup.

Frey looked at her for a moment before he continued eating.

As Alkon boasted, the journey through the grasslands continued without incident.

The Mercenaries became relaxed, and Alkon did not reprimand them.

However, three days later, the atmosphere changed completely as they entered the forest.

Alkon's previously relaxed expression became so serious that it was almost as though he had become another person.

"From today, keep an eye on our surroundings. We'll break up into three groups with two reconnaissance teams."

Alkon decided the team leaders and members after considering the characteristics of every Mercenary on the trip.

But this did not include Frey or Syax.

Not only that, but they did not have to help with setting up camp, preparing meals or anything else of that manner.

As Domki had said, Wizards were treated like nobles by the Mercenary world.

The Mercenaries around them looked at them with envious gazes, but none of them found this strange.

Of course, apart from that, Frey also paid a lot of attention to his surroundings.

His facial expression behind the illusion was stiff.

It wasn't because of the undead.

He didn't particularly care about the undead.

Instead, it was something else that made his expression so serious.

It was because he could feel traces of Divine Power in the vicinity.

'Is there an Apostle here?'

Eizek hadn't mentioned that.

Come to think of it, he had not mentioned anything about undead either.

Did the Demigod's servant enter the forest after Eizek left?

Undead and Demigods.

At first glance, they appeared to be unrelated, but at that moment, Frey recalled Beniang's words.



[There are five of them that the Lord trusts the most. They're the ones with outstanding abilities even among the Demigods. We call them 'Apocalypses.']]

[They're not as strong as the Lord, but they are strong enough to have some influence among Demigods.]

[We have identified the power of three of the Apocalypses. They are Sword, Poison and Death.]

'...A Demigod with the power of Death.'

He knew to some extent that the Demigod's power had been enough to easily destroy a large subjugation team.

He'd learned this information after joining the Trowman Rings.

'He is said to have released a fog that could immediately kill those with weak resistance with just a touch. Not just that, he could also use corpses of the people he killed as tools.'

Is that Demigod the origin of the undead?

He'd never thought about that.

Frey had only ever seen them as destroyers. At least, he had never seen them exercise the power of creation.

'If there really is a Demigod here...

He would have to run without looking back.

At his current level, he would be completely helpless if he were to face a Demigod.

But Frey knew that the odds of that were low.

'If it was really a Demigod, then the traces of Divine Power wouldn't be so faint.'

It was highly likely that it was either an Apostle or other subordinates of the Demigod here rather than a Demigod themselves.

If so, then it would be a great opportunity for Frey.

If he managed to kill another Apostle and create an elixir from their crystal, then it would be a major step on his path to 8 stars.

Frey was more concerned about the fact that the Successor of the Magic Warrior King was in the vicinity of the Great Forest.

He didn't think too deeply about it, but he couldn't think of a reason for why the Successor would be in the forest.

It might be related to the Demigod.

Only

'Or he could be the Demigod's subordinate.'

Frey felt that that was the worst case scenario.

The successor of the Magic Warrior King, Kasajin, becoming the subordinate of a Demigod?

It was absolutely unacceptable.

If that were the case, Frey would kill him without hesitation.

Kasajin had always claimed that the Warrior King's Fist was the only martial art that could slay a Demigod.

Frey respected those words.

He would not allow his dead friend's martial art to be tainted.

### **Season 1 Chapter 70: Ivan (1)**

On the second day after entering the forest, one of the ranger leaders reported to Alkon.

“Captain Alkon! We have a group of undead at 7 o’clock!”

Alkon’s expression stiffened.

“Tell me more details.”

“I didn’t take a close look as I was afraid that they’d notice if I got closer, but there are at least dozens of them. It’s not only low level undead like Ghouls and Skeletons, but there also seems to be Dullahans and Death Knights there as well.”

“At 7 o’clock...damn. There’s no way to avoid them.”

Alkon grumbled and drew his sword.

“Rexler, you keep watch of the carriages here. I’ll give you ten Mercenaries.”

“Understood.”

“The Wizards and everyone else will follow me. Kain, can you enchant weapons?”

“Yes.”

“Good. Ms. Syax, please help out as well. We will leave as soon as you are finished, so please hurry.”

Except for light, the elemental attribute that worked best against undead was fire.

Therefore, Frey applied fire enchantments to the Mercenaries' weapons. With this, the low level undead would be unable to regenerate and could be easily defeated.

The problem was the Dullahan and Death Knight.

It was basically impossible to do much damage to them unless it was a 5 star spell.

Frey decided to watch the situation first.

This was because Alkon had a confident expression on his face.

'I'll get to see how strong an S-rank Mercenary is.'

After a while, the subjugation team set off.

Frey and Syax were placed at the back of the group, together with the priest, and the rangers led from the front.

The expressions of the Mercenaries became more and more tense as they drew closer.

Some of them even began to sweat.

Even veteran Mercenaries who had gone through many bloody battles would want to avoid undead.

This was because their characteristic persistence, grotesque appearance and powerful odor covered everyone fighting them with the uncomfortable and dirty feeling of death.

In addition, high ranking undead such as the Dullahan or Death Knight were powerful enough to threaten the lives of A-rank Mercenaries.

However, when the Mercenaries arrived at their destination, they were shocked by the scene before their eyes.

“W-, what? This...”

“What happened here...”

The place where the undead was supposed to be.

No, the only things in this location were pieces of debris that appeared to have once been undead.

Broken bones, rotten flesh and shattered, pitch black armor were haphazardly strewn around the area.

The undead had been annihilated.

“W-, we only took thirty minutes to get here.”

“It hasn’t even been thirty minutes yet.”

And they did not disappear naturally.

Someone had eliminated them.

Frey only paid attention to the Death Knight’s corpse, although it was strange to say that about an undead.

There was a large fist print on its chest plate.

And the back of the armor was torn as though something had exploded from within.

The Death Knight’s armor was made from a material stronger than steel, but it had still been torn like a piece of paper.

‘Mana was used to smash it from the inside.’

Frey was sure that the scene inside the armor was much worse than what could be seen from the outside.

He knew who had gotten rid of the undead.

It was the Successor of the Magic Warrior King.

It couldn't be anyone else.

\* \* \*

Frey immediately examined the scene.

And he realised that it should have taken no more than ten minutes for this group of undead to be annihilated.

'It seems he is even better than I thought.'

From the traces of the fight that he saw, his strength should be around the top ranks among First class Magic Warriors.

He might not yet be a Warrior King, but his strength was close to that level.



The more he looked at the bodies of the undead, the more he felt that his judgment was correct.

'I'm starting to become more curious as to what type of person he is.'

At least he could be sure that this person was truly Kasajin's heir.

Frey felt strange.

The Warrior King's Fist was created solely by Kasajin and was a martial art tailored for his own body.

Of course, this didn't mean that you couldn't use it simply because you had a different physique from Kasajin.

In fact, Frey also trained his body using the Warrior King's First. The problem lied in the efficiency.

No matter how hard he tried, Frey would never be able to draw out the true essence of the Warrior King's Fist because he was not suited for martial arts.

It would be a good thing if he was able to even bring out 20% of its true might.

But this guy was different.

'He has a good understanding of the Warrior King's Fist. He must have trained his body the same way Kasajin did.'

The whole body would be composed of muscles harder than rocks. It was probably possible for him to smash a boulder apart without using any mana.

At the same time, Frey was relieved.

Seeing that he'd annihilated this group of undead with such prejudice, it seemed that he was not one of the Demigod's subordinates.

"Did you notice something?"

Alkon asked.

Frey stood up and replied.

"I found traces of martial arts."

When he pointed out the fist mark indented on the Death Knight's armor, Alkon's face became colored with amazement.

"You are a Wizard of great knowledge and skill. No, wait a second."

Alkon's expression became serious again as he looked around.

"Hm...this appears to have been done by one person."

He had a good eye. His S-rank wasn't merely a title.

"I think so too."

"Hoh. I don't know what to say. To defeat this number of undead, it would have to be at least an SS-rank Mercenary."

Frey looked into the forest.

That guy's trail continued inward, but Frey didn't think he needed to pursue him right now.

'Eizek said that he was near the Great Reynolds Forest.'

However, this forest was nowhere close to the Great Reynolds Forest, even if one was to exaggerate.

This meant that the Successor had come all the way here for some reason.

'Is it to get rid of the undead?'

Perhaps that was the case, but it was too soon for Frey to draw a conclusion.

First, he went back to the carriages with Alkon and the rest, and after making preparations, they started moving immediately.

The Mercenaries did not relax.

Although they did not personally fight the undead, they had still felt the sinister aura that exuded from their bodies.

It made the Mercenaries' expressions stiffen considerably.

However, the deeper they went into the forest, the more unsettled they became.

"Again?"

Someone muttered.

No one else said a word, but they were all thinking the same thing.

The broken bodies of undead lay scattered before them

It was a scene that they had seen numerous times so far.

One of the Mercenaries kicked a skeleton's skull while saying.

"Maybe we'll meet this person soon."

His words soon became a reality.

Shortly after they began moving again, they could hear sounds coming from the distance.

Boom...boom...

There was also a slightly muffled explosion.

The Mercenaries all turned to look at Alkon, who thought for a moment before giving his orders.

"Subjugation team, follow me."

Since he had divided the group beforehand, the team moved without hesitation and followed him.

The sounds grew louder as they approached, and after a while, they came to a clearing.

And in it, a man was beating up undead.

The expression 'beating up' was not a mistake.

In a way, it was a very unrealistic sight.

At first glance, the image of a topless man standing among a group of undead would make the viewer feel that he was in danger, but the ones in danger were the undead, not him.

Boom!

Whenever his fist struck, there was the sound of something exploding.

The Death Knight that was hit by this blow flew away as if it had been struck by a cannon, and it did not stop until it had shot through quite a few trees.

"Hoh..."

"It's hard to believe even when watching it with my own two eyes."

The Mercenaries muttered with blank expressions on their faces.

What the hell was his fist made of? It had made the Death Knight's armor crumple like a piece of paper.

However, it could be said that the high ranking undead were fortunate since the Skeletons and Ghouls struck by his fists simply popped like firecrackers.

The man smashed through the group of undead while his lion-like mane flew in the wind.

It was insufficient to call his entire body a weapon.

Every time he punched, kicked or headbutted an undead, they would shatter like a sand castle against boisterous children.

The fight, no.

The one-sided massacre soon ended.

Crack!

The man crushed the last remaining Dullahan's skull with his bare hand.

Even though it was wearing a helmet, its head was smashed like a rotten apple.

“Ptooy!”

He spit on the body before turning his head to look at Alkon’s group as though he’d known of their existence the entire time.

As soon as he caught the man’s gaze, Alkon shivered.

There seemed to be a light within his eyes that threatened to explode at any moment.

“Who are you guys?”

“W-, we’re Mercenaries.”

“Is that so? Okay then.”

The man immediately turned around as though he had lost interest. However, Alkon stopped him.

“W-, wait.”

“What is it?”



“Who are you?”

“Ivan.”

“I, I didn’t mean your name. Why are you removing undead here...”

The man, Ivan, frowned.

That alone seemed to change his expression to one similar to a beast.

“Why do I have to tell you that?”

“H-, huh?”

“Don’t annoy me or get in my way. Or I’ll kill you.”

“...”

Alkon, who was an S-rank Mercenary, could not even mutter a word at Ivan’s threat. In the meantime, Ivan turned around and continued on his way.

Frey realised that now was a pretty good time.

“This man is suspicious.”

“I think so too. Still, it doesn't seem like he's an enemy...”

“We can't jump to conclusions. And it would be dangerous to leave it unverified.”

Alkon tilted his head slightly.

“Hm. Is it? He didn't seem to care much about us just now.”

“That may be true for now. But I'm worried by the aggression he showed.”

Alkon scratched his cheek while remembering Ivan's threat.

But he soon shook his head with an embarrassed expression.

“I think so too, but we can't track him or fight him.”

He wasn't confident that he could defeat that man even if he gathered all of the Mercenaries.

It was an accurate judgement.

Ivan's strength was not something that they could overcome simply with a numerical advantage.

Frey pretended to think for a while before speaking with a stiff face.

"Wouldn't it be better to find out this man's identity? We still need to continue along this route, but it is too dangerous to let an unidentified man wander around."

"That's...right."

"So I'll go find out."

"A Wizard alone? That's too dangerous. Wouldn't it be better for a ranger to go?"

It was normal for him to think so.

Frey slowly persuaded Alkon in a low voice.

"It's better for a Wizard to hide from a Magic Warrior than a ranger."

"You would be risking your life. I could tell just by looking at his eyes. That guy is a beast. If you get on his bad side..."

"I know. But I can't think of a better way. Besides, I'll only be in the group till you arrive at the Great Reynolds Forest."

Alkon probably knew that already.

Frey kept speaking in a low tone.

"So you probably intended to make use of my power as much as possible before we arrived."

"...right. You're smarter than you look."

Alkon nodded since his intentions were already exposed.

"Then I'll leave it to you. Since you are willing to do this dangerous task, I'll give you double, no, triple the reward. And if you feel it's too dangerous, then you should leave right away."

"Yes."

Frey nodded and immediately chased after Ivan. It was easy to find him.

All he had to do was head to the huge commotion that was shaking the entire forest.

Boom!

Ivan was slaughtering undead again.

Frey watched on with a curious expression.

'Why is he hunting the undead?'

Because undead were a threat to humans?

No, he didn't seem to have such a noble purpose.

Was it for training?

It couldn't be that either.

Although these groups of undead had high ranking undead like the Dullahans and Death Knights in them, they were no more difficult than some after meal exercise for Ivan.

He could see it now.

Ivan's face while he faced the undead was filled with nothing but irritation and annoyance.

"Damn bug like bastards..."

He corrected his posture and seemed to draw power from the earth.

Boom!

At that moment, a violent storm broke out and swept the swarm of undead away at once.

'Knife Fist. Not bad.'

It was one of the few long range attacks in the Warrior King's First style. The tacky name was also given to it by Kasajin himself.

Then a Ghoul that was behind Ivan bit his shoulder.

"...kuk?"

The expression on the half rotted face of the Ghoul became strange.

No matter how hard it bit down, its teeth could not penetrate.

“Hmph.”

Ivan snorted and smashed the Ghoul’s head. That was the last one.

Ivan then spit on its body.

It was the same thing he had done before. Was it one of his habits?

“What the hell do you want?”

Ivan’s eyes turned to look at Frey.

Frey didn’t bother to hide his presence. Instead, he was openly watching Ivan’s performance with his hands folded over his chest.

Frey didn’t answer and instead inspected the bodies of the undead.

It was a deliberate act.

He didn’t know much about this man, and this was his first time meeting him, but he already had an idea of what his personality was like.

He was his own man.

He lived in his own world, and he felt no loneliness or regret in that fact.

To deal with a man like this, you must first make him interested in you. (TL: you hear ladies?)

“ ... ”

Ivan raised an eyebrow when Frey ignored his question.

This meant that he was already slightly interested.

Frey spoke just as Ivan opened his mouth.

“How long has it been since you started learning the Warrior King’s Fist?”

Then Ivan gave a fierce smile.

“I was wondering what kind of guy you were, but you’re just another Circle dog. Get lost. I have no intention of joining your little group.”



“You’re using the Warrior King’s Fist, but you won’t fight against Demigods? How shameless.”

“That’s not something an outsider would understand.”

Frey glanced at him for a moment before touching one of the undead body parts at his feet.

“These undead. They seem to have sprung up recently. Does it have something to do with you?”

“...”

Ivan stayed silent.

He didn’t deny that it was related to him in some way.

After staring at Frey for a while, he finally spoke.

“You cursed me for not doing anything about the Demigods. That’s where you’re wrong. I know about the background of the Warrior King’s Fist. This martial art was specifically designed to kill Demigods.”

“It seems you are well aware. Then why did you refuse the Circle’s offer?”

“You’re talking about those guys? Ha. That’s ridiculous. Then I’ll ask the opposite. If I join the Circle, will we be able to kill Demigods?”

Ivan's question was sharp.

He glared at Frey.

"I've met guys like you many times before. No matter how well I cover my tracks, you always seem to find me. But do you know what they say as soon as they see me?"

Only

Grk.

He grit his teeth.

"They clamor at me to join their circle without even mentioning two words about the Demigods. The current Circle is rotten. It's a place filled with pigs who only know how to fill their own stomachs while Demigods pull strings from behind the scenes. I'm not going to join such a filthy pigsty."

Ivan stared at Frey with a gaze that seemed to say 'if you dare to say nonsense, I won't let you go'.

But his expression became a bit strange when he heard Frey's words.

"Everything you said is true. I agree with you."

