

## **S vs Rebirth 531**

### Chapter 531 Extension

"This is..." The Master Blacksmith, Roel, frowned while staring at the sword he had just enchanted.

The sword had a stable Spiritual Energy flow, but the power was a bit lackluster compared to the normal Spirit Enchantment.

"Wait a minute... it seems that there are a few differences in here, here, and here..." Roel took another look at the sword as well as the Hardening Rune he embedded.

This time, Roel was in his personal workshop so that no one could know about this weapon. But because it had been three days, Dimitri ended up tagging along, so he could get the completed version.

His children, Rick and Rica, were worried that their father would end up meeting misfortune, so they also came and sat in the corner.

When they realized their father had failed again, they couldn't help but walk to Dimitri.

"Sir..." Rick looked at Dimitri with a serious expression. "It's impossible for one to learn this within three days even though one has the basic skill for it..."

Dimitri wasn't that bothered since Roel had given his promise, so he had to fulfill it.

However, Rick tried to persuade him after finding something amiss in the negotiation. "Sir, I don't mean to be rude, but you seem to be short of time. You are rushing this negotiation and learning process.

"I believe that I can give you another solution. There is no way an expert like you will be staying in that fort, considering lad... Sir ladre is coming with his squad. Hence, I believe that you are planning to leave the fort right away after giving the swords to some people.

"Here is my suggestion. Can you give my father a few more days to work this out? In exchange, I'll deliver the goods to those people.

"I am trying to respect your boundary by not getting involved in the creation process and the negotiation, but since you've given your words about supporting our merchant group in Sir ladre's future territory, how about giving us a little privilege to bring these goods with us?"

"You can consider this as our first contribution to Sir ladre."

Rick's suggestion was good. Not only could he buy some time for his father, but he could also figure out ladre's true identity. After all, depending on the people he would meet later, he might be able to get enough information to deduce the noble's identity.

After all, there was no way a normal person could have a powerful expert like Dimitri under his command.

Dimitri thought this was a good idea. But he also didn't want to let people know about Noel's identity.

So, he thought about another way to work this out. And this was a good measure to check these two's integrity.

"I'll be giving you a letter after this. In exchange, you will be giving the goods to the Demon Banner Army's administration office. With that letter, the people should know who they should give."

Dimitri's answer was clear. Although he couldn't reveal Noel's information to these two, it didn't mean he had to avoid it if the commander was directly involved.

He might be a former member of the Demon Banner Army, but he was once one of the strongest people in the Demon Banner Army. So, asking a little favor from the commander should be fine. It wouldn't take too much time to give the weapons to the kids anyway.

And it wasn't like the commander didn't know that the 'Shadow' had gone to serve the Ardagan Family.

So, this was actually the best option.

In addition, by using this letter, he could see whether these two were honest or not. If they actually tried to take a peek at the content, it meant they couldn't be trusted and he had to be wary of them along with Roel himself.

If they actually delivered the goods without any problem, it meant having both the Master Blacksmith and the merchant group in their territory shouldn't be a problem.

Rick and Rica also knew they were being tested, but they still decided to accept the task. This was their way of contributing to the family. They wanted to help their father, who had used a lot of resources to help their merchant group grow.

Roel understood their intention and smiled. He was truly blessed by two great children.

"I'll extend the time limit by five... no, four days! But that's the limit."

"Two days are enough for me to complete one and another day to complete the rest of the swords." Roel smiled with confidence.

"That's better being the case." Dimitri nodded. He wasn't Noel, who had some attachments to this family. As a butler of the Ardagan Family, he had to maintain a professional attitude and focus on the task and the time allocated for it.

After the agreement, Dimitri finally disappeared, leaving them alone.

"Thank you." Roel smiled at the two kids, thanking them for their help.

"This is what we should do, Father." Rica smiled back since she was the one giving the idea to her brother.

"But will you be fine now?" Rick asked, worried that the time was still not enough.

"Yeah. I underestimated the difficulty of this thing, but the time should be enough right now. I can even finish it faster..." Roel nodded while glancing at the rune. "Still, this is truly remarkable.

"This rune... was it? It seems to be only one of the applications. No, should I say that Spirit Enchantment is only a branch of the Rune System?

"However, after looking at the complete mark, I know for sure that the Rune System is the future.

"Even this one rune alone is about two times stronger than the incomplete Spirit Enchantment. And the flow of Spiritual Energy is more stable.

"If I manage to complete all this work and learn the Rune System, I might be able to become the number one Master Blacksmith in the world..." Despite etching his name into the canal of history, Roel was sighing.

After all, his ambition ended up involving his two children.

#### Chapter 532 Sorting

While Dimitri handled the task, Noel finished his talk with the second guide, teaching him a lot about the basics of Spiritual Energy.

He was sitting on his chair, trying to write everything he had learned today.

"Hmm..." Noel looked at the notebook while furrowing his eyebrows. He tried to recall the explanation.

"Two hundred years ago, the Great Spirit ian divided the Spirit Ability into four grades: Basic, Destruction, Annihilation, and Apocalyptic Tier.

"The Basic Tier is the Spirit Ability that only works against one to a few opponents. They are the tiers that we use most of the time.

"Then comes the second tier, the Destruction Grade Spirit Ability. When an ability reaches this grade, it will be able to destroy an area and kill more than ten people at once.

"After that, the Annihilation Grade Spirit Ability. At this point, the Spirit Ability can cause so much destruction to a town and kill more than a hundred people at once.

"When you are able to wield this ability, you should be well-known all around the kingdom. Even the Captains of the Demon Banner Army, the Tower Association's elders or all the Kingdom's Arbiters have one or two of these abilities.

"Last but not least, the Apocalyptic Grade Spirit Ability. I don't need to explain more about the destruction. It's simple... this kind of ability is simply a massacre.

"There are only two people in this kingdom who have this type of ability. The first is the commander of the Demon Banner Army, while the second person is the current Royal Knight Captain under the Royal Family."

"..." Noel looked down, recalling the power of his abilities. Due to having two spirits, he had a lot of Spirit Abilities.

However, it seemed that his level was still far away from a Captain's.

Most of his Spirit Abilities were classified as Basic Grade. Although he wasn't sure about the scale, the Undying Phoenix, the Undying Fire Feathers, as well as the Ice Vortex could be considered as a Destruction Grade.

However, he still had to upgrade them to the highest level.

Though, there was one thing that could be better than these abilities. It was his Undying Fire. This was one of the first abilities Ardagan gave him.

The Undying Fire was far more dangerous than a Destruction Grade Ability. After all, the more he upgraded this ability, the more it became inextinguishable.

He believed that once the Undying Fire reached its peak state, even a Captain from the Demon Banner Army would have a hard time extinguishing it.

Unfortunately, it was still wishful thinking to get this kind of ability. It used a lot of Skill Points just to upgrade it once more. If he poured all the points he got for a few months, he might be able to upgrade it to the final level. But it also meant the rest of his abilities would be stagnant, causing an imbalance in his fighting power.

So, he dropped that idea.

"It seems coming to this place is the right choice. I lack a lot of basics. Although I have read a lot of books in the Demon Banner Army, their knowledge isn't as complete as this place.

"But before reviewing the rest of the knowledge I had learned today, I wonder if it's possible to apply this grade to the runes."

Noel couldn't help but remember what Ardagan had told him before.

"The reason why I give you the Rune System is because you're walking on a different path from your ancestor. Your ancestor didn't wish to spread that knowledge, so only one kingdom has its official record.

"But you are going to spread that knowledge so that everyone can get stronger. I believe this is necessary for the sake of humanity."

"Hmm?" Noel frowned. "I can understand the idea. If all humans can learn the runes, it means they will be stronger to face the demons. However, I still have a few doubts regarding this decision. First of all, why did my ancestor's grandmother not spread the knowledge?"

"I think you're already aware that humans in the past didn't rely on Spiritual Energy, so there was never a need to spread it."

Noel looked down, contemplating. After seeing the technology in the academy, he knew Ardagan was telling the truth.

It seemed that the situation had changed and the need to use the runes had arrived.

"I see. I guess I didn't make a wrong decision." Noel let out a sigh of relief. He was a bit skeptical of spreading it at first, but it seemed there was a need to level up the overall strength of humanity.

After remembering that conversation, he shifted his focus back to the book.

"Well, the Spiritual Energy movement, the Spiritual Energy Reserve as well as the Spirit's Link... Luckily, those three are enough to tempt the young girl."

Noel smiled while taking out another note that contained a few names.

"Dark Lord."

"Fire Lord."

"Plant Lord."

The Water Lord gave him these three names that he believed had switched to the other side. However, he was confused why the Poison Lord's name wasn't on the list.

After some thought, he realized that the one that poisoned the Water Lord was not the Poison Lord but the Plant Lord.

He remembered that he was once poisoned inside a brothel when he investigated a certain plant that shouldn't have gone extinct a few hundred years ago.

It seemed that the Plant Lord was the culprit.

But since this was the academic city, his focus was on the Fire Lord, one of the founders of this city. Although he didn't give an important mission to the spies, it should be enough to get some general knowledge about the Fire Lord's movement.

As for the other two elders, he was planning to use the Ardagan Family's network to deal with them.

Though, he was worried that his father's former subordinate had switched sides and would harm him the moment he reached Tamworth.

In the end, Noel spent the rest of the week sorting all the knowledge before heading to Tamworth.

#### Chapter 533 Unexpected Encounter

Tamworth.

A man was sitting in his office, looking at the report from his subordinates. "Hmm?"

"Hestia." The man surprisingly let out a feminine voice as he was staring at the door as if calling the person that stood by in front of his room.

Despite being a male, he was actually wearing makeup. There was nothing wrong with a male putting on makeup, but this makeup actually made him look beautiful like a woman.

His skin was smooth and his gesture was gentle. He even put on a dress like a woman. If only his voice was one iota higher, one could easily mistake him for a woman. In fact, as long as he remained silent, no one would recognize him at all.

Hearing her name being called, a woman entered the room with a cold expression.

"Do you need anything, Ma'am?" The woman, wearing a maid uniform, asked while staring at this guy as if not bothered by his appearance.

"Who gave this report?" He asked, tossing the report.



Even though it was paper, it flew a few meters without being disturbed by the wind.

Eventually, it reached the maid's hand. It took her a glance to recognize the writing. "This is from Lisette. If I'm not wrong, the person she accompanied last night came from Styxcanva."

"Hmm..." The guy looked down, contemplating for a moment.

"Is there something wrong with this information?" The maid asked without a change of expression.

Unfortunately, she didn't receive an answer as the guy had fallen into deep thought. After two minutes, the guy actually gave her an order. "I want you to tell the ladies to be on the lookout during our business hours... at least for one week to two weeks."

"Is there something wrong? Is there any description so that we can keep the person out?"

"No." The guy shook his head with a serious expression. "You shouldn't chase away that guy. However, you shouldn't let him in easily."

"Huh?" The maid was confused.

The guy waved his hand. "Tell the girls to prepare for the 'banquet.' Remember, you have to be courteous to him.

"As for his description... I'm not very sure what kind of disguise he has right now. But apparently, he is going with a female friend, who comes from the Demon Banner Army."

"..." The maid nodded. "I understand. In that case, I'll tell them to find out information about the gate, especially about the people related to the Demon Banner Army."

"Yeah. Do that." The guy confirmed.

"Is there anything else?"

The guy pinched the bridge of his nose. "Hmm, how is the deal with the noble?"

"Everything works perfectly. I don't understand your decision, Sir. If the Demon Banner Army knows about this, we'll be in a bad position. So, why do you suggest holding a 'banquet' instead of assassination?"

"How long have you followed me?" The guy asked while narrowing his eyes.

"Two years."

"Exactly. That's why you don't know much about this matter. For now, just follow my instructions and don't ask. If the opportunity arrives, I'm going to teach you about the current matter."

"I understand." The maid nodded and immediately stepped back, stopping her curiosity. She immediately left the room to tell the others.

Meanwhile, the guy was letting out a long sigh, staring at the ceiling.

"Everything has gone far quicker than the prediction. It seems that I have to get involved soon..." The guy suddenly made an evil smile as if he was scheming something.

His expression darkened and his tone became deeper. "Oh, Young Master Noel. Why would you even come to this place? If you're planning to visit me, then you should be prepared. After all, I'm going to give you a big present."

...

After a long journey, Noel and Rose finally reached their destination, Tamworth.

Because this city was near the border, it was protected by a tall and robust wall. There was even a ditch that would stop the monster for some time. The wall was reinforced by Spirit Enchantment that would stop the monsters from destroying it with their own power.

It was a defensive city and this kind of city was spread all over the kingdom. Even the Water Lord had a similar protective measure.

When Noel looked at the wall, he couldn't help but ask Rose, "By the way, do you feel anything weird from the outside?"

Noel looked a bit worried since they were going to the enemy's den. They didn't know whether Luke Ardagan's former subordinate was still an ally or not. Even though Dimitri had told them to head here, Noel still raised the suspicion so that Rose would be vigilant.

"Hmm... Our destination is the brothel, right?" Rose asked.

"Yeah. We're simply passing by to confirm his intention. After handling some matters and thinking about how to deal with the enemies, we're going to head to the Countess's city to talk about cooperation before visiting the Lelelei Fort, our original destination." Noel nodded while explaining.

"Hmm..." Rose looked down, contemplating for a moment. "There is nothing visible from the outside. We have to check everyone's expressions first..."

"I'll leave that matter to you." Noel nodded. They were about to enter the city as their turn to be checked by the city guard was two people away.

But the plan seemed to love to go sideways. It might be fate playing them.

After all, the one who was being checked suddenly raised her voice.

"What are you doing? I have given you everything. That's all."

This voice sounded extremely familiar to their ears. Rose and Noel couldn't help but glance at each other.

"You're not thinking the same person as I'm thinking... right?" Noel's eyebrows twitched.

Rose gave a facepalm as the answer.

They both took another glance at that person, whose blonde hair was slightly coming out of her coat.

They were sure about it. This person was actually Anna. Who would have thought that they would actually meet in this city and in this situation?

Chapter 534 Same Target?

"What? You should stop!" The girl seemed to be pushing off the soldiers while the latter tried to take her hood off.

Suddenly, another woman came between them, startling all of them.

"!!!" They all looked at the woman and gasped for different reasons.

The soldiers admired the beauty, while the female was shocked by her appearance in this town.

"You are..." The female stepped back while calling her name. "Rose?"

"Who are you, woman? This is Tamworth. Everything has to be checked." The soldiers glared at her while vulgarly scanning her proportion.

Rose coldly looked at them while taking out her badge. "It seems that this city truly deserves its reputation... To think even a mere soldier dares to act almighty in front of an officer from the Demon Banner Army.

"Who do you think has been protecting this place from the demons?"

The moment Rose showed her badge, it alarmed all the people around the gate.

"Demon Banner Army?" The soldiers became panic-stricken.

It also caused commotion to the point the supervisor who took care of the gate ended up coming out of his office.

He was dumbfounded that the soldiers were trying to harass a knight from the Demon Banner Army. And by looking at the badge, it seemed that her position wasn't low.

Rose glared at him and said with a disgusted tone. "It seems that Tamworth is far worse than I imagine..."

"May I know your name, Miss?" The supervisor tried to confirm her identity. If it was just a lowly knight, he wasn't that afraid of the consequence.

Unfortunately for him, the opponent this time was Rose. "Demon Relief Squad's Zero Squad, Rose."

"!!!" The moment he heard the Zero Squad, his heart skipped a beat. Without hesitation, he grabbed both the soldiers' heads and lowered them down along with his own head.

"I apologize for not disciplining my subordinates. I'll immediately punish them after this."

Rose glared at him. She knew that they would just do this again after she entered the city, but she also didn't want to make a big fuss.

In fact, she didn't plan to use her identity previously if not for the fact Anna was being harassed.

It wasn't that she cared about Anna being harassed, it was that the moment Anna made a big scene, the consequence would be far worse than mentioning her identity.

Anna was confused by Rose's action. She was planning to enter this place quietly. Even if she couldn't enter right away, she could easily sneak in at night. But the fact that Rose appeared here meant there was one more person who should come out.

The moment that thought appeared in her head, she felt an incoming presence from the back. This figure immediately put his hand on Anna's shoulder, acting like her best friend.

"Oh, to think we would meet in this place. What a coincidence. When was the last time we met?"

Anna turned around, startled. After all, this was the man who was with Rose according to the report, Noel. But she didn't know why Noel actually visited this place.

She wanted to stop him, but she realized that it would be easier to enter with them. So, she had to play along.

"Yeah. What a coincidence."

The moment the soldiers saw how good their relationship was, they instantly looked at Rose who asked them with a demanding tone.

"I didn't plan to use my identity previously, but it seemed I had to. So, am I allowed to enter with my friend?"

"Y-yes." The supervisor nodded his head furiously, hoping Rose would go away immediately.

Before the situation escalated, Noel and Anna had entered the city, leaving Rose behind. Seeing their action, it looked like Rose had to let go of them and chase after the two.

They felt relieved that Rose didn't say anything more than that.

They ended up entering the city after making a bit ruckus. They truly had a bad start.

"What are you doing here?" Noel glared at Anna with his eyebrows twitching, never thinking he would meet her here.

"I should be the one asking that question." Anna clicked her tongue.

Noel and Anna were staring at each other for a while before they reached the same conclusion.

"This is not a good place to talk." Noel sighed.

"Yeah."

"Tavern?"

"Inn is better."

In the end, they ended up agreeing to go to the inn first to discuss the current situation. Meanwhile, Rose was completely speechless watching these two, who were about to argue, end up wanting to go to an inn together as if they were more than friends.

She shook her head helplessly while following these two.

It didn't take too long for them to reach an inn and they immediately entered the same room to discuss this current matter.

As soon as they reached the room, Noel and Anna were glaring at each other as if they had become an enemy.

For Noel, Anna's appearance would cause a lot of issues, especially since his father's subordinate would find her identity and get angry for executing his parents. In the end, they would end up causing unnecessary problems.

On the other hand, Anna came to this place for her own mission. And Noel's existence would just cause another problem since he would do something unexpected in this place.

She had to determine his intention first.

"What are you doing here, Noel?" Anna gritted her teeth, frustrated by his appearance. Although it was true that having an ally was good, the timing was not good.

"I should be asking that question. I'm here to see my father's former subordinate and to determine his stance. What about you?"

"I am here because I got wind of the relationship between a certain underworld tyrant and a noble that seemed to be related to the Supreme Devil Organization.

"So, I'm here to confirm their relationship and if possible, handle them," Anna explained with a grim expression.

"..." Noel suddenly fell silent as if he noticed something. "Wait a minute. That target is not related to the brothel, right?"

"Eh?"

Chapter 535 Agreement

"Eh?"

"Eh?" Noel also had the same reaction, realizing that her target was actually the brothel.



Noel immediately pinched the bridge of his nose while saying, "I think we need to discuss this matter carefully. So, do you mind talking about it first?"

Anna glanced at Rose, who remained calm even after seeing her like this. She didn't know whether she could cooperate in this matter since she didn't know Noel's stance.

But it didn't hurt to talk about it.

"So, I'll tell you about my mission first." Anna took a deep breath before explaining, "My mission is to investigate the brothel.

"We have some suspicion that the brothel is involved with a certain noble who has a connection to the Supreme Devil Organization.

"Although our organization doesn't really handle the Supreme Devil Organization, we still handle the noble.

"So, because of this connection, I'm tasked to investigate the noble. And after knowing their relationship with the brothel, I decided to infiltrate the brothel first for that information.

"I'm not sure if you know about this, but the brothel has a certain reputation... According to my intel, it seems that the brothel is a front for a certain organization that specializes in espionage. I'm not sure which organization, but you get the idea.

"I'm planning to enter the brothel to get a hold of all the information." Anna finished her explanation with a smile as if everything was under her control. It was true that if the brothel was just a front, it would be good to get a hold of their information.

Not only would it be useful to be used against that noble, but the information should be massive enough to bring down more people.

So, investigating the brothel was something that Noel would recommend.

However, the problem was that the person running this brothel was none other than his father's former subordinate. Before confirming the person's intention, he didn't plan to take direct action against him.

Noel thought for a moment and shared his side of the story. "Alright. Hear me out first. The person in charge of that brothel is actually my father's former subordinate who is in charge of the espionage of the family... or that was what I heard.

"So, my objective was to visit the brothel and talk about rebuilding the family's information network.

"That was my objective before I learned about your mission. I also had some suspicion about him having some relationship with the noble and the Supreme Devil Organization. So, I'd like to take action at first...

"After all, there is a big difference between a subordinate and a former subordinate. The latter couldn't be controlled anymore, so they often switched sides.

"Though, after listening to you, I couldn't help but think of another possibility.

"He is my father's former subordinate. My father has been fighting the Supreme Devil Organization in the dark, so there is a possibility that he is actually in a covert operation to investigate the Supreme Devil Organization.

"He might be getting along with that noble in order to find out about them. That's why I'm wondering what I should do now."

"..." Anna fell silent. She never expected that her target was actually related to the Ardagan Family.

On the one hand, if she took action against this person, it might be seen as Anna trying to eradicate the remaining members of the Ardagan Family. On the other hand, she didn't want to cause more trouble for the Ardagan Family.

So, she also couldn't decide what to do.

"Hmm..." Both of them looked down, contemplating their choice.

Rose looked at both of them, wondering how these two could actually do the same thing. Their actions were in complete sync.

She couldn't help but ask herself, 'Are they in a relationship or something? The Stargaze Family hasn't done anything about Anna's fiancé and the Ardagan Family has been destroyed before Noel could marry. There's no information about Noel's marriage partner as well.

'Considering their fathers are best friends and Noel's father is the one who controls everything behind the scene, there is actually no bad blood among them right now.

'In fact, I couldn't help but think their fathers actually want them to get together... By pitting them against each other, they will see each other very often. And after resolving the misunderstanding, their relationship might get better...'

Rose narrowed her eyes. She didn't know how much her prediction was true. In fact, she could be completely mistaken.

Either way, it didn't change the fact that Noel and Anna were in sync.

Rose couldn't help but ask, "Is there any reason why you shouldn't destroy the brothel?"

"Obviously. Since we're talking about an organization specializing in espionage, we can get a lot of information from them." Anna nodded with a serious expression.

"Yeah. If the other party is still on our side, we can take advantage of the information network to help us re-establish the family." Noel agreed with Anna.

"..." Rose shrugged. "Then, why don't you just get there and talk about it?"

"Hmm..." Noel suddenly fell silent. "I wanted to do that at first. After all, the other party was my father's subordinate. Just that fact alone made me wonder about his strength... If I go there carelessly, I might end up losing my life."

"Yeah. And I am a woman, I can infiltrate as one of the women there, but I've to learn about their layout and identities before going there. In other words, I won't go there for another five to seven days."

Noel and Anna looked at each other.

"So, you are saying you can enter there..." Noel narrowed his eyes.

"So, you are saying you can check their power..." Anna also narrowed her eyes.

It seemed both of them had the same plan in their mind. It turned out they needed each other to complete their own objective.

"You'll help me go there while I'll try to check their levels," Noel smirked.

"If they are allies, we can form cooperation. If they are enemies, I can sneak in with your information." Anna nodded in agreement as a smirk appeared on her face.

Suddenly, both of them said the same thing at the same time, "Then, hit the noble!"

Chapter 536 Plan

"..." Rose made a wry smile. These two actually thought alike.

When Anna was in the Demon Banner Army, she rarely took the initiative. It seemed that her work in the organization had helped her tremendously.

She was smart to begin with. But because she never schemed in her past life, she didn't have the necessary skill to do it.

Now that she had entered the organization, the door was open, allowing her to stand next to Noel when they were discussing their plan.

It didn't take too long for these two geniuses to agree with each other's plan.

"By the way, what do you know about the noble?" Noel asked.

"Hmm, I'm not sure." Anna closed her eyes for a moment, recounting the matter in her past life.

'In my past life, the noble has become a supplier for the Supreme Devil Organization. I'm not sure what kind of supplier they are, but when the Demon Banner Army finds out, they have fallen to the enemy's trick.

'I believe the organization has sent someone to check about the noble as well, but since they don't do anything, there is a possibility that the noble will kill him.

'It seems that the mission is trickier than I originally thought. As for the brothel... I'd never heard of them in my previous life.

'If they actually work with them, I can somehow understand why Noel has a lot of information.

'But because of no information about the brothel, I don't know if that former subordinate will actually work with Noel or not. After all, there's a chance that Noel took over the brothel after exposing their deeds.'

Anna thought for a moment, trying to see which information he could give to Noel without giving away her identity.

After two minutes, Anna opened her mouth. "According to my information, the noble is actually a supplier for the Supreme Devil Organization."

"Huh? A supplier? What kind of supplier is he?"

"I'm not sure. I haven't checked their information. In fact, I'm planning to use the brothel's information network to find out their specialty." Anna shrugged.

"I see..." Noel fell into deep thought.

While waiting for Noel's decision, Rose asked Anna, "Do you have any other information related to the noble?"

"I don't think so. In fact, I'm surprised by how hard it takes to get information about the noble. I wonder if the brothel assists him in covering his tracks."

"In that case, we can only enter the brothel to get the answer." Rose sighed.

"I have the same thought." Anna nodded in agreement. However, Noel might have another idea, so she waited until Noel opened his mouth.

Unfortunately, no matter how hard he racked his brain, he couldn't find any other way to achieve their objective.

"It seems I have to get some good clothes here." Noel sighed.

"..." The two ladies looked at him, knowing he had reached the same conclusion.

"Me too..." Anna raised her hand. She was going to infiltrate the brothel, so of course, she had to buy clothes that looked similar to them. She wasn't planning to serve the customer, but she should be seductive enough so that others thought she was their friend.

Though, she didn't plan to talk to the people there since there was a chance that she would be recognized.

"Let's split the task then." Rose smiled.

"Yeah." Anna pointed at Noel. "You should buy some clothes and enter the brothel. We will see whether they accept you or not. If they don't accept you, take the little time you get to check their levels."

"If they accept you, try to understand their layout. Hopefully, they are our allies. But even their appearance could be deceitful, so we have to prepare for the time they become our enemies."

"As for me, I'll enter first in order to figure out their movement patterns and operation. Noel will use that information to try to meet their leader."

"After that, I'll use his information to infiltrate their base of operation and try to extract as much information as possible."

"Rose will be staying outside, taking a look at the enemies. You have the power of illusion and your range is quite far, so you can inform us if something happens."

Anna seemed to be good enough to assign their roles. Even Rose believed this was the best role they could get.

However, Noel rejected one of the roles. "No. I have to be accepted no matter what. There is something I have to confirm."

"Huh?" Anna tilted her head in confusion, not understanding the urgency.

However, Anna didn't know about Noel's Affection Medal. He wasn't using it right now, but he could see through the enemy's affection toward him.

As long as he could meet their leader, he could confirm whether that person was an enemy or not.

So, he couldn't accept it if the other party refused to meet him. No matter what, Noel had to confirm it.

Noel looked at Anna and adjusted the role a bit. "I want you to find out about their secret code or something. If possible, find someone useful enough to lead me to their leader. At least, someone who I can pressure to lead me."

"Are you going there with force?"

"This is the plan B. If possible, I want to resolve this without any conflict." Noel shrugged.

Anna pondered for a while before agreeing. "Alright. I'll try my best. Though, we have to buy our clothes first."

"I guess we know our next destination." Noel nodded. "Rose. I want you to go around the city and find the buildings you can use to observe them. If possible, try to look at the windows and gather some information from there. And make sure you look at their guests... Since this brothel is an important place, there might be high ranking guests..."

"Got it." Rose acknowledged the order.

"Alright. Let's go there. I guess we have to play the same role as back then... after you made some mess in the gate earlier..." Noel made an annoyed smile.

Anna also knew the mistake on her part and immediately circled her hand on Noel's arm while smiling, "Then, shall we go, Darling?"

"Since when did you become so bold..."

Chapter 537 Suspicious

"She's entered the building," whispered Rose while looking at the building through the window. She was sitting in front of Noel inside a restaurant not far from the brothel. This was a perfect place to use to observe the brothel. Although it was a bit hard for even a strong fighter to see from this angle, it wasn't a problem for Rose.

She was monitoring the brothel's movement and Anna, making sure nothing went wrong.



The brothel was called Eternal Flower. Because the business was booming, the brothel building had four floors, standing far higher than most buildings in the area.

Looking at how the building was furnished, it seemed that the higher the floor, the better the rooms. It showed that there were different levels of service and the top floor must be used for an important customer.

"What should we do?" Rose asked gently, glancing at Noel, who was calmly eating his meal.

Although he looked like he was focused on the meal, he was actually thinking about the information they had.

According to Dimitri, the brothel was owned by the second in command of the Ardagan Family's espionage division. The leader was called Harley.

Noel couldn't help but wonder how much they knew about their arrival. On the one hand, they had come to this place unannounced. On the other hand, if the brothel truly had that vast and powerful information network, the other party should have heard about their arrival.

That was why Noel wondered why the other party hadn't contacted him yet. He thought it was due to him hiding his identity. It seemed that the other party only knew about ladre, not the fact that he was Noel.

Though, they should have some suspicion, considering they should be aware of Anna's existence and the fact that they were helping Anna during the gate's inspection.

Noel stopped eating and took a sip of water before saying calmly, "I'm just worried that we've underestimated them."

"Is that so?" Rose tilted her head in confusion. She thought the leader shouldn't be that strong. Even if he managed to employ a powerful expert, it shouldn't be as strong as theirs. After all, a loose Spirit Master was hard to come by.

So, they should have some advantages during this operation.

But Rose couldn't assure Noel of that fact simply due to Dimitri's existence. The Ardagan Family had concealed their true strength the whole time. Dimitri was one of the examples.

So, it wouldn't be strange if there were multiple Spirit Masters inside that brothel. Still, he didn't think there would be a Spirit Grandmaster inside. At the very least, if they ended up in the worst-case scenario, they should be able to escape.

Rose might still have underestimated the true power of the Ardagan Family. Although their rank had declined, it was still considered one of the oldest families in the kingdom.

Even if they appeared to be ruined on the surface, the strength that no one had ever seen might still be hiding underground, biding their time.

This was the reason why Noel wanted to meet this man. He actually wanted to know the depth of his own family.

Now that he didn't have parents who taught him about this, it was better to experience it himself.

After a few minutes, Noel added, "Tell Anna to get out of there after thirty minutes whether she has found or hasn't found anything."

Rose didn't understand why he wanted it that way, but she still relayed the message.

While waiting for Anna, Noel took a deep breath as he scanned the entire restaurant with his Affection Medal. He had changed his medal before coming here, so he could see whether the people around him were a bystander or not. Of course, he didn't plan to use this on Anna yet because he chose to trust her for the time being.

To his surprise, he found three unique affections among these people.

Name: Hansen

Affection: Hostile (21/100)

Description: Someone who is suspicious of you and tries to find out more about your information.

Name: Hana

Affection: Hostile (60/100)

Description: Someone who hates you as if you have attacked her.

Name: Gants

Affection: Jealous (67/100)

Description: Someone who is envious of your status, relationship, or resources.

'What in the world is happening...' Noel immediately frowned, retracting his gaze. He assessed these three unique affections carefully.

But because of the degree of hostility, Noel tried to focus on the one with the highest number first.

His eyebrows immediately twitched the moment he read the description. 'Jealous? Is it because I'm sitting with Rose? Well, she is a beautiful lady, so I can kind of understand. But seriously, this guy doesn't think with his brain but with his instinct... I'll ignore it for now.

'As for the other two... This Hana is a woman. And judging from the description...' Noel suddenly fell silent before asking Rose, "By the way, when are we going back to the inn tonight?"

"Huh?" Rose tilted her head in confusion, but she soon saw Noel telling her to stop looking with his lips. In that instant, she realized that they were being watched and played along. "As soon as the sky turns dark. I don't want to go back far too late."

"Alright." Noel smiled. From the looks of it, Noel believed that this Hana was actually one of the women from the brothel. She must have been suspicious of them and tried to figure out the situation. That was why Noel asked her to stop.

'When did she arrive? I had scanned this place earlier, but she was not there, I think? Or was she here the whole time and became hostile after suspecting us?' Noel frowned.

Hana was his main concern, but he couldn't ignore the last guy as well. He didn't know why this person was suspecting them as well, considering they were tourists here.

However, one thing was clear in this situation.

'It seems that our stay here will be more dangerous than I originally thought.'

#### Chapter 538 Bad News

After a while, they decided to regroup. Anna already realized that their situation was worse than they had predicted. So, it was better to retreat as soon as possible.

Even though the gain was small, it was better than alerting the enemy.

"So, what I found inside was that the brothel had four floors. The first floor was basically the reception and all the utility rooms, including the waiting room for the ladies. In other words, it would be pretty hard to enter through the front door.

"I am pretty sure that the ladies can utilize their Spiritual Energy as well. I have learned their system quite a bit.

"It seems that the stronger and more beautiful the lady, the higher the floor they will be. I am assuming there is a correlation between beauty, strength, and Spiritual Energy. Though, I'm not sure about this right now.

"As for the fourth floor, not many can go there. Only a super important person can reach that floor.

"There are rumors that the owner of that brothel is living on the top floor. Only those who he invited would be able to reach that floor. That's all. I don't know about their purpose, operation, and so on."

Noel looked down, contemplating. "That's enough for the time being. It seems that I have to find a way to reach the fourth floor..."

"Since you're going to talk with the owner, who is a former subordinate... Why don't you use the family's insignia? I mean, the other party is also a family, right?"

"That's true. But I don't know whether the other party is an enemy or not. You should know that I am supposed to die in Silica Valley. If he is an enemy, he will spread this information. In the worst-case scenario, the Royal Family will hunt me down with all they've got." Noel let out a long sigh.

"I see." Anna fell into deep thought.

"How about infiltrating the building from above? We can easily destroy a window or two. If needed, we can even jump over the building... So, it's possible to enter from above." Rose gave another suggestion.

"That's possible, but he is my father's former subordinate until proven otherwise. Doing something like this will just lower his trust and loyalty if he's proven to be our ally." Noel shook his head. "We really have to go through the front door..."

"Oh, I don't know if I sense this correctly or not, but it seems that there is a fluctuation of Spiritual Energy all over the building. Although it's faint, I'm sure the Spiritual Energy is covering the building. I'm assuming they have reinforced the building with Spirit Enchantment, so breaking them won't be easy." Anna explained.

"I guess we don't have a choice." Noel pinched the bridge of his nose. There was only one way to meet that person. It was to go through the front door.

However, he didn't know how to reach the second floor or even the third floor, let alone the fourth floor.

"How about asking for a service?" Rose asked. "You can try the service that will lead you to the second floor. This way, the girl who will accompany you won't be that strong, so you should have enough strength to defeat her.

"Take that opportunity to enter the third and fourth floors," Rose explained her plan, which made sense.

Noel worried about many things, but it appeared there was no other way to infiltrate the brothel.

"How is their level at one glance?" Noel asked.

"I am not sure. The ladies on the first floor are completely mixed, so I don't know who is strong and who is weak. You have to find out for yourself. But from what I can see, there are a lot of Spirit Apprentices and Spirit Practitioners. I'm assuming there are Spirit Wielders, which should be serving the third floor. So, when you reach the third floor, you have to be extra careful."

"I see. A Spirit Wielder shouldn't be a problem. As for a Spirit Master..." Noel bit his lips. He had the confidence to defeat a normal Spirit Master with his fire and ice. But he couldn't release his ice ability if he didn't want his cover to be blown away and his two elements to be witnessed by the crowd. So, he had to prepare an escape route.

"Alright then. I'm going to prepare first. You two should split up and find more information about them. If possible, don't stay too long in one place." Noel waved his hand, grabbing the clothes he had bought earlier.

Rose and Anna exchanged looks before leaving Noel alone in the room. They had to play their part after all.

...

A few hours later.

When the night came, Noel had changed his clothes. He was wearing a red shirt and long black pants, covered with a long gray coat. He appeared to be a young man who had just finished adventuring outside.

Considering this place was near the border, there were a lot of demons, so it wasn't that weird for someone like him to visit a brothel. After all, he could fight the demons during the day and enjoy the night accompanied by a whore. This was a usual occurrence in this brothel, according to the information they got.

However, Noel was still wearing his masquerade since he didn't plan to reveal his face before he could see the owner and confirm his stance with the Affection Medal.

Noel took another look at the sign first.

'Eternal Flower.'

After confirming that he didn't go to the wrong brothel, he entered the brothel with a calm expression as if he was a regular in this place. He even acted a little vulgar by glancing back and forth from one lady to another as if he was scanning them.

Of course, he was looking at them to see their affection to determine whether his cover was blown away or not.

"Welcome, Sir." A woman wrapped her hands around his arm and smiled sweetly. "Please come in."

Noel smiled at her as the lady gradually brought him to the receptionist so that he could pay for the service.

The receptionist politely bowed her head to Noel, welcoming him.

However, the moment he saw her affection, he realized that he had been found out.

Name: Helena

Affection: Hostile (35/100)

Description: Someone who has confirmed you are suspicious.

Chapter 539 Temptation

"!!!" Noel was shocked to the core that the other party actually knew him. But it was too late to back out.

After all, the receptionist bowed to him and said, "Welcome, Sir ladre. My master would like to meet you. He is waiting for you on the top floor."

"..." Noel was utterly speechless. On the one hand, he was happy that he could meet their leader. On the other hand, he didn't know whether this was a trap or not.

'Should I go inside? I'm using my Affection Medal right now, so I can see their hostility. What if I suddenly escape the moment I see their master in case he is hostile?' Noel thought this was possible.

Unless the opponent was a Spirit Grandmaster, no one could stop him. At the very least, he could still make some ruckuses, alarming Rose and Anna.

He was a bit hesitant to accept this invitation, but he knew that if he backed away, he might not get a second chance. That was why Noel tried to consider everything in the little time he had.

"My master knows that you are going to be hesitant. So, he is asking me to deliver this letter to you." The receptionist took out a letter and placed it on top of the table so that Noel could take it himself.



"..." Noel narrowed his eyes. He looked around at first, making sure that they were not trying to harm him while he was reading the letter.

After that, he braced himself to read the letter. The content only contained two sentences to his surprise, but it surely shocked him to the core.

"Welcome to my brothel, Young Master. If you wish to meet me, you should climb to the fourth floor by yourself."

Noel was speechless. After all, the first sentence had told him that the other party was already aware of his identity.

He thought there was no one who could see through his identity. But there was actually one person and he was in this building.

He had to know how the other party knew about his identity or he might not know that his identity was already discovered by the enemies.

Although this was risky, he might have to go this time.

He bit his lips and said, "I understand. I'll meet him myself."

The receptionist bowed to him, not saying anything. Meanwhile, the girl who was pulling him here was confused because she didn't know what had happened and how this gentleman knew their master.

There was no one that tried to accompany him or even stop him. Since the receptionist had allowed him to go, it was clear that the gentleman was more important than they could imagine. So, they left him alone, allowing him to go straight to the fourth floor.

However, the moment he stepped onto the second floor, the atmosphere changed.

"Hmm?" Noel widened his eyes in surprise, looking left and right to see what was going on.

The scent of this floor was sweet. He could hear a lot of moaning coming from the rooms on the second floor.

He wasn't that disturbed by the sound since he was inside a brothel. But what he didn't expect was that a few women suddenly came out from the rooms.

The women were almost naked. Most of them had clothes covering their private parts, but some only used their hands to cover their breasts as if trying to tempt him.

The sweet smell that permeated the entire floor was actually inciting his instinct as if telling him to go with one of them and enjoy the pleasure.

'What is this smell? Am I being poisoned?' Noel widened his eyes in surprise and hurriedly used his Undying Fire to burn every poison that entered his brain.

To his surprise, the moment he did it, the sweet smell still remained, but his head became extremely clear. Due to that clear head, he could finally see what was actually happening.

These women actually had no screen panels coming from them. In other words, they all were not human beings.

Noel took a deep breath, calming his heart and mind down. It seemed that the sweet smell had a hallucination effect.

'Hallucination... I never thought it would be like that... I have to remain calm. The fire is burning the toxin right now...' Noel muttered inwardly. He kept using the fire to burn all the toxins while covering his mouth and nose to make sure he didn't inhale this gas.

The women gradually disappeared from his eyes as the corridor turned into a normal one, filled with doors that led them to a room for the service.

Some of them were open, some were closed. He was a bit hesitant, but he knew he had to step forward if he wanted to reach the fourth floor.

He thought this was normal in the brothel, so he kept going while taking a peek at the open room.

To his surprise, there were a few ladies inside the open rooms as if they were waiting for their customers.

Although they couldn't be considered beautiful, they weren't that bad either. But when one inhaled this gas, they couldn't help but hallucinate, turning these girls into peerless beauty. It was no wonder why the brothel used them.

After confirming that it was just a necessary hallucinogen for a brothel, he continued walking forward, not planning to talk to any of them. He had to meet the owner of this brothel first before he could even learn anything from this place.

It didn't take too long for him to reach the stairs, which were located on the other side of the building. It seemed that for the important customer, it was necessary to go through this corridor first so that they would hallucinate, turning the girl that would accompany them into far more beautiful.

And the smell filled the entire room. But Noel didn't know that this was actually the 'banquet' that the owner had prepared for him.

The moment he reached the third floor, the atmosphere changed once again.

Chapter 540 Melody

Suddenly, a melody started to echo in his ears.

"Hmm?" Noel furrowed his eyebrows, thinking this was another part of the hallucination. He became extremely wary of this change, so he kept burning the toxin inside his mind whether it was there or not. He just assumed that everything was either an illusion or a hallucination. This way, he could keep his mind clear.

However, the moment he stepped onto the third floor, he suddenly felt pressure from above him.

"!!!" Noel widened his eyes in shock as he exerted a bit of his strength, trying to withstand this pressure.

He glanced to the side and actually found a person sitting on the other side of the corridor.

And this person was hidden behind a curtain, but due to the light illuminating the person, he could see the shadow of that person, including the harp that she was playing.

Suddenly, this person ticked the string a bit stronger, causing a little jump in the melody. At the same time, the pressure suddenly felt much heavier.

"Kh..." Noel gritted his teeth. He had found the cause.

It turned out this person was the one controlling this pressure.

"It seems that I'm not accepted here." Noel gritted his teeth while releasing his Spiritual Energy. He glared at the person on the opposite side as if trying to tell her that he was going to use all his strength to attack her.

However, he soon heard her voice, telling him, 'You are not invited here because you are not accompanied by a woman from the brothel, Sir. I am here simply to maintain the rule of this floor.

'But because you are invited by the owner, as long as you can move ten steps from your position. This lowly woman will stop playing for Sir, and even guide you to the next floor to meet the owner.

'It's just this lowly woman's request Sir not to use your ability here. After all, this is where this lowly woman works. If it's destroyed because of Sir, I wouldn't be able to earn some money to continue living.'

"..." Noel narrowed his eyes. On the one hand, he didn't like to follow this person's words, considering he was attacked there despite being invited. On the other hand, if the other party would guide him, it would mean that he wouldn't have to suffer more until he met the owner.

Noel took a deep breath and said, "It seems that your ability is related to this pressure and sound. I don't like being tested, you know. However, since I'm in your place, I'll do it your way. But I have to warn you, I'll remember your actions."

"If Sir wishes to take my life, then you just have to ask the owner. As long as he gives you permission, I won't even resist whether you want to kill me or torture me."

"..." Noel's expression turned serious. He never thought that this woman was this resolute.

It seemed that it was better to follow this procedure than to cause a mess here. So, he took a deep breath and said, "Let's do it then."

"Then, this lowly woman shall play a lovely tune for you, Sir."

Suddenly, the melody changed from a calm and steady melody to a sweet but mellow tune.

It might be an illusion, but he felt that his body became warmer as if winter had just ended and he welcomed the spring. The cool breeze and the warm temperature made him comfortable.

However, he knew that he had to continue forward. Without hesitation, he took the first step despite his body being lazy because of the sudden change of atmosphere.

First Step.

After that first step, the atmosphere changed once again. His vision gradually became distorted as if he was being transported to another space.

There was actually something he found from here. It seemed that if the other party was being covered by something like a curtain, towel, or anything that completely hid that person's body, Noel couldn't see their affection through the medal. He had to be extremely careful since one wrong step might cost him his life.

And with addition to this illusion that transported him to a grassland, he completely lost sight of that woman.

"..." Noel felt like he was standing still and his body refused to move as if he just wanted to enjoy this warm atmosphere.

He bit his lips while raising his foot, completing the second step. It seemed his body still managed to resist.

This illusion was a different kind of illusion than Rose's. At first, he thought he was already familiar enough with Rose's illusion that he could withstand this illusion, but it seemed this illusion could be divided into many categories.

Noel was trying his hardest to complete the third step, but because he understood the difference, he managed to complete the third and fourth steps without much problem.

But the moment he was about to complete his fifth step, someone suddenly hugged him from behind.

"!!!" Noel thought this was an ambush, but when he heard that voice, he was completely frozen.

"Noel. We can finally meet again... I think this is enough for the test, right?"

"!!!" Noel turned around and saw his mother's face. If he wasn't aware of the truth, he would instantly know that his mother was an illusion. But he already knew that his mother and father were still alive. And the fact that he mentioned it was a test, it was clear that the other party never had the intention to hurt him.

'Is this truly a test?' Noel believed it for a second. But there was one fact that reminded him that he was inside an illusion.

His mother actually had no system panel that showed her affection. In other words, she was also an illusion that wanted to stop him.

"Kh!" Noel gritted his teeth, glaring back to the sound's direction. "That's enough!"

He completed the fifth step and sixth step right away in anger.

But this was the true challenge that began.

The melody once again changed.