

With The Gods 331

Chapter 331

C331

The rewards for the Great Heaven Demon War have been calculated.

The points according to the contribution were also taken into account. It was a generous reward, converting 1 contribution point into 1 point.

Now he understood why the Great Heaven Demon War became a business.

However, the problem wasn't the points.

[The 'Twelfth Demon King' is born]

[The 'Demon King - Kim YuWon' Ranking is second]

[Alias is blank]

It was a common message that appeared in the heads of the Demons along with YuWon.

"The twelfth Demon King?"

A new acquired title.

From the name alone, it was already unsettling.

Demon King.

YuWon knew that title was reserved for the High-Rankers of the Great Guild of Demon Kings in the Demon Realm.

Suspiciously, Diablo's gaze, who was momentarily angry at being used by someone, turned toward YuWon.

"Is it you?"

He was the leader of the Great Guild of Demon Kings.

And at the same time, he was the absolute king ruling the Demon Realm.

There was no way he wouldn't notice the birth of a new Demon King.

"Probably."

"If there's a twelfth... will it be after Lucifer?"

Until now, the number of Demon Kings that had existed was a total of eleven.

YuWon's position was the twelfth. If only the number was considered, he was quite far back, but in terms of rank, it was entirely different.

In second place.

YuWon's current position among the Demon Kings was officially after Diablo.

YuWon had recently rejected an offer to join the Guild. And in that rejection also included the ascension to the throne of the Demon Kings.

But now, he had obtained this title and had acquired the name of Demon King.

It was something truly unknown to the world.

[Twelfth Demon King]

#Category: Title

#Rank: A+

#It's the name officially given to those who become Demon Kings in the Guild of "Demon Kings." The power of the title increases as one climbs the hierarchy of the Demon Realm.

#It grants the power to give orders to relatively lower-ranking Demons. However, the power of command can only be used on Demons who have obtained the same title of Demon King once every ten years.

#If the authority of command is challenged, the title is revoked.

#Demonic Energy +10

The effect of the title was quite impressive.

It didn't possess a special power like "King of the Dead." If the twelfth Demon King had to be categorized, it would resemble more the title of "Vice Leader of the Heavenly Demon Cult."

The power to lead a Guild.

Depending on the perspective, it might be a title with more power than a title like King of the Dead.

'The fact that the Rank of the Title is higher than the Rank of Vice Leader of the Heavenly Demon Cult... it's probably due to the difference in the size of the Guild.'

The Demon King is a Great Guild.

It's not simply a Guild that has just entered the league of the greats, like the Murim Guild, but a force that has long been calling itself a Great Guild.

Of course, it was difficult to compare it to the Heavenly Demon Cult or the Murim.

'My rank is already high enough.'

Currently, YuWon occupies the second position in the rank.

Aside from Diablo, no one else could give orders to YuWon.

A quite attractive effect.

However, there was still some disappointment.

"Hmm..."

Yuwon looked at Diablo.

Diablo, who understood the meaning in his gaze, smiled as if finding it interesting.

Both the Title of Vice Leader of the Heavenly Demon Cult and the twelfth Demon King were equal.

Yuwon is the second-in-command of each Guild.

To move any Guild, he had to obtain permission from a person of higher rank.

"I'm always ready for a challenge."

Although they were just words, in that moment, YuWon felt like Diablo was about to extend his fist toward him.

Diablo's eyes were shining in an intense red color.

YuWon raised both hands.

"It's alright, I have no intention of hitting a rock with an egg."

"You're not just an egg, you know?"

Thud-.

Diablo, who stood up from his seat, quickly approached YuWon.

A head taller than YuWon. Due to the strength that could be felt from his body, YuWon felt like he was facing a giant.

"You never know. If you fight a hundred times, maybe you can win at least once." (Diablo)

A provocation to fight.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't tempted.

If YuWon won this fight, he would gain a lot.

Above all, due to the Great Heaven Demon War, the Demon Kings had absorbed The Heavens.

The integration of two Great Guilds.

Even if the main forces of each side, Metatron and Baal, were eliminated, the size was enormous.

Moreover, YuWon, who obtained the title of Demon King, now had the possibility of officially becoming the Leader of the Demon Kings. If he could defeat Diablo here, he would become the king who ruled over the two Great Guilds.

However...

"That's right."

YuWon wasn't reckless enough to get involved in an absurd fight just because he coveted something great.

"Once in a hundred times. The probability is too low."

No.

Probably not even once in a hundred times.

Diablo's words were a clear provocation. He was telling him to try challenging him since there was at least a small chance of winning.

He wasn't lying.

Once in a hundred times, maybe even less.

There was a possibility that YuWon could win.

But that possibility was as low as the gap between YuWon and Diablo.

Above all...

'I haven't seen his true form yet.'

The Diablo in front of YuWon was nothing more than a temporary form.

Yuwon remembered the trial on Floor 41 when he first encountered Diablo.

Although it was just a temporary form, Diablo's appearance at that time was not the same as his current human appearance.

Behemoth, who revealed his true form, was a giant Demon with the appearance of a bull.

So, what about Diablo?

He couldn't imagine what his true form would be like and how much strength he would show at that moment.

"When I feel like I can win, then I'll challenge you."

It wasn't the right time yet.

For now, he had to be satisfied with this. He had already obtained something much greater than he expected at first.

What he would get from the Great Heaven Demon War ended here.

"You won't fight if you believe you can't win? Is that what you're saying?"

"That's right."

"That's something exciting to look forward to."

Chas.

The corner of Diablo's lips lifted.

He looked with a face full of anticipation and joy.

"The next time you challenge me, you have to have the confidence that you can defeat me."

He had always been waiting for a Demon who could beat him.

A stronger enemy. A stronger Demon.

He believed that only when a Demon who surpassed him appeared, the Demon Realm could advance, even if it was only a little.

Even though it was just a half step, YuWon was a Demon who was Human and knew how to manipulate Demonic Energy.

Furthermore, by obtaining the title of Demon King, even if it was a small step, he had now sat on the throne of the Demon Kings.

If it were YuWon, perhaps...

No, without a doubt.

With those expectations, Diablo extended his hand for a handshake.

"Anyway, I welcome you as a Demon King. Although you haven't officially joined the Guild."

YuWon shook Diablo's hand.

"Thank you."

Along with the handshake, YuWon left Diablo's headquarters.

There were several demon clans gathered in the camp. When YuWon left the mansion, the Demons gathered around him scattered in surprise.

They were Demons gathered by the birth of a new Demon King.

"Really... he's the twelfth?"

"Then he'll replace Baal?"

"A Human?"

"He's not a Human. Now he's a Demon."

"How did his lineage change?"

"Hey, what can't be done in this Tower?"

"Well, that's true..."

The murmurs of the Demons who had elevated YuWon as a topic of conversation could be heard.

It was an annoying look. He had no intention of being their puppet and under their control forever.

Anyway, from now on, he would carry that title constantly.

YuWon decided to use it immediately.

"Disperse."

The moment they heard YuWon's voice.

[You have used the authority of the "Twelfth Demon King."]

The power of the title manifested, and the demons who were laughing at YuWon quickly moved away from his place.

The area around Diablo's headquarters became empty.

YuWon, who had driven the demons away with a few words, looked at Diablo's headquarters for a moment.

'With this, time is on our side.'

Angels and demons.

The two races would no longer waste energy on a pointless struggle called the Great Heaven Demon War.

The integration of the two Great Guilds would have a positive effect on increasing power.

There were many gains from this battle. More than just a simple reward, being able to increase the power of both races was the greatest harvest.

However, at the same time, there was unease.

'It was too easy.'

Without a doubt, Foolish Chaos had begun to notice YuWon.

However, despite that, he didn't make any moves in this battle.

After the previous events, YuWon thought he would have a respite for a while, but he never expected things to be resolved so easily.

Although he couldn't use his power, if Foolish Chaos had gotten involved, Metatron wouldn't have been defeated so easily.

Heavenly King Metatron.

He was one of the "puppets" created by Foolish Chaos a long time ago.

'What is that guy doing?'

At this moment...

YuWon remembered someone who would be accumulating power somewhere.

He didn't have a favorable premonition.

The place where YuWon had left...

Diablo sat silently in that place and tapped the desk with his finger.

Tap, tap...

A regular sound resonated in the quiet headquarters.

At that moment, Diablo raised his head.

"Are you from the Administration Office?"

-Did you notice?

Ssshhh...

A small light appeared over the ceiling of the headquarters.

At first glance, it might look like a tiny firefly, but it was actually an Envoy from the Administration Office.

And not just any Envoy, but a high-level entity among the Envoys.

The peak point of the Administration Office, a high-ranking Envoy from the Classification Office.

"Do you think if you sneak up as an Envoy, I wouldn't notice?"

-The Classification Office must remain secretive. I ask for your cooperation in this matter, Lord Diablo.

"They are like rats."

The Classification Office exists everywhere.

They observed, listened, and classified everything in this Tower according to their own criteria.

Although the details of those criteria were not known, the rankings established by the Classification Office were so accurate that no one questioned their validity.

"Is it about Kim YuWon?"

-You know it well.

"Then there's nothing more to listen to, right?"

YuWon's actions were already known among the Rankers of the Demon Race, including the Demon Kings.

It couldn't be that the Classification Office, which discovered countless unknown information, didn't know something so common.

Diablo couldn't understand why the Envoy from the Classification Office had come to seek him out. But...

-Isn't there something more important?

"Something important?"

-It's his wish, Lord Diablo.

If what they need is Diablo's opinion, then the story changes.

Only one person in this Tower knew.

Diablo himself was the only one who had that information.

-According to his wish, the title obtained by Kim YuWon and his position could be lost. But on the other hand, they could also turn him into the powerful Demon King who unified The Heavens with the Guild of the Demon Kings.

The power of the Demon Kings changed according to Diablo's wish.

Even just with the title obtained by YuWon, it was so.

If Diablo were to give the order to "die," YuWon would have no choice but to immediately relinquish the title.

The power and authority of Diablo, the supreme leader of the Guild of the Demon Kings, were so absolute.

But what if Diablo were to boost YuWon?

Then YuWon would become the Second-in-Command of a giant guild and a High-Ranker with absolute authority.

The current YuWon, who had been acting as an invincible general, would have the qualifications.

-As per your will, his ranking will change. That's why I'm asking you.

The Envoy descended from the ceiling of the headquarters and approached Diablo.

The light came close to his face.

The Envoy asked Diablo why he was here.

-Are you going to boost or limit Kim YuWon?

Chapter 332

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Early in the morning.

YuWon took a bite of his fruit.

It was still bright outside the window. Unlike the Demon Realm, the night in the sky passed in the blink of an eye.

After resting well, his body and mind felt fresher. It seemed like he was finally enjoying a relaxed meal after a long time.

Thanks to the treatment he received in the Demon Kings' army, YuWon had settled in the Celestial City and taken a few days off.

"I should start moving little by little today."

He had rushed to participate in the Great Heaven Demon War. He had taken Trials without rest to meet the schedule, and finally, he had successfully resolved the Great Heaven Demon War.

Eat, sleep. Then eat again, then sleep.

After spending several days like that, his heavy head felt a little lighter.

Just as he was about to finish his last relaxed meal...

Ring, ring.

The Player Kit he had left on the table started ringing.

[Hargan]

Seeing the name that appeared on the kit, YuWon hesitated for a moment.

If he answered this call, he felt like he would lose the rare opportunity to have some free time.

The sound continued non-stop. YuWon finally answered the call.

-Hey! What's going on?

He was glad he moved the kit away from his ear.

Hargan, from the beginning, spoke with an excited tone.

"What's up?"

-It's your ranking. Haven't you checked it yet?

"Ranking?"

YuWon reached out for the Player Kit.

"I'll end the call."

Tic.

YuWon quickly hung up the call and started searching for information on the Player Kit.

This was the second time Hargan behaved so excitedly.

The first time was when YuWon's ranking was first recorded.

The fact that YuWon, who was not a Ranker, was registered in the ranking was surprising.

But after that, even as YuWon's ranking went up, Hargan didn't reach out to him.

As if there was nothing surprising about it.

But this time was different.

"What happened to my ranking?"

YuWon searched for his ranking and stood frozen in place, unable to believe what he saw.

It was so high that it was hard to believe.

[Kim YuWon: 53rd]

53rd.

It was a ranking that barely differed from Hades, the current King of Olympus, by only two places.

Even though YuWon's ability had improved significantly, it was too drastic of a ranking increase.

YuWon's previous ranking was 67th.

He had risen an incredible 14 places.

Even when the Ragnarok ended, YuWon's ranking hadn't gone up that much.

"Is it because of the title?"

Having an affiliation meant more than strengthening one's personal power.

This was true for Raguel.

As the Chancellor of the Heavens, he was ranked among the top 100, even though he was just a moderately skilled High-Ranker.

The power Raguel had was comparable to being the second-in-command in the Heavens.

If it were any other Player, they would probably be celebrating their promotion by dancing, but YuWon felt his head spinning instead.

Next to YuWon's ranking, there were several related articles.

[Is YuWon's ranking rise a management error?]

[The truth behind the ranking: Is it about ability?]

[The Second-in-Command of the Demon Kings. Is YuWon backed by the Demon Realm?]

[Analysis of YuWon's movements. His motivation for the tutorial...]

Just by reading the titles, it seemed like he understood what they were about.

Some of the articles were written provocatively, as if they were sure that YuWon had joined the Demon Kings.

"Damn journalists..."

YuWon wasn't interested in the affairs of the world.

It was natural.

He already knew how the world worked, even how it would work in the future.

He knew far more than the journalists running around, and he couldn't help but lose interest in their information.

However, maybe simply because he was bored at the moment.

YuWon started searching and reading some of the important articles about himself.

And in the midst of that...

"...Huh?"

One article caught YuWon's attention.

[Power Struggle in Olympus. A Conflict Between Hera and Hades?]

[Hercules at a Crossroads. The Siblings Apollo and Artemis, and...]

[Dionysus, a High-Ranker of Olympus, Says There Are No Internal Struggles in Olympus and That Everything Is Already Stabilized... What's the Truth?]

Zeus stepped down from Olympus.

The vacant throne was taken by Hades.

He was the highest-ranking in Olympus, excluding Zeus, and everyone considered him the rightful successor to Zeus.

At that moment when Zeus was overthrown, there was no one else apart from Poseidon in Olympus.

However...

Besides the Three Main Gods, there was another High-Ranker in Olympus who posed a threat to him.

'Hera...'

Zeus' wife, the High-Ranker after the Three Main Gods.

She was moving to take control of Olympus.

'Has this ever happened before?'

YuWon checked in his memory, but there was nothing.

The history he knew had changed.

There was a scent in the air.

"If we change events one by one, there will undoubtedly be changes."

"Then, we should investigate that aspect. If there were changes, it means there is a high possibility of intervention in some way."

He wasn't sure yet.

However, it seemed necessary to confirm it.

"Then..."

YuWon called Hargan again.

A short ring.

And after a brief moment...

-Why did you end the call so suddenly?

Hargan's voice, annoyed, returned.

"I'm sorry. I just wanted to confirm something and then call you."

-The ranking?

"Yes."

-Well, I guess it's understandable. You've risen a lot in the Ranking, seriously.

Fortunately, Hargan didn't seem too upset. It wasn't the first time YuWon hung up the phone like that, and he also had other reasons.

-Seeing that you don't even check the rankings, you probably don't know our news either, right?

Hargan was the first to speak.

From YuWon's point of view, who was about to mention something related to Olympus, it was a welcome start.

"It seems they're in the middle of a battle."

-It's not just a battle. Now...

There was a pause in his voice.

A conflict could be felt on the other side of the phone. YuWon patiently waited for Hargan to continue.

-No, wait. Could we meet and talk for now? I'll come to your place.

It seemed there was some help he needed to request.

It probably wouldn't take much time.

After all, Olympus had the best means of transportation, the Sun Chariot.

"As for where I am right now..."

It only took four hours for Hargan to find YuWon.

After talking on the phone during breakfast, he arrived just in time for lunch.

YuWon was sitting outside the residence, in a quiet café with few customers. There was nothing particularly special about the café to make him feel conscious of any stares.

"You came early."

"I wasn't far, just two floors away."

"Sit down, for now."

Thud-

Hargan sat across from YuWon. He looked outside through the café window, his eyes widening in surprise as if he were amazed.

"It feels strange here. Demons might be lurking around here."

"Everyone should be used to that by now. We're from the same Guild."

"Is there really no problem?"

"Of course, for now, it doesn't seem like there are problems due to Diablo's orders. No one knows when or what problems will arise."

"It's dangerous."

"It was a problem we had to face at some point. It's been like that since the beginning of the Great Heaven Demon War."

"So many things really happen..."

Normally, he would have been open-mouthed in amazement.

The battle known as the Great Heaven Demon War had lasted as long as the history of Olympus. Perhaps it was a war that had a significance beyond the Gigantomachy.

Yuwon had managed to bring that war to an end.

It was strange, but now it felt appropriate.

'This isn't the first time something like this has happened.'

He had reformed Olympus, defeated the Three Precious Children, triggered Ragnarok, and now ended the Great Heaven Demon War.

It no longer seemed surprising what could happen.

When Hargan arrived, the drinks that YuWon had ordered in advance were already ready. Hargan's drink was sweeter than coffee.

"Anyway, congratulations. You've risen in the ranking. And you've finally settled in one place."

"I haven't settled."

"What?"

"It's a lie. The journalists said strange things."

"... A lie?"

Hargan tilted his head and scratched his head, wondering what was going on.

The article clearly stated that YuWon had become the Second-in-Command of the Demon King's ranks. Unless that was true, it was hard to believe in YuWon's astounding rise in the rankings.

But it was YuWon himself who said it wasn't true.

"Well, I guess you're right. You're not someone who lies about these kinds of things."

Hargan straightened up in his seat.

Looking ahead and bending at the waist, Hargan changed the subject, saying, "Anyway."

"I heard some news about what's going on in Olympus these days. Do you know what's happening there?"

"Dionysus said it wasn't a big deal during an interview."

"Do you believe that?"

"I don't."

Hargan nodded in relief.

"Yes, something has happened."

His face suddenly turned serious.

Olympus was in a state of turmoil, that was something YuWon knew, but seeing Hargan react so seriously was something he hadn't seen before.

"Is it really because of Hera?"

"Yes."

As he recalled recent events, Hargan gripped his head with one hand while furrowing his brow.

"I don't know if it's because she's carrying the Great Uncle Poseidon on her back or if she has recruited many Rankers within Olympus. It seems Hera has been restraining the Great Uncle Hades lately."

"Perhaps it's the influence of external forces to the Guild."

"That would be the worst. If it's something like that, then it could escalate into a war rather than just being an internal Guild problem."

"What about Hercules? What is he doing?"

In a way, he was the simplest problem.

Hercules, the Giant Slayer.

He was the greatest force in Olympus after Zeus and possessed incomparable power.

Moreover, by obtaining the hammer created from the branch of the World Tree in Ragnarok, he had enough power to confront Olympus by himself.

"If Big Brother Hercules helps us, we won't have to worry. Well, even if it's not because of him, Hera couldn't have done this."

Hargan sighed deeply.

"That's the problem, that..."

Indeed, that was the reason why Hargan had sought out YuWon.

"I don't know what happened, but we haven't been able to communicate with Big Brother Hercules."

"They haven't been able to communicate with him?"

"Nothing serious should have happened to his abilities and status. His ranking remains the same."

It was a valid assertion.

YuWon wasn't worried about Hercules either. Unless Hera teamed up with Zeus again, there was no way they had the means to threaten Hercules.

But Zeus was currently on the 100th floor.

There was no room for Hera to team up with him.

"So why are you so worried?"

"The problem is that, according to what we've found out, it seems Hera has proposed a wager."

"A wager?"

With those words, Hargan whispered quietly to YuWon.

Twelve Labors. It seems she accepted that.

Chapter 333

C333

The Twelve Labors.

It was a legend in Olympus.

Whoever solved the Twelve Labors would become the Hero of Olympus.

He had heard the name several times before.

Of course, he had heard it from Hercules.

"The Twelve Labors. I came close to dying then."

Hercules raised a bottle the size of his own torso with one hand and drank it in one gulp.

Half of it was drunk, and half of it was spilled. Although YuWon asked him to stop drinking, the alcohol banquet, which turned into an appetizer of memories, would not end easily.

"Cerberus, the Hydra, the golden apples... Some were difficult, others were easy."

He began to talk a lot.

Hercules was someone who rarely got drunk, but once he did, he was hard to control.

It was a past that had already passed.

But at times like this, there was no choice but to listen.

"The hardest part of it all was..." (Hercules)

"Haa..."

YuWon leaned back in his chair, wrapping his head pulsating with pain.

He thought something like this would happen eventually.

But this was too fast.

'The sudden change in the timeline is probably because of...'

There was only one variable.

'Is it my fault?'

The Destruction of Olympus.

The suppression of Zeus and the alteration of power balance. And the problems that would arise as a result.

Although the Rankers were intelligent and knew many things, there was no way to know when and in which direction the cracked tower would collapse.

In the end, it is a situation where you have no choice but to move according to the situation at that time.

He didn't expect the Twelve Labors to start so quickly.

'It's a challenge he has already overcome once.'

But at that time, Hercules' rank was higher than the current one.

The reason he started the Twelve Labors was also because he wanted to, not because Hera ordered him to.

'It might be a little dangerous.'

"Are you done thinking already?"

Apparently, the silence had lasted a little too long.

At Hargan's question, YuWon straightened up again and nodded.

"Yes, more or less."

"Anyway, I want you to help me."

"Why me?"

There were several experts in Olympus.

In any case, Hades could move directly, there was also Poseidon, and the siblings Apollo and Artemis.

However, there was a reason why he sought out YuWon and made this request.

YuWon wanted a clear reason.

"After all, you have a good relationship with Big Brother Hercules. You also have abilities..."

Hargan hesitated for a moment and scratched his head.

"Besides, when I ask you something, it doesn't seem like you're going to fail, you know? That's what matters in this matter."

Definitely, if only the ranking was considered, YuWon was in a similar position to Hades right now. The situation is much better when it's YuWon, an outsider, who moves instead of Hades, the Guild leader.

"Don't worry too much, we'll handle the compensation properly. We're not the kind of people who take advantage and ask for a favor without a good reason."

"How much would it be?"

"5 million points."

"5 million..."

It was a tremendous amount.

It meant that Olympus valued YuWon's worth and Hercules' worth very highly.

Of course.

It also meant that it was a very dangerous matter.

'With that many points, there's no shortage of things that can be done immediately.'

Points had various uses.

Purchase of valuable items, expansion of influence, hiring mercenaries, negotiations using points.

With 5 million points, the possibilities were endless.

That's why, in the Tower, it was also said that one could become a God if they had enough points.

So YuWon was also a little worried.

However...

"I don't want points, I want something else."

"Is there something else you desire?"

"The Aegis of Athena."

"The Aegis?"

Hargan's expression distorted.

It was a difficult request.

"That's something that Sister Athena has..."

"In any case, Hera's Salvation is also fine."

"Hey, that's..."

Hargan backed off as he tensed his neck.

The Aegis of Athena.

And Hera's Salvation.

Both were items that symbolized Olympus. Although they were of incalculable value, obtaining them was like catching stars in the sky, and on their own, they represented Olympus' pride.

But asking for those items as a reward...

"Isn't it cheap compared to 5 million points? Both the Aegis and Hera's Salvation."

"Can those items be converted into points?"

"We could overlook the Aegis, but Hera's Salvation could become a worthless item now."

Hargan's expression became serious.

The fact that it no longer mattered implied that Hera's Salvation would no longer be Olympus' property.

And that meant...

"They won't just let it be like that."

Internal war in Olympus.

Or a fierce battle with the Outer Gods.

Perhaps Hera was preparing for a rebellion, as feared.

"I'll try to lure the Players and Rankers who have crossed over to the other side. If their strength diminishes, they might surrender first."

"Something tells me it won't be so easy to resolve."

"Don't say that. If you talk like that, it sounds like it will really happen that way."

"Really?"

YuWon took a sip of the remaining coffee.

In any case, the conversation with Hargan had been resolved quite satisfactorily.

Now the break was over.

"Anyway, let me know as soon as it's decided. Whether it's the Aegis or Hera's Salvation."

"The request? Will you accept it?"

"Probably."

"Probably?"

Thud-.

YuWon got up from his seat.

"If you really want to hear a clear answer, then say it clearly from your side too."

"Huh? Is that how you behave?"

"Didn't you say we're not the type of scoundrels who only look out for our own interests and constantly ask for favors?"

"....."

"Then, I'm leaving."

YuWon exited the room first.

The sound of Hargan pulling at his hair could be heard from a distance. He seemed very frustrated. Probably, from now on, just as YuWon said, he would run as much as needed to obtain the Aegis or Hera's Salvation.

'The Twelve Labors...'

Hera had given Twelve Labors in total.

He didn't remember all the details, so YuWon had to review them as he walked slowly.

'Where are you right now?'

Just in case, during the conversation with Hargan, when Hargan said they couldn't locate Hercules, he left him a message through the Player Kit.

And as expected, Hercules didn't respond to his message.

So there was no other choice but to go in person.

Yuwon never expected he would regret underestimating the situation due to drunkenness.

Yuwon recalled that moment in his mind.

"What was the hardest one?" (Yuwon)

Anyway, it was fortunate.

To empathize with Hercules, who seemed to be in a good mood despite being drunk, YuWon asked him which Labor was the most challenging.

"It was catching the Ceryneian Hind."

"For it to be the hardest, was that creature strong?"

"No. It was fast, but not strong."

"Then?"

"It took a long time to catch it."

Even just remembering that incident was painful for Hercules. He sighed deeply and lowered his head.

'The Ceryneian Hind.'

Ceryneian Hind.

A mythological creature with golden antlers and bronze hooves.

More than a creature, it resembled a Sacred Beast (神兽) that appears in legends.

It was such a challenging hunt that even Artemis, who had hunted numerous times, found it difficult.

"That stubborn thing was impossible to catch."

Hercules was a powerful man.

As a High-Ranker, his speed was also quite good, but his stats were completely biased toward one side.

On the other hand, Artemis was considered the best in agility among the Olympus High-Rankers. Even Artemis had difficulties with the Ceryneian Hind hunt.

'That was probably the Third Labor...'

If the Labors had started a few days ago, he would probably be hunting the Hydra now.

'It wouldn't be bad to go there and wait.'

YuWon's steps quickened as he headed towards his destination.

With his shoulder bandaged, Hercules staggered.

The poison was stronger than he thought.

This must be the last head.

The Hydra.

The venomous monster with nine heads.

Always compared to Yamata no Orochi, it still hasn't been captured by anyone.

Unlike Yamata no Orochi, it hasn't caused much damage to the city, and no Ranker or Guild has killed it.

Therefore, its power had not been properly unleashed yet.

"Whoa-."

Fortunately, Hercules had managed to kill the Hydra on his own.

Its corpse, buried in a massive mountain, probably would never leave the world.

Ziik-.

Hercules ripped off the hastily tied bandage. A little blood oozed out, but the wound was almost healed.

Upon closer inspection, he had hardly any injuries.

Just a bite mark.

That was the only wound Hercules had received in this battle.

But that wound was a problem.

'Do I not have enough poison resistance?'

Poison.

That was the most terrifying aspect of the Hydra.

Fortunately, the poison didn't last long.

Perhaps because it was only in its body.

Hercules' robust resistance was enduring the Hydra's venom without any antidote.

'There's no time to rest.'

He couldn't even stagger for a moment.

Hercules headed straight to Floor 37.

A world with only two things: mountains and meadows.

Having arrived in this place inhabited only by Elves and Spirits of the Spirit Realm, Hercules sat down for a moment in his place, letting the sweat drip from his forehead.

"Huff."

As he moved, the poison spread faster and faster.

He needed rest.

Hercules briefly sat in his place, contemplating the vast field that spread before his eyes.

"Ceryneian Hind..."

He had never actually seen it, only knew it was a deer.

If it's called a Divine Creature (Sacred Beast) rather than a monster, it's safe to say it's not something common. Even Artemis, who couldn't catch it, attests to that.

'Where can I find it?'

It might be better to fight the Hydra again.

This kind of trial was simply unpleasant.

Hercules lay down in the middle of a vast field, drawing a large sign (大) with his arms as he rested for a moment and turned his head to look.

But at that moment...

"You arrived early."

Swoosh.

A shadow stretched over Hercules.

Hercules slowly opened his eyes, and upon recognizing the identity of the shadow, he jumped to his feet.

"Why are you here?"

"You arrived much earlier than expected."

The owner of the shadow was YuWon, who knew in advance that Hercules would come and was waiting for him.

He thought it wouldn't take much time, but it was much faster than expected.

This meant he had already defeated the Nemean Lion and the Hydra.

Hercules became cautious as he questioned YuWon.

"Who sent you?"

"Olympus."

"...As I thought."

An uncomfortable flow took over in an instant.

Hercules, who was indecisive for a moment, got up again and spoke.

"Leave. I can understand you have business to deal with, but I have no intention of listening to you."

As if he knew, YuWon showed no surprise.

If he had intended to cooperate with Olympus, he should have made contact from the beginning.

However...

"Nevertheless, this will be necessary, won't it?"

Swoosh.

YuWon reached into his inventory.

This... Hercules' gaze instinctively went to YuWon's hand, which pulled something out.

And then...

"That is..."

Hercules discovered the golden horns in YuWon's hand.

"Could it be they're from the Ceryneian Hind?"

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Long and sharp horns extended.

So sharp and smooth they seemed to have been precisely carved.

Shining in a golden glow.

And within them, an strange energy was perceived, so mysterious it was astonishing.

"What do you see?"

In response to YuWon's question, Hercules nodded confidently.

"It seems to be true."

It was just as he had heard.

The Horns of Ceryneia possessed a mysterious power, capable of turning into a celestial elixir when boiled.

There was no way YuWon could have concocted something like this, nor was it his style to deceive others with tricks.

Then...

Swish.

YuWon threw the Horns of Ceryneia into the air and caught them gently with his hand.

"You caught it and were preparing in advance?"

Hercules's gaze fixed on the Horns of Ceryneia.

Though he didn't know how YuWon had captured them, it was YuWon who had accomplished it.

The possession was in YuWon's hands, and with that, his mission became as fleeting as a bubble.

"If you carry this, there won't be major problems with the Labors."

"Are you willing to negotiate?"

"Yes."

"How much do you expect to receive in return?"

It wasn't Hercules's usual gaze.

YuWon couldn't understand what kind of bet he had made with Hera, but his hostility was at its peak.

He felt a bit of danger.

There was only one occasion when Hercules showed such a gaze.

When he was determined.

When he believed he was doing what was right, that it was justice.

In most cases, he was not mistaken in such situations, but...

"Stubbornness has always been his greatest disadvantage."

YuWon tightly clenched the Horns of Ceryneia in his hand.

The situation with Hercules was dangerous.

If the negotiation didn't go well, he might try to forcibly take the horns.

Perhaps, reading YuWon's caution...

Hercules stood up.

"I'm not seeking points for what I did. (You know this is not just about points)."

YuWon told Hercules.

"Then?"

"We'll travel together from now on."

"Travel together?"

"I heard you are undertaking the Twelve Labors."

"Do you want to come with me and travel together?"

Hercules frowned. A displeased expression manifested on his face. Hercules didn't easily show his bad mood over trivial matters.

"It doesn't make sense if I don't do it alone."

"Well, then..."

With a suspicious look, YuWon stroked his chin as he locked eyes with Hercules.

"What kind of bet did you make?"

Swish.

One eye was red, while the other was golden and radiant.

To understand his inner thoughts, there was nothing better than the Golden Cinder Eyes. Even Hercules realized that YuWon was trying to uncover his true nature.

'The Golden Cinder Eyes...'

Eyes that could see through lies.

He could have used any excuse to avoid those eyes, but Hercules sighed and expressed what he had in his heart.

"Hera thinks my Father's authority should belong to her."

"You mean the throne of the king?"

"Yes. She says that throne shouldn't be Hades's or Poseidon's, but hers."

He wasn't entirely wrong.

The reason Hades took Zeus's place was because Hades was the main actor in the destruction of Olympus.

The new king who had ousted the tyrant Zeus.

If Zeus was excluded, Hades had the highest rank within Olympus, so he lacked no power.

However, from Hera's perspective, that wasn't enough.

"Actually, Hera's power within Olympus is greater than that of the Great Uncles. It's because she naturally absorbed the forces that used to follow Zeus."

"So, that's the reason this problem arose."

"Yes. The balance has been disturbed."

Hades had a high rank, but he was the Lord of the Underworld.

With relatively limited power, Hades couldn't establish as strong a foothold as others.

On the other hand, despite her relatively low rank, Hera possessed countless Rankers and forces at her disposal.

It was a challenging enough situation to start a fight.

Furthermore, she had enough justification to claim the throne of the king.

"We can't judge who's right or wrong. It's only natural for her to seek to reclaim Father's position."

"And what about Hades?"

"He takes the stance that history cannot repeat itself. If Hera regains power, it could trigger a new war against the Giants."

For a long time, Hades had been trying to stop the war against the Giants and seek reconciliation.

On the other hand, Hera held the position that Hades had ruined what Zeus had accomplished.

The important thing was Hercules. Depending on which side he chose, the outcome of this fight between Hades and Hera would differ.

"Which side are you on?"

"I want to avoid fighting the Giants if possible."

"So, you've already made your decision."

"But..."

But.

In the moment those words were spoken, YuWon knew what kind of story lay ahead.

"I don't want to shed more blood."

He was an idealist and a pacifist.

He wanted to resolve conflicts without fighting.

That ambition had led him to take on this place as Hercules.

"That's why I went to find her, to ask her to stop the fight."

"And she proposed this bet to you."

"That's right."

Hercules nodded.

"She said that if I successfully completed the Twelve Labors, she would give up everything and retire."

He knew it would be like this.

Although he had only seen her once, YuWon vividly remembered the impression Hera left on him.

A single glance was enough to etch Hera's image into his memory.

'She's still the same.'

Ambition, desire, and determination.

Those were the words that could describe Hera.

She didn't hesitate to use whatever means necessary to achieve her goals. To overcome the great obstacle called Hercules, she chose the path of the Twelve Labors.

Through this bet, Hercules had decided to take on the internal conflicts of Olympus himself.

If it was to avoid a fight where blood must flow like a river, he would never easily back down.

"Do you think Hera will keep her promise?"

"She will. If not, I'll break her neck."

A voice full of conviction.

Of course.

No matter how much she was Hera, she wouldn't have the courage to break her promise with Hercules.

If she did, she would inevitably turn a monster who had so far maintained neutrality into an enemy.

"Now that you know, hand it over. As an outsider, you have no place to meddle in this bet."

"I know, but..."

To YuWon, it already seemed that Hercules had fallen into the trap.

But explaining it became difficult due to the stubbornness deeply rooted in Hercules.

"I still can't trust her."

"It seems you don't understand me."

"Is it really necessary to be so stubborn? I'm not trying to interfere with your Labor."

"The Labor must be overcome with my own power alone. That's the core of this bet."

Clearly, this wouldn't be resolved with words.

YuWon glanced at the wound on Hercules's shoulder.

The wound caused by the Hydra.

After briefly examining it, YuWon spoke.

"The Third Labor is probably the most difficult for you. It would be better to fight since you seem more skilled in hunting."

"Still, I'm not someone who can't catch a simple hind."

"It's not just a hind, it's Ceryneian. Even Artemis had difficulties catching it."

Hercules's face distorted even more.

"And so what?"

"You must choose between the two options."

With a swift movement, YuWon stashed the horns in his inventory as if he was about to take them out at any moment.

"Either you join me on this journey, or you stop here."

Hercules's eyebrows furrowed at those words.

"If that's the proposal, I refuse it."

Hercules's stubbornness couldn't be stopped by anyone. If there was someone who rivaled Sun OhGong in stubbornness, it was him.

But YuWon knew the only way to break that stubbornness.

"Then, let's make a bet, you and me."

"A bet?"

"A fight between you and me."

Hercules showed a perplexed expression.

"It's a very favorable bet for me."

Even though YuWon's ranking had increased considerably, the gap between Hercules and YuWon was not small.

And of course, YuWon wasn't someone who ignored that.

"Yes, that's right."

"Despite knowing that, you propose such a bet?"

"30 minutes."

"30 minutes?"

"If you defeat me in the next 30 minutes, you win. If the fight doesn't end within that time, I win."

YuWon said that, shrugging his shoulders, and added cheekily:

"Because it's impossible for me to defeat you in the first place."

He might have had some chance if he could throw Nir, but there was no way he could do that while facing Hercules.

This fight wasn't a fight he had to win.

30 minutes.

That was a considerable amount of time.

Usually, it would pass so fast he wouldn't even know when it had passed, but in a fight where life was at stake, time flowed in different currents.

Even more so considering the considerable difference in skill.

"What you just said..."

Kwak-.

Hercules clenched his fist.

"Don't regret it."

That was the moment the bet was established.

Thump, thump-.

Both of them stepped away in opposite directions.

They walked until the distance between them widened enough, and Hercules opened his mouth.

"You always help me."

Woosh-.

Without needing anyone to mention it first, both of them turned their bodies at the same time.

"Making the hardest Labor seem so easy to solve."

"It's still too early to say it's solved."

"Well-."

Thud-.

One more step.

The sound of Hercules' footsteps towards YuWon echoed on the ground.

How powerful was the force that transmitted through the soles of the feet to the ground?

The feeling of being crushed entirely became overwhelming.

"I don't think so."

Kug, kug-.

Sweat began to drip from YuWon's forehead, oppressed by Hercules' atmosphere.

An energy that almost took his breath away emanated from his towering two-meter-tall body.

Gulp-.

Saliva slid with difficulty down his dry throat.

'Maybe it's the toughest fight.'

It was an impromptu bet.

It didn't make much sense.

He had to endure for 30 minutes against Hercules, wielding his Yggdrasil mace.

But he had no other choice.

From Hercules' perspective, if it wasn't a 100% surefire winning bet, he wouldn't have accepted the bet in the first place.

Indeed, although he was convinced of his own victory, he showed a moment of doubt.

Yes...

Although it was difficult, in the end, that was the only way to break that stubborn obstinacy.

YuWon took out his Player Kit and checked the time.

"It's 11:28 right now."

Tic, tac~

"31 seconds."

"We'll start when it's 11:30."

"Yes, alright."

One minute and thirty seconds.

It was a tight time to sketch the fight while controlling his breathing.

YuWon closed his eyes.

How could he solve this fight?

With a clock in his mind, he began to draw a picture in black and white.

Time passed this way.

Clack-.

YuWon opened his eyes and unsheathed his sword.

It was the moment.

[The 'Golden Cinder Eyes' read the path]

['Sensory Field' has been activated]

Hwaryuk-.

Suaaaa-.

YuWon's eyes glowed with different colors, and all perceptions around him became sharp.

He couldn't afford to save energy in this fight.

This fight probably...

"Let's begin."

Would require his full power even if he gave it his all.

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BANG-!

Hercules' body soared into the air.

The club remained at rest.

At least that was fortunate for YuWon.

Hercules, wielding Yggdrasil's club, was too much for YuWon to handle.

Boooom!

Crack!

Hercules' fist struck the ground.

The place where the fist landed sank deep into the earth.

Rocks on the edge rose up, blocking YuWon's movement. Seeing that scene, YuWon clicked his tongue once again.

"It's monstrously strong, no matter how many times I see it."

That was pure power without using any skill or item.

It was astonishing.

Undoubtedly, Hercules called himself the strongest in this Tower in terms of strength.

"Do you want to buy time by running away?"

Thump!

Hercules extended his foot and caught YuWon moving away.

"Of course, that's the only thing you can do."

Hercules didn't insult YuWon for being a coward.

Rather, it was a situation where insulting him would be cowardly.

Hercules knew exactly what his strength was, and he had already anticipated that YuWon wouldn't confront him directly.

Above all, time was YuWon's weapon.

Not using the most powerful weapon was not a suitable fighting style for YuWon's personality.

"But still..."

Boooooom!

Hercules' fist struck through the empty air.

"You're still ten years away from being able to fight me."

"!"

Boom!

A loud wind struck YuWon's body.

The punch that struck the air turned into air pressure and hit YuWon's body. Pushed back by the wind, YuWon flew backward.

Dust rose with the pressure of the wind.

Boooooom!

While clearing the dust, Hercules approached YuWon again.

Crack!

The beautiful field turned into a field full of craters with just two strikes.

The ground rose everywhere.

Hercules' hand covered YuWon.

Thud!

Instead of grabbing his neck, Hercules had shattered stone fragments in his hand.

YuWon's movements were smooth.

It was as if he knew from the beginning what Hercules would do.

"You're like an illusion."

Golden Cinder Eyes and Sensory Field.

They were skills that showed the best evasion ability in close combat.

As if not allowing Hercules to get close, YuWon moved smoothly.

"You had faith in this, right?"

But...

Whoosh!

Simply relying on strength and fighting ignorantly, Hercules wouldn't have been able to earn the title of 'Giant Slayer' and his current rank.

The distance between Hercules and YuWon quickly closed.

Bum-.

A fist extended in a straight line.

And at that moment...

Kwaack!

YuWon's "Gigantification" manifested.

[The power of a Giant dwells in your arm]

Kwaaang!

The two strikes collided, and the ground where they both stood sank due to the impact.

Hercules, who didn't expect this direct confrontation, showed a bewildered expression instead.

Tong, thud!

YuWon's body was thrown far away by the clash of their fists.

YuWon tumbled on the ground and quickly got back up, regaining his balance.

Ukssin...

While clutching his right shoulder, YuWon slightly distorted his expression.

"My shoulder..."

Fortunately, he was in the state of Gigantification, so it was fortunate that his shoulder wasn't completely broken.

He thought that if he used Gigantification, he might be able to clash head-on, but it still wasn't enough.

"Gigantification alone isn't enough, right?"

When he looked up, he saw Hercules running towards him relentlessly.

There was no time to hesitate.

YuWon immediately summoned his Arcane Power.

Tsutsutsu...

Behind YuWon, a giant red figure appeared.

It was the manifestation of a giant formed by a massive set of Arcane Power.

Heavenly Demon Spirit.

Its utility was truly limitless.

"This is the first time I've used it in a real fight."

[The 'Heavenly Demon Spirit' responds to 'Gigantification']

[The power of a Giant dwells in the Heavenly Demon Spirit]

[The 'Holy Fire' dwells in the Heavenly Demon Spirit]

The Heavenly Demon Spirit was both a composite form of Arcane Power and a manifestation of YuWon.

A vessel containing the Holy Fire that had been sealed in the Celestial Mountain for a long time.

This vessel was not simply created to contain the Holy Fire.

Gguwook...

The Heavenly Demon Spirit, imbued with the power of Gigantification, clenched its fist.

The Heavenly Demon Spirit moved in unison with YuWon.

Finally...

Bwoong...

The Heavenly Demon Spirit collided with Hercules' fist.

Kwaang!

"!"

The Heavenly Demon Spirit, filled with the power of the Giant, received Hercules' punch head-on without flinching, accompanied by flames.

Hercules was surprised once again.

"Did he block it?"

He took a few steps back, looking at the Heavenly Demon Spirit.

A giant form that was even larger than his own body.

The true identity of that ability was unknown, but it was evident that the power of Gigantification was imbued in the fists that formed its figure.

Hercules narrowed his eyes.

"It's not unfounded confidence, is it?"

YuWon evaded the first punch.

The second punch clashed but was repelled, and he blocked the third punch.

"I thought it would take you about ten years..."

Considering his progress, he thought he could reach his level in less than ten years.

But it turned out not to be the case.

"Maybe it's much faster."

He hadn't imagined that YuWon had improved so much since the end of Ragnarok.

However...

YuWon's rank had risen to the Top 50.

Perhaps it wasn't so strange not to be able to reach even that level.

Bang, kuwong!

Hercules' fists and the Heavenly Demon Spirit clashed repeatedly.

The strength didn't lean towards one side. The Heavenly Demon Spirit didn't waver, and Hercules didn't suffer injuries.

How many times did their fists collide?

Giiing.

Arcane Power inside Hercules wriggled for the first time.

Kwaang!

Crack!

A crack appeared in the fist of the Heavenly Demon Spirit that had collided.

Hwaryuk.

Cracks formed on the vessel, and the Holy Fire contained inside naturally trembled.

With just one blow.

And finally...

Kwaang!

On the second punch, the Heavenly Demon Spirit shattered into pieces.

"Kku...!"

YuWon showed no hesitation at the shattered Heavenly Demon Spirit. Instead, he focused on another ability.

[The 'Golden Cinder Eyes' read the path]

['Sensory Field' is activated]

He widened his vision through his eyes and focused more on Hercules' movements.

Kwaaaang!

Crack, cra-cra-cra-cra!

As YuWon dodged the punch, Hercules' fist impotently struck the ground.

The results were different from before.

The earth cracked in a chain as if an earthquake had occurred, and the upturned earth rose as high as to form a small mountain.

The power had become several times stronger.

YuWon: "Is he using Gigantification?"

The current Hercules.

The ability that allowed him to become the Giant Slayer.

It was a manifestation of an ability much more powerful than YuWon's Gigantification.

"Are you thinking of winning somehow?"

"Because you're my opponent."

Hercules, raising his head, once again faced YuWon.

"Complacency is forbidden."

Although the world thought of Hades and Hercules as the main players, their thoughts were different.

The destruction of Olympus, the Ragnarok...

Everything was something that YuWon had initiated and concluded.

The guy who made possible what seemed impossible.

There was no guarantee that this time would be different.

"This is an unexpected reaction, somewhat different from what I expected," YuWon thought in an uncomfortable situation.

The ability that combined the Heavenly Demon Spirit, the Holy Fire, and Gigantification had been broken. Now he had no means to buy time through close combat.

Even if he didn't like it much, he had no other choice.

"For now, I must minimize the damage," YuWon thought.

He no longer attempted to extend his fist or fight head-on.

From now on, he had to change his way of fighting.

Zap...

A golden lightning began to emanate from the ring on his right hand.

The lightning quickly formed into a tangible shape. It became a small spear the size of YuWon.

YuWon escaped from Hercules' grasp and launched the lightning he had created in his hand.

Flash!

Crunch!

The lightning spear pierced through Hercules' body.

Hercules' body momentarily trembled, even though he used his Arcane Power to protect himself; it was a painful blow.

Crack...

At that moment, YuWon distanced himself again and took another lightning in his hand.

The speed of creating the spears was astonishing. Although Hercules had seen him handle lightning before, he had not been as skilled as this.

The power was also impressive.

It was amazing to be able to create lightning so quickly and still cause minimal impact on his own body.

"This is annoying."

If he continued avoiding combat like this, he would only accumulate damage in his own body. In his heart, Hercules felt like grabbing YuWon's neck and hitting him with all his strength, but it wasn't that easy.

Drip...

A drop of sweat fell from Hercules' forehead.

The more he moved, the more he felt the torment of the Hydra's poison.

YuWon knew that time was on his side.

But that wasn't all.

"Did you really think of all this?"

Taking advantage of the fact that he was poisoned by the Hydra's venom, YuWon attacked at that vulnerable point.

If he had planned up to that point, it was a level of meticulousness that was surprising.

"This could get painful if it continues."

Crack!

Once again, a lightning spread over Hercules' body.

He crossed his arms to block the lightning, thinking that he needed his arms to be longer.

Zas...

Hercules reached into his inventory.

A familiar sensation as he grabbed something.

As soon as he held it, he felt a surge of energy throughout his body.

[Yggdrasil's Club]

Crack!

The Supreme Blacksmith of Olympus, Hephaestus, had created that item at Kim YuWon's request.

Hercules didn't particularly rely on items, but this club was different.

When he held it, his strength amplified, and he felt a surge of energy throughout his body.

It was like a shark rediscovering the ocean.

Crack...

Hercules took another step forward with the club in hand.

And at that moment...

Flash!

Once again, a lightning flew from the direction where YuWon stood.

Zas!

Hercules swung his club to strike the lightning.

The lightning dissipated without any difficulty.

YuWon, who was gradually retreating and throwing lightning to maintain distance, stopped and looked at Hercules.

"Are you finally going to use that club?"

"This is the only item I have."

Hercules waved his club slightly in the air as he approached YuWon.

"Understand."

I only have one item, but don't you have many items with you?

He wasn't wrong in saying that.

And, of course, YuWon didn't think of calling him a coward.

"Well..."

If you analyze it, YuWon had much more in his possession.

"Actually, I'm not the only one."

"...?"

Hercules paused briefly, as if asking what YuWon meant.

At that moment...

Woosh~

Hercules felt a sinister feeling behind his neck.

Swish.

Unknowingly, Hercules quickly lowered his head.

Whoosh.

Spinning in the air, Hercules swung his club backward.

That new and fast person.

Finally, he landed away from Hercules.

-It seems that even days like these come to me.

A crazed voice, full of emotion and madness.

A sword as red as blood, as if it had been forged from spilled blood. A shield with a shape that seemed to have been carved into a mirror.

And on the hilt of his sword, a single shining red jewel.

The Kusanagi Sword.

The Yata Mirror.

And even the Magatama Jewel.

Susanoo, armed with the Three Sacred Treasures, appeared before Hercules.

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The sharp gaze of his eyes pierced through Hercules' body.

At the same time, a dark aura emanated from Susanoo's body.

The King of the Dead. Susanoo was revived with the power of that title.

Hercules brought his hand to his neck.

"This is not something common."

It had been a long time since he felt this sensation of a sword.

Although there were many swordsmen in Olympus, there was undoubtedly no one with such exceptional skills.

After training his body to a certain extent, Hercules believed that he would no longer be cut by a simple sword.

But Susanoo, standing before him, was an exception.

"It's been a long time since I felt the sensation of being cut."

A red weapon held in his hand.

It was not a common sensation.

Even getting close to it gave the feeling of being cut by an invisible veil. The smell of blood scattered in the air, and indeed, nearby blades of grass were sharply cut and scattered by the wind.

There was only one sword with such a history and capability in this Tower.

"Is it the Kusanagi Sword?"

An item he had only heard rumors about.

Although Yu Won possessed it, Susanoo was the one who could make the best use of it.

With versatile skills in handling swords, spears, and even ranged combat. Unlike YuWon, who showed versatile abilities, Susanoo was so good with the sword that he was nicknamed the Sword Demon.

Hercules' gaze now turned to the mirror shield held in Susanoo's other hand.

If the sword was Kusanagi, it was obvious what the other shield was.

"The Yata Mirror."

He didn't know what abilities that item concealed.

If there were two of the Three Sacred Treasures, surely there would be another.

Hercules looked at the jewel connected to Kusanagi and furrowed his brow.

"This... won't be easy."

Susanoo armed with the Three Sacred Treasures.

His strength had already been demonstrated in the previous trials. Susanoo's power, which blocked thousands of Players, was considered comparable to his prime.

Of course, without the power to command tens of thousands of undead armies, Susanoo was only worth half.

But if he had the Three Sacred Treasures in his hands, the story was different.

Chas.

Hercules aimed his club.

"Come."

Susanoo did not shy away from the fight.

Despite the brief provocation, Susanoo let out a hearty laugh.

-Good, good!

Zas!

As smooth as sliding on ice, Susanoo approached Hercules.

The distance closed in the blink of an eye. In the moment Hercules judged that Susanoo was within the range of the club, he swung his mace.

Boom!

Susanoo did not move his sword.

What is he trying to do?

The thought was fleeting.

At that moment...

Zas-.

Susanoo's figure disappeared from his place.

"...!"

Giiin-.

Susanoo reappeared behind Hercules.

An identical image reflected in the mirror.

Susanoo's Kusanagi emitted a red light.

Swoosh!

Thud!

Kusanagi cut through Hercules' back, and with a dull sound, a wound formed on his back.

Hercules staggered for a moment and turned his body, but once again, he couldn't see Susanoo.

Zas, zas-.

It wasn't just moving quickly.

There was no Ranker in this Tower who could move that fast.

"Could it be the Yata Mirror, perhaps?"

Bam, boom-!

Thud, whoosh-.

He crossed his arms to protect his head and swung his club forcefully once.

But the club passed through empty air and didn't reach Susanoo.

Instead...

Flash!

Crack!

A sharp lightning spear flew over Hercules' body and impaled him.

It was a much more elaborate and perfect lightning than before.

Staggering-.

Hercules staggered.

His body couldn't react for a moment.

And at that moment, Susanoo's sword struck.

Giiin-.

[The 'Magatama Jewel' shines]

[The 'Gigantification' resists the 'Magatama Jewel']

[All stats decrease by 5.2%]

[Pain resistance decreases by 22.5%]

[Physical resistance decreases by 15.9%]

['Attribute: Confusion' granted]

[Your resistance to 'Attribute: Confusion' has succeeded]

He felt a bit numb in his body. It was like wearing uncomfortable clothing that didn't fit.

While his body was momentarily restrained...

Puh-.

Susanoo's sword slashed Hercules' chest.

Ziik-.

Hercules' burly body was thrown backward by the sword strikes.

Hercules tilted his head and looked at his blood-stained chest.

He was cut.

Blood was flowing.

Tududuk-.

As usual, Susanoo shook the blood off the sword and threw it to the ground.

Drops of blood fell in a straight line.

-I wish your body were in better shape.

Susanoo noticed that Hercules' body was not in normal condition.

Hercules was poisoned.

Naturally, his body became numb, and he found it difficult to gather strength.

['Abnormal State: Poisoning' increases to level 3]

The poisoning that stopped at level 2 increased to level 3.

It still didn't endanger his life.

At this point, Hercules' endurance would have allowed him to recover naturally.

But not in this situation.

"I wish I could wait for you, but..."

Spot-.

Susanoo's figure disappeared from view again.

"My master doesn't want me to."

And by master, he obviously meant YuWon.

In some way, he also wanted to win this bet.

Hercules: 'I feel trapped in a trap.'

Susano, armed with the Three Sacred Treasures, was strong.

Strong enough to hold him in a close combat.

YuWon's Lightning Bolts that came from afar were equally powerful.

A masterpiece created by Hephaestus based on Zeus' Lightning Bolt. If he continued to receive the borrowed Lightning Bolts' power, he would surely start to take damage little by little.

Moreover...

Right in this situation, he also had the Hydra's poison in his body.

"Is this how you set up this situation?"

Thud!

Kwagwagwag!

The club and the sword clashed. The power of the Magatama Jewel enveloped the sword, and Susano, without receiving a direct impact, moved aside using the Yata Mirror.

And as expected...

Flash!

A Lightning Bolt came from the same direction.

Kwang!

Hercules extended a hand and caught the Lightning Bolt. The Lightning Bolt trembled for a moment and shattered in Hercules' palm.

Crunch.

Hercules tightly clenched his trembling palm.

"The fight has turned into a prolonged battle."

This way, the fight wouldn't end so soon.

Susano charged at him again.

"Thirty minutes."

Woong.

When he forcefully swung the club he held in his hand...

"Somehow, I'll finish it within that time."

Crash!

The ground where Hercules stood overturned.

YuWon could feel the mana in his body rapidly depleting.

It was the mana used to maintain Susanoo.

"This is really nerve-wracking."

Zap, zap.

[The 'Uranus Heart' generates a Lightning Bolt]

He had already lost count of how many times he had seen this message.

It was probably the first time he had thrown so many Lightning Bolts. Even though he threw so many, Hercules endured them without flinching.

But if he stopped throwing Lightning Bolts, Susano would be in danger.

"Even a brief lapse would be dangerous."

Susanoo demonstrated his ability as expected.

Thanks to his overflowing Arcane Power, he could unleash his ability to its peak, handling the Three Sacred Treasures, including Kusanagi, at a level close to perfection.

Especially, his ability to handle Kusanagi was exceptional.

However, it was still not enough to take on Hercules, who wielded the Yggdrasil Club.

Woong!

The club swung with all its force.

Kwaah!

With a gust of wind, Susanoo's body was pushed back. Even without directly receiving the club's impact, its power was formidable.

"Not to mention, he's poisoned."

If it weren't for the Hydra's poison, what would have happened?

He wouldn't have lasted even 10 minutes, let alone 30.

Though the poison was gradually spreading, Hercules showed no signs of weakening.

In fact, he seemed to be growing stronger.

It was his mental strength.

"That's Hercules."

Someone with an unyielding will that couldn't be stopped by anything.

A Hero like steel who could break even the tallest walls.

Because of that, YuWon had no other choice but to fight as he was doing now.

Facing Hercules in his usual state was already a daunting task, even in his current form.

"I'm sorry."

He apologized to his future self, who knew.

And to the Hercules in front of him at that moment.

While apologizing for only being able to fight in this situation, YuWon threw his spear again.

"This time, I have to win."

Thwack-!

Susanoo's body was pushed backward.

The gust of wind emitted by the club.

That was the force that pushed Susanoo back.

-How...?

Susanoo couldn't complete his sentence, asking how Hercules didn't tire with that body.

It was because of Hercules' grip as he approached Susanoo directly to his face.

[The 'Magatama Jewel' restrains the target's movements]

[The target is resisting the effect of 'Magatama Jewel']

[Resistance has mostly succeeded]

Spot.

Hercules' hand grazed Susanoo's head.

It was really a minimal difference. If Susanoo hadn't slightly reduced Hercules' movements with the Magatama Jewel, he wouldn't have been able to avoid it.

Pat, pat.

Susanoo quickly moved away and wiped his chest.

It felt like a huge boar charging at him right in front. In that brief moment of relief, thinking that if he hadn't avoided it, it would have been the end.

"Now I understand some of your tricks."

Hercules' self-assured voice echoed.

"I won't let it pass next time."

It wasn't just a provocation.

Despite that, Susanoo couldn't stop.

No.

-Well, really...

He didn't stop.

-What will happen now?

Plop!

Faster than ever seen before.

Without stopping, he rushed towards Hercules head-on.

That was always Susanoo's way.

He didn't shy away from a fight even in situations where he could die, and he always came out victorious.

This time wouldn't be any different.

He believed that.

But...

"Didn't I tell you?"

That was because until now, Susanoo hadn't faced Hercules.

"I won't let it pass this time."

In the blink of an eye, the enormous club was right in front of his nose.

He had no idea what was happening or how it happened.

Crack!

Hercules' club swung, severing Susanoo's head and tearing his body into pieces. With a powerful gust of wind, the clouds in the direction the club was swung scattered like fluff thrown by the wind.

Whoosh.

A strong and powerful wind blew for a moment.

Puf... puf...

Susanoo's corpse turned into black smoke and disappeared.

Hercules, who had dealt with Susano'o, let out a long sigh. For a moment, he felt the tension loosening, and strength leaving his body.

At that moment...

Tsu, tsutsu, tsutsutsu...

He felt an Arcane Power of an unusual magnitude, different from everything before, coming from the direction where YuWon stood.

"One problem after another."

With his stamina diminished and his body feeling as heavy as a mountain, Hercules looked at YuWon.

Then he saw a black spear emanating immense Arcane Power, held in YuWon's hand.

The figure of Odin wielding Gungnir seemed to overlap with that of YuWon.

Chapter 337

C337

At the moment when Hercules swung his club towards Susanoo, he thought YuWon's spear would fly towards him.

That had been the pattern so far. There was no reason for it not to be.

Since he had been given enough time facing Susanoo, it was natural to throw the spear at that moment.

But he wondered why everything was so calm. There was a reason.

'It amplifies significantly as time passes.'

Even though he was in a position to throw the spear at any moment, he instinctively knew it was dangerous to give him time.

Even at that moment, it was still the case.

That spear was the only strike YuWon could deal that would be fatal to his own body.

Bang!

Hercules leaped with all his might.

In an instant, both felt as if all the time in the world had slowed down.

YuWon no longer hesitated.

Even though he had only taken half a step, he had to be content with that.

Shhhhhh...

The Arcane Power that had been building up intensified in an instant.

Thwack!

Finally, the spear shot out of YuWon's hand.

Kagagak...

Hercules quickly stopped his flying body and gripped his club with both hands.

The tip of the spear reflected in his eyes. He prepared to swing his club with all his might towards that point.

[The power of the Giants manifests in your arms]

The power of Gigantification had taken root in his two arms. His muscles trembled as if they were about to burst.

It was different from before.

That spear could be dangerous if he didn't block it.

Wooooong...

The club, made from a branch of the World Tree, swung with all its force.

And then...

Crashhh!

When the spear and the club collided, they created a stirring shockwave.

Thud, thud...

The spear didn't immediately fly away.

The spear held firm, as if it was resisting as tenaciously as he himself was.

But...

Thwoooong!

After a long struggle, Hercules finally redirected the spear in the opposite direction.

Hwak-!

Suddenly, Hercules's imposing figure appeared before YuWon's eyes.

However...

"It's over."

Buuummm...

Hercules's club couldn't reach YuWon.

"Thirty minutes."

Kwaaang!

The club passed by him.

Instead of swinging it, the club seemed to fall downward.

Yuwon didn't dodge or block the club.

Instead, he held a Player Kit in his hands.

[12:00:17]

After surpassing 30 minutes, another 17 seconds passed.

Yuwon was convinced that time was almost up.

At the exact moment he thought he had done it, time ran out completely.

"I..."

Yuwon said as he wiped his chest.

"I won."

Ziiik~

Hercules ripped off the bandages he had in his inventory and wrapped them around his body.

He applied medicine to the wounds to stop the bleeding. The wounds inflicted by Kusanagi delayed the recovery, leaving visible marks for quite some time.

On the other hand, although he had no visible wounds, YuWon had almost completely depleted his Arcane Power.

Thanks to that, both sat face to face, recovering.

'There are no mortal wounds.'

Yuwon examined Hercules's wounds.

'The sweat is probably due to the poison...'

The fact that the only damage Hercules received from Susanoo, who wielded Kusanagi, were only superficial wounds, showed how incredibly resilient his body was.

The wounds caused by the Lightning Bolt were not that significant either.

His skin only turned slightly red, but it wasn't a significant injury.

"You even guessed the time."

Hercules, who finished bandaging himself, opened his mouth.

Yuwon shook his head.

"No."

"Then?"

"It was faster than I expected. Much faster."

Thinking about it again, it gave him chills, and YuWon shook his head.

'I thought I could prolong it for another ten minutes.'

Forty minutes.

He believed he could fight long enough until he reached the limit of his Arcane Power.

Using the Heavenly Demon Spirit and his Gigantification, fighting alongside Susanoo.

He believed he could delay enough time to fight Hercules, who was poisoned by the Hydra.

But it was unexpected.

No matter how much he had obtained Yggdrasil's club, YuWon didn't expect Hercules to be so powerful.

"If he hadn't been poisoned, maybe I could have only lasted ten minutes."

Perhaps in this fight, the greatest contribution was not made by himself or Susanoo, but by the Hydra.

A monster comparable to Yamata no Orochi.

Thanks to fighting such an enemy and finishing it off, victory was possible.

The bleeding stopped quickly.

Hercules reached out nonchalantly.

"The horns?"

"I have them in my inventory."

"Give them to me."

YuWon obediently took out the horns and handed them to Hercules.

It was a different reaction from before.

Hercules, holding the shining horns in his hand, stored them in his inventory.

"The next one is Mount Erymanthos?"

"You seem to know quite well about the Twelve Labors. You even memorized them in order."

"I've studied a bit."

"Even if I allow you to accompany me, don't interfere in the Labors."

YuWon's request only went so far: the companionship.

However, Hercules had no intention of receiving any help at all for the Labors.

"That's the condition."

"Understood."

YuWon also had no intentions of being stubborn here.

After losing the bet, he didn't think Hercules would break his promise.

But there was also a line he wouldn't cross.

If the bet's conditions hadn't been "companionship" but "doing the Labors together," Hercules wouldn't have accepted the bet in the first place.

He would never break a promise like that.

However...

"Just in case, though."

There was something he needed to point out.

"Do you think Hera will stay idle?"

"I don't think so. Although I'm full of muscles, that doesn't mean my brain is the same."

That was true.

In terms of having the brain turned into muscles, he was closer to Sun Wukong than to Hercules.

Contrary to appearances, Hercules was quite deep and quick in his thinking. It's just that his unwavering sense of justice sometimes limited his vision.

"She's probably planning something right now."

"But why?"

"Still, it's a clear fact that she won't break our promise."

Hercules blinked his bright blue eyes as he spoke.

"If she does, I'll twist her neck first."

It was an unusually violent and frightening statement.

It also meant that Hercules was prepared for many things in this bet.

And this was a reality that Hera surely knew as well.

It was a bet with Hercules, no one else. If she didn't fulfill it, she would become his enemy.

It definitely shouldn't happen.

But for some reason, YuWon felt unease about these Labors.

"Do you think the Labors will go smoothly?"

"What are you saying?"

"What makes you think she'll just do that?"

It was Hercules, not anyone else.

He wasn't a man someone should worry about.

In a sense, he was similar to Sun Wukong, who possessed the power of immortality.

An absolute body that no sword or ability could affect.

He took Susanoo's sword, the Tower's greatest swordsman, with his own body, despite being poisoned by the Hydra's venom.

It can't be helped to believe in it.

Still, YuWon chose Hercules' side over Hera.

There were two reasons for that.

The first was Hargan's request.

To find Hercules and ensure his safety.

However, YuWon didn't come to look for Hercules solely because of that request.

"If I have to choose between Olympus and Hercules..."

There was no need to think much.

"Clearly, it's the latter."

Despite feeling sorry for Olympus, he had no other choice.

Since YuWon knew better than anyone the value of Hercules, even compared to all the Rankers of Olympus except Zeus, he had no choice but to make this decision.

Hercules' value was much higher than that of all the Rankers of Olympus, except Zeus.

From now on, his role would be to handle any variables that arose in the Labors.

He only wished for the safety of Olympus.

YuWon thought briefly to himself.

Please.

Let the current matter be just a small setback arising from Hera's ambition.

The palace/castle of Olympus was filled with Players.

Over a thousand Players. Several hundred Rankers.

A large number of people gathered and discussed a single topic.

It was about Hera, the High-Ranker who was the core of Olympus.

"If Hera doesn't back down, we have no choice but to respond firmly."

"That's right. The true ruler of Olympus, no matter what others say, is Hades-nim."

"He can unleash an army from the Underworld."

"There's no need to go that far. In our Dionysius altar..."

It was all words adorned with flattery and praise.

This was the second time the king changed in Olympus in its thousands of years of history.

When there's a change of leadership, the power dynamics change completely. Especially when a High-Ranker like Hades, who had no interest in politics, becomes king, this becomes even more inevitable.

To be able to be at the center of power, it was necessary to draw as much attention from Hades as possible.

Everyone present saw the conflict with Hera as an opportunity.

"It's a meaningless time."

Hades believed in the power of collective thinking, which said it's better to have more than one.

He thought that if he gathered a group of people in this number, at least one brilliant idea would come out.

But it turns out it wasn't so.

The people gathered here were so busy flattering that there wasn't a single person who presented a proper thought.

"Disperse."

"Then, in our Demeter's altar... what about?"

"It doesn't matter, just disperse."

A calm and dispassionate voice echoed in the hall.

The Rankers and Players who were hesitant quickly got up from their seats.

Hades was left alone in his seat, sinking his buttocks into the throne and looking up at the ceiling.

He felt exhausted.

"It seems this place is not suitable for me after all."

Poseidon and Zeus headed to Floor 100.

To break through the Ceiling and go even higher.

But Hades couldn't do that.

At that moment, Hera started to move, and Hades couldn't leave Olympus, which was already unstable.

But, after all, he wasn't fit for this position either.

No.

In reality, he didn't fit into mingling with so many people.

He hated complicated and difficult things, so he got stuck in the Underworld, where it was hard to find the shadow of a person. By seeking out the monsters of the Underworld, he became their savior and, as a result, became their king.

But for some reason, two of the Three Gods disappeared, and Hades ascended to the throne of Olympus.

A place that didn't belong to him.

"It would be better to hand it over to someone else."

To Hera.

It was at that moment he muttered that...

"That's right."

Tak~

Hades raised his head and looked straight ahead.

From the door to where the throne was, a long carpet extended.

In the center, a figure in a hooded robe walked slowly.

"Who are you?"

"Allow me to introduce myself for the first time."

In response to Hades' question, the hooded figure courteously bowed at the waist as a greeting.

"I come on behalf of Hera. My name is Foolish Chaos."

Chapter 338

C338

Boom, boom.

An enormous boar like a mountain exhaled through its nose.

Each step it took shook the ground. The hot breath turned into smoke and rose to the sky, while the surrounding air became suffocating.

All this was a change that occurred since the boar got angry.

"He's a very irascible type."

Boom!

Hercules firmly planted his two legs on the ground.

Holding the club in one hand, he observed the boar that appeared in front of him.

And YuWon, who was watching both from afar, took a peeled nut and put it in his mouth.

It was an exciting sight.

"Looking at it this way, it's like a scene from a movie."

Whoosh!

It was a shame there were no popcorn. It's a pity that something as fun as this spectacle can be enjoyed without doing anything other than watching.

The collision between the Erymanthian Boar and Hercules would probably end in an instant.

The Erymanthian Boar was as gigantic as Behemoth.

But Hercules' power was strong enough to throw it with one hand.

And it happened.

Kwaaang!

In YuWon's eyes, he saw the image of the huge boar rising into the sky.

Kweeeek!

Following the sound of the boar's snout being struck, it fell back to the ground.

Hercules, who struck the boar, hung the club back on his shoulder.

"It's hot."

Siiizzz.

The earth that had turned red gradually returned to normal.

The Erymanthian Boar was capable of igniting the earth with its breath and changing the weather.

Since that boar was defeated, it was natural for the weather to return to normal.

And this was the Fourth Labor entrusted to Hercules.

As he chewed on the nut, YuWon looked around.

"Nothing special has happened yet."

Now it was the Fourth Labor.

There were eight other Labors remaining.

At this rate, one month would be enough to complete all the Labors.

Woong.

It was at that moment that the Player Kit rang.

It was a message from Hargan.

YuWon had already informed him about his encounter with Hercules. He had no reason to communicate with him after that.

"Why is he calling me?"

Through the slightly trembling Player Kit, YuWon felt a strange unease.

"What happened?"

-Grand Uncle has passed away.

"Grand Uncle...?"

Two figures came to mind.

Poseidon and Hades.

After thinking for a moment, YuWon asked.

"Hades?"

-Yes! Grand Uncle Hades! He's dead!

Hargan's voice was tinged with malice.

A sign of the difficulty of the situation.

"Hades is dead? Suddenly?"

It was such unexpected news that he could hardly believe it.

Hades was the 51st High-Ranker in the Rankings. The fact that Hades died suddenly was shocking.

Moreover, it was known that he was recently in the center of Olympus.

"Tell me more in detail. What exactly happened?"

If Hades really died, the fight would become more difficult.

Currently, there was no one in Olympus who could continue the king's lineage. Hades was the most suitable for the position, followed by Hera.

But if Hades died, then the turn would pass to Hera.

-I don't know the details. But he was found dead in the middle of the Royal Castle all of a sudden.

"Suddenly...?"

-He was murdered, as if someone stealthily attacked him.

"Are there traces of a battle?"

-No, there's nothing. Absolutely nothing.

That meant he died in an instant, so fast that he couldn't even understand how it happened.

But that was impossible.

It was none other than Hades. Even if his opponent were Odin, Hades couldn't be easily killed.

At least, the other Rankers in the Royal Castle should have noticed something unusual.

But...

'Is it that guy?'

In YuWon's mind, there was a person.

There was someone who could have done that.

"Understood."

-Understood? What does that mean?

"Until you find the killer of Hades, the throne must remain empty. The king was murdered, so we must leave the position vacant until we find the culprit."

-Do you suspect Hera as the culprit?

Hargan quickly grasped YuWon's intention and asked curiously.

-But there's no way Hera could kill Grand Uncle. Quietly killing him like this is even more impossible.

Of course, Hera was not the culprit.

Even if she were the culprit, it was almost impossible to prove that it was her.

She didn't have the ability to do it.

"Whether Hera is the culprit or not, if it's a matter of the throne succession, it will be delayed. We'll be able to gain some time."

-Gain time, is that the point?

"Yes."

-How much time?

"As much as possible."

Originally, he hoped this was just an incident caused by Hera's ambition, but now it was no longer the case.

"You probably want to hurry up a bit from your side."

-...Understood.

The conversation with Hargan ended there.

He didn't know if the call was made in the midst of an urgent situation, but through the tone of the call, he seemed to hear the desperate voice of someone else.

"What's wrong?"

Was it because of YuWon's unusual expression?

Hercules, who had finished with the boar's breath and approached, asked.

After thinking for a moment, YuWon transmitted to Hercules the conversation he had with Hargan.

Then...

"...Something's wrong."

Hercules muttered with a serious expression.

"Hera moved first..."

"What are you going to do?"

"What do you mean?"

"I'm asking if we're going to continue with the Labors."

His concern continued.

A moment later.

"Wait."

Hercules took out his Player Kit and called someone.

The ringing tone lasted. After a quite long time, the other person answered.

-What's up?

"Hera, have you heard the news?"

The voice sounded quite indifferent, as if she hadn't heard of the death of the King of Olympus yet.

That person was Hera.

The wife of Zeus, the former King of Olympus, and High-Ranker at position 97.

-What news?

"Haven't you heard yet?"

A brief silence.

The response came with a tardy rhythm.

-Do you think it was me?

"Wasn't it?"

-Impossible. I don't have that power.

Hera's excuse was virtually invincible. Indeed, it was almost impossible for her to have killed Hades with her own abilities.

Naturally, Hercules didn't expect her to easily confess to what she had done.

Instead, what Hercules wanted to hear was something else.

"Is the deal still valid?"

-Of course.

"Keep that in mind."

There was a crunch.

Hercules clenched his teeth.

A voice full of contained anger escaped his throat.

"If you don't keep your promise, I'll break your neck first."

-I promise, she replied.

"I'll end the call."

Click.

Hercules hung up.

YuWon, who had been listening to the conversation, looked at Hercules' back.

He didn't need to see his expression to know.

He knew exactly what Hercules was thinking and how much fury he harbored at the moment.

"Tell me," said Hercules without turning around.

"How much time do you think we have?" He referred to the time until the ceremony of the vacant throne succession.

YuWon briefly reflected and recalled his conversation with Hargan before answering.

"Short term, about ten days. Long term, around two weeks."

"Ten days..."

It wasn't much time at all.

There were eight Labors left to fulfill.

Each Labor was not easy at all. In fact, the time they had was insufficient to carry out all the Labors.

Hercules quickly dialed another number.

The ringing tone was brief.

-Hey, what's up? I couldn't reach you all this time!

"Sorry, Brother Apollo."

Hercules hurriedly apologized along with his apologies.

"Could you lend me the Sun Chariot?"

Not many years had passed since Zeus disappeared and the King changed.

But right now, Olympus had lost another King.

They couldn't leave the King's throne vacant. Olympus heard two voices at the same time: the need to choose a new King and the need to avenge the former King.

And among those voices...

Tick-.

The center of Hera's temple.

Hera, sitting at the long round table, turned her Player Kit.

"Arrogant brat!"

Hera muttered in irritation, her face full of nervousness.

"How dare he, a nobody like him, speak to me that way?"

In the years past, she was the Queen of Olympus.

A being just below the mighty Zeus.

Even Poseidon and Hades, the Three Gods, couldn't mock her lightly.

No.

They couldn't even look her directly in the eyes.

But Hercules was an exception.

"Where are you, Hera?!" (Hercules)

At some point, she seemed to hear the voice of the one who stormed into her temple and shouted at her.

She wasn't in the temple, but she had seen the situation through the records.

Since then and until now, Hera had never tolerated Hercules' existence.

"That son of a concubine..."

"But his ability is really impressive."

A voice sounded without warning.

Hera startled but tried to maintain composure as she turned her head without showing her surprise.

"Have you come?"

"Yes."

Beside her, a man dressed in a tunic bowed courteously in greeting.

Although she had never seen his face, she could clearly sense how grand the existence of this person was through this incident.

"I hope you don't let your emotions get the better of you, and the Labor progresses smoothly."

"...I only trust you."

He called himself "Foolish Chaos" and approached without revealing his face or identity.

She had no intention of accepting someone who approached without showing their face from the beginning.

However, from this incident onwards, she came to trust him completely.

Or rather, she began to fear him.

"If I kill Hades, will you believe me?" (Foolish Chaos)

She thought it was something unimaginable.

How could someone without any Rank do that?

But she accepted the proposal with the thought of "well, what else do I have to lose?"

But it turned out he really proved his words.

He was not only superior in intelligence but also in power.

'Hercules is distracted, and Hades is dead.'

When Hera started this affair, she thought of two main obstacles.

Hades and Hercules.

However, one died, and the other accepted an absurd bet and was wasting time outside of Olympus.

"It's almost complete."

"We shouldn't jump to conclusions."

Extremely high expectations mixed with cold water.

Hera, who had been slowly raising the corner of her mouth, returned to her original position and asked.

"What else is left?"

"If he's involved, the outcome might change."

"Who do you mean by he?"

Foolish Chaos, who had been observing by her side, was confident in all cases.

However... this same person said the outcome might change.

Hera had never imagined those words would come out of his mouth.

"Who are you talking about?"

"Kim YuWon."

"Kim YuWon?"

She had heard that name many times.

No.

She didn't just hear it in passing.

Perhaps it was this individual who caused her to be in this situation.

The main culprit behind triggering the Destruction of Olympus, instigating Hades and Hercules.
That individual was Kim YuWon.

"Are you saying that guy will get involved again?"

"There's a high probability."

Under the tight tunic.

Hera noticed how the corner of Foolish Chaos' lips slightly lifted.

"If that happens, this fight will turn into a battle between him and me."

Chapter 339

C339

An exclusive treasure of Apollo radiating a suffocating heat to its core.

It is one of the items known as the fastest means of transportation in this Tower.

The Sun Chariot.

YuWon and Hercules were riding on it, in motion.

Zzz~

Hercules fell asleep.

It's incredible how he can sleep so well in this situation.

He's probably doing it to conserve energy even at times like this.

'Yes, it's not an easy task.'

The battle against the Hydra and the capture of the Erymanthian Boar, all those Labors were not easy. Moreover, Hercules kept moving tirelessly to quickly finish the wager with Hera.

He must have accumulated a lot of fatigue until now.

'For now, we'll let him be.'

The core of this fight was him.

'Hercules rarely shows such determination. It's uncommon,' thought YuWon to himself.

Hercules had a natural aversion to fights.

Whenever it wasn't absolutely necessary, Hercules avoided using his fists. That's why, during the thousand years that passed until the Gigantomachy War started again, he only limited himself to cutting trees in the forest.

Even if it was necessary, it was the same.

He didn't excessively use his fists. It was because he knew the kind of power his fist had and what consequences could arise from it.

But this time was different.

"The problem lies on the other side."

If Hera takes control of Olympus, the story will change.

There was no way Foolish Chaos hadn't taken Hercules into account. Surely, he had calculated everything, including Hercules, from the beginning.

So, Hercules was no longer the universal key that could resolve all events.

Shu~

Focusing, Yoo Won stared at the floor of the solar chariot.

Shik~

Just as he was planning, YuWon started drawing on the floor using the sheath of his knife.

'I have to find the main key.'

In individual fights, strength and weakness were everything, but in a great battle like this, there was always a key.

'He has completely changed the board.'

Crack, swoosh.

Olympus.

Hera.

Foolish Chaos.

Hercules.

And even Hades, who is already dead.

By drawing detailed relationships, each of them appeared before YuWon's eyes like chess pieces.

'I also need to redraw the board.'

The most powerful piece was Hercules.

But the opponent's pieces were not clearly visible, as if they were hidden in dense fog.

'I need a variable.'

What is the best move in this current situation?

As he slowly pondered, YuWon continued drawing.

Thump-.

The Sun Chariot landed on the ground.

When the heavy weight fell, Hercules, who was sleeping, woke up.

How long had he slept?

Hercules, rubbing his sleepy eyes, opened his mouth and yawned.

"Have we arrived already? Ah, I'm so tired..."

It really felt like he had slept deeply after such a long time.

Well...

Since the mission started, it seemed like he hadn't rested properly.

Suddenly, he thought the Sun Chariot was cool.

"That guy..."

After waking up, Hercules searched for YuWon first.

There were no signs around him.

It seemed like YuWon wasn't sleeping either.

But...

"What are you doing now?"

YuWon, who had his back to Hercules, was sitting with crossed arms.

Hercules, asking the question, soon closed his mouth.

He wanted to move as fast as possible to carry out the next Labor, but it felt different from usual.

YuWon didn't respond even when called.

He wasn't sleeping.

It meant he was immersed in his thoughts.

How much more time had he spent like that?

"Contact Athena."

YuWon, who was staring at the Player Kit in front of him, opened his mouth.

"For the time being..."

YuWon's words trailed off.

Waiting for YuWon to finish speaking, Hercules furrowed his brow and asked, pressing his forehead with his fingers.

"Is it really going to happen like that?"

"For now, it seems to be the most viable option. I don't think they want to delay any longer from the other side," YuWon replied.

"Well, that's true, but..."

"You have nothing to lose by trusting. It doesn't hurt to have insurance in case things go wrong," YuWon said.

"Yeah, that's true."

Upon hearing those words, Hercules nodded and took out his Player Kit to send a message to Apollo.

With a clumsy finger, he slowly typed the message. After writing the message, Hercules stood up from his spot.

"Let the other side take care of that. Are you going to stay here?"

"Yes."

"If you don't intend to help anyway, why insist on staying here? It would be better to help the other side if you really want to assist."

This was the Fourth Labor completed, but Hercules was confident he could handle it himself with his own strength.

Thus, he felt YuWon's company was an unnecessary waste of manpower.

But...

"Don't you regret saying that?"

".....?"

YuWon's words sounded so assured that Hercules appeared bewildered.

Then, with self-assurance, Hercules patted his chest with one hand.

"I can handle what's left by myself."

"Really?"

It was a meaningful declaration and a meaningful expression.

"Keep that promise without fail."

YuWon, getting up from his seat, started walking with what seemed to be a cheerful expression.

And then, half a day later.

Thump-.

With arms full of strength, Hercules held a shovel the size of a house and muttered with a furrowed brow.

"What's with all these Labors..."

Muuuuu~

The enormous bulls mooed. Even at this moment, they kept eating and defecating in proportion to their size.

And there was Hercules, cleaning up the excrement of these bulls, even those that hadn't been cleaned in a thousand years.

It was a task he could never get used to.

Cleaning such a large amount of excrement was no easy task, even for someone with brute strength like Hercules. However, the problem didn't lie in strength but in the "smell."

Barely half a day had passed since he started, and Hercules was experiencing a hell like never before.

And at that moment, his Player Kit chimed.

[Kim YuWon: Are you sure you don't need help?]

Ding...

A message that seemed to know everything about the situation.

"That bastard..."

Hercules was truly angry at someone after a long time.

If YuWon were in front of him, he would have wanted to punch him right away.

But there was nothing he could do.

He had already spoken the words and couldn't take them back.

Puff...

Finally, Hercules began his frustrating Labor again. The bulls continued to mess up the place in front of him, and that was the only response he got. Meanwhile, YuWon observed the scene from a distance, out of the reach of the foul smell.

"Always stubborn..."

It was his determination to complete the Labor somehow and defeat Hera.

After Hades' death, Hercules' determination grew even stronger. He thought that if this continued, Olympus might face calamity.

That was why he clung to the Labor.

In his heart, YuWon hoped he would choose to fight against Hera even if it meant certain sacrifice, rather than an uncertain gamble...

"But that's not like him."

In his adventures, Hercules always sought the best possible outcome. That was the very essence of Hercules and the reason why he was called a Hero. He was always willing to sacrifice himself to achieve beneficial results for everyone.

Puff...

YuWon watched Hercules, who with just one shovel quickly gathered the excrement.

It was a truly terrifying speed.

Using even his Gigantification, the skill with which Hercules wielded the shovel was awe-inspiring.

"This is the fifth one."

The most challenging Labor according to Hercules, along with the Third Labor.

"If he moves..."

YuWon watched that scene with pleasure as he remembered the upcoming Labors.

The Sixth Labor, capturing the Stymphalian Birds.

The Seventh Labor, capturing the Cretan Bull.....

The Tenth Labor, bringing the Cattle of Geryon back alive.

And in the eleventh...

"Will it be in the eleventh?"

Out of a total of Twelve Labors.

YuWon recalled the Eleventh Labor.

Fetching the golden apple from the Garden of the Hesperides.

That was the goal of the Eleventh Labor.

However, YuWon wasn't interested in the golden apple.

Instead, there was something he had to obtain from that garden.

"My mother, Thetis, wanted to make me an immortal being."

Achilles.

A High-Ranker of Olympus, a higher rank compared to his abilities.

There was a reason for that.

It was due to a unique characteristic he possessed.

"So, when I was born, my mother dipped my body in the River Styx and anointed me with ambrosia."

His enduring resilience.

Achilles' endurance, which never waned and never died, was almost immortal.

However...

"The result was a failure. Immortality? How can there be any effect just by anointing it on the body? I might have become slightly more resilient, but I am not immortal. Everyone, remember. No matter what elixir it is, don't apply it on the skin, always ingest it."

Saying that, Achilles glanced sideways at Son OhGong.

It was evident that he was envious of Son OhGong, a true immortal being unlike himself.

"Then, where did you get it?"

Thus, one after another, he revealed his secrets.

"I don't know. I only know it's next to the golden apple tree."

"Golden apple tree?" (Hercules)

A surprised voice murmured.

Everyone's gaze turned to the owner of the voice.

Though those words were spoken in a low voice, Hercules' voice was so deep and strong that it couldn't be ignored.

Thus, amid the concentrated gazes...

Hercules opened his mouth with a somewhat embarrassed expression and a much softer voice than before.

"I went there once..."

In a castle above the clouds.

Hera arrived at the most sacred castle, Olympus.

Thousands of Players and Rankers followed her in flying carriages through the sky.

Step, step.

Hera stepped onto the castle in the clouds and took a deep breath.

The red fabric that enveloped her fluttered in the wind, and the fresh air tickled her nose.

"It's been a long time since I've been here too."

It used to feel like home in the past.

But after Zeus' subjugation.

She never returned to this place.

Step, step.

Many Rankers and Players were blocking her path.

Hera headed towards the blond man at the front.

"I've come to claim my place."

"Please return from where you came."

Hargan.

He stared at her and said.

"The funeral has not yet taken place."

"Does the order matter to you?"

"Please return from where you came."

At that moment...

Chas.

The Rankers on the side of Olympus (Royal Castle) responded to Athena's gesture by assuming a stance that seemed to indicate they would soon unsheathe their weapons and use their abilities.

"Otherwise, I'll consider you my enemy."

"Do you have any means to stop me?"

Swish.

Hera's gaze turned to Athena, who held the Aegis Shield.

"It will be difficult with just her."

Hargan sensed Hera's words.

Hercules is gone, Hades is dead.

Apollo and his sister refused to fight their own mother. Even if they became enemies, they couldn't attack the mother who brought them into the world.

Only Athena remained as a force.

The power of Olympus had weakened.

And Hera seized that opportunity.

Hargan: "You're right."

It was truly surprising.

Hargan: "But there is still a way."

Suddenly, Hera found it strange.

"How can he be so sure in this situation?"

Then, Hargan stepped aside.

Beautiful hair as if dyed orange.

Smooth, white skin, and a much clearer focus than before.

She had only seen her face once, but it was an unforgettable face.

Hera: "... Pandora?"

Long ago.

The cursed girl who opened the box appeared here.

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"Perhaps they are also preparing," Foolish Chaos thought, warning Hera about the danger.

With a fairly high probability, Olympus would be getting ready to stop her.

"Get in touch with Apollo and his sister. Tell them I don't want to kill my own blood. Under no circumstances. They must not raise their voices or try to coerce me," he said.

Upon hearing those words, Hera immediately contacted Apollo and Artemis.

How could a mother fight against her own children?

How could they leave her with such a terrible memory?

Thus, appealing to their compassion, Apollo and his sister finally gave up on fighting her.

It was just as Foolish Chaos had said.

"Once you take care of Apollo and his sister, there will be no more obstacles. Even if Athena is present, she won't be able to stop venerable Hera," he asserted.

After hearing Foolish Chaos' response, Hera couldn't contain her excitement any longer.

She wished to return quickly to her home, the majestic Olympus.

So, Hera began to prepare her forces.

Foolish Chaos didn't try to stop her.

Hera took it as a sign of permission.

But...

Why exactly...

"Why the hell is she here?"

A woman with hair as red as blood, whose beauty was unforgettable at first sight.

She used to be an ordinary Ranker who received a box from Zeus a long time ago.

Pandora was as beautiful as Tsukuyomi of the Three Precious Children, making her popular even in Olympus. Many men adored her, and many women envied her.

Hera was one of them too.

That's why...

Hera chose Pandora as the owner of the "box."

She had heard rumors, but...

Her head throbbed as she saw Pandora appear in front of her.

'How can she be so well?'

Surely, she should have been disabled in exchange for obtaining great power.

It was hard to understand.

The fact that she was here.

And her appearance so perfect in Hera's eyes.

Everything about her displeased Hera.

"Well..."

Hargan smiled at Hera's hesitation.

"What will you do now?"

The situation had just changed.

Hera couldn't answer immediately.

Pandora was someone who couldn't be judged by her rank. Even the Rank Management Office couldn't properly assess her.

The reason was simple.

She had not been active for a long time.

After opening the box, Olympus imprisoned her as Pandora couldn't be controlled.

As a result, she was relegated outside the Top 200 Rankings. With time passing without any activity, her influence and power were underestimated by the Rank Management Office.

But Hera, no one else but her, knew.

What kind of power was inside that "box."

"If this turns into a total battle, I can't predict who will win or lose."

Hera, she was also a High-Ranker within the top 100, but her opponent wasn't easy to handle.

Athena and Pandora, the Heroines of the Gigantomachy War. Even Hera couldn't be sure of victory against the two of them.

Chak~

Hera's teeth gritted.

The moment she had been waiting for so long had finally come.

Hera: "After the king's funeral..."

Did she have to leave like this?

Hera: "At that time, I'll come back again."

Woosh...

Hera turned her body, and the soldiers began to retreat following her signal.

Hargan didn't let his guard down until they were all gone. Athena was ready to draw her sword at any moment, and Pandora also stared intently at Hera's back with her shining eyes.

However, fortunately, nothing special happened.

Hera left.

For now.

"Huah..."

Hargan, whose tension had eased, let out a frustrated sigh.

And then, immediately...

He took out his Player Kit and called YuWon.

"...Ah, she just left, but she'll be back."

-...Ah, she just left, but she'll be back.

From the first sentence, YuWon could understand.

Fortunately, it seems everything went well.

-She says she'll come after the funeral. Will she really come at that time?

"I don't think she'll wait that long. It'll just take some time to prepare."

-I suspected so, but I didn't think she would move so fast. How much time has passed since my Great Uncle left? Seriously, this is too much.

Hargan anxiously mumbled, then spoke in a hurried voice.

-Anyway, it looks like we've overcome that obstacle. Thanks to that, we gained some time. And I'm sorry. I'm busy over here too.

-YuWon, when are you coming?

-Just wait a moment, Pandora... Hey, I'll contact you later.

The call ended abruptly.

YuWon stared at the Player Kit he held in his hands for a moment and asked, "What happened?"

He put the Player Kit back into his inventory due to the sudden and noisy disconnection.

Right in front of him, Hercules was carrying out his Ninth Labor.

Hercules was fighting against the Amazon warriors alone.

Observing that scene, YuWon recalled Pandora's face.

'Even if it's just a part, if she possesses the power of an Outer God...'

When they first met, YuWon felt like he had found a treasure.

If he could win her over to his side, she would have value beyond simply being a source of power.

'She is one of the few existences that elude the gaze of Foolish Chaos.'

Foolish Chaos had special eyes.

Because of those eyes, YuWon and his colleagues had lost many things. It seemed like he could see everything in the palm of his hand within this tower.

Using that ability, Foolish Chaos had planned many things.

The goal was to plunge the Tower into chaos and destroy it.

Pandora was the only one capable of evading Foolish Chaos' eyes.

Because she didn't fully belong to this Tower.

"Moo..."

YuWon looked up at the sound of cows mooing.

It seemed that the task was being resolved satisfactorily.

"What's happening?"

Hercules, who was sweating profusely as if under a shower of sweat, approached.

He held the Belt of the Amazon warriors in his hand.

'It was a success.'

The Amazon warriors were one of the most dangerous tribes in this Tower.

Each warrior was a battle-obsessed Ranker, and the tribe had strength comparable to a Great Guild.

And this task was precisely to retrieve the belts of those warriors.

Naturally, conflict was inevitable, and Hercules emerged victorious against them.

Of course...

'For a while, the Amazon warriors will become enemies of Olympus.'

Well, that's something Olympus will deal with later.

"It seems that Hera went to Olympus."

YuWon responded with a slight delay, and Hercules, who was wiping his sweat with a towel, stopped.

"Hera?"

"Yes."

"Why did she go there?"

"The reason is obvious."

Hercules let out a deep sigh.

It's not that he hadn't expected this to happen, but it was still too fast.

"Anyway, it looks like the other side managed to get past her somehow."

"Confronting Pandora is also a burden for Hera."

"That's fortunate."

They overcame that obstacle.

Though they gained some time, they didn't know how much.

Hera began to move.

Just with that fact, Hercules couldn't help but feel anxious.

"We'll have to hurry a little more."

"No need to rush."

Boom!

Hercules exploded at YuWon's response.

When he punched one of the rocks YuWon was leaning against, the rock shattered into pieces, turning into sand and falling down in a steady stream.

"Sometimes, that about you annoys me."

Crunch!

A vein appeared on his forehead.

Hercules, unable to hide his emotions to this point. It was not a common sight at all.

"I get it. You're clever. You can always anticipate a few moves ahead, as if you even know the future."

Crack!

The rock he held in his hand turned into sand and spilled from Hercules' hand.

"But I'm going crazy. Because I'm impatient. Fearing that the ground we've built in Olympus will collapse. Fearing it will vanish into the blood-stained history."

Plop!

Hercules wasn't undertaking these Twelve Labors for no reason.

He was doing it to end this fight with the least damage possible.

Although he knew what was happening in Olympus, he was still present in this place.

"Great Uncle Hades is dead."

The death of Hades.

That lit the already hurried heart of Hercules.

He hadn't seen him many times.

But he was his relative and his family.

"The situation has become uncontrollable. You also know..."

"He's alive."

Hercules' eyes widened.

Unable to complete what he was going to say, Hercules repeated the same phrase with surprised eyes.

"What...?"

What did he just hear?

As he stopped his words and fell silent, the sound of the approaching Amazon warriors could be heard from afar.

And only then...

"He is... alive?"

Hercules understood the meaning of YuWon's words and asked.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Just that it might be a possibility."

"I can't just take it as a casual word if it comes from your mouth."

Surely.

It wasn't just a casual word.

To say that Hades was not dead even after hearing that he was dead, especially in front of someone with a blood relationship with Hades like Hercules, was a statement that had to be treated with more care.

Though he knew that, YuWon spoke those words for two reasons, probably.

"To gain confidence and calm down, isn't it?"

'You're perceptive.'

However, there was nothing to say.

This situation was different from when Pandora was moving.

He just hoped it was a repetition of what had happened once.

That's why YuWon couldn't respond in detail to Hercules' words.

"Let's go. There's not much time left."

"Don't you have any intention of saying anything?"

"I have nothing to say."

"...Although it's frustrating, I feel a little more relieved."

Perhaps Hades is still alive.

With just that hope, more than half of the impatience building up in Hercules disappeared.

"Here he is!"

"Hercules is here!"

"He's stolen the symbol of the Amazon warriors!"

Chased by the fierce warriors, Hercules began to move.

"We must hurry now. Let's go."

Hercules headed back towards the Sun Chariot.

Now, there were only three Labors left.

Yuwon followed behind Hercules. At the same time, he reflected on Hargan's contact and remembered the situation there.

'It's faster than I thought.'

He had already encountered an obstacle.

Hera couldn't give up this easily. Everyone knew how obsessive she was about the throne.

Once she started a wave, it couldn't be stopped.

Hera would move once again.

This time, worrying about Pandora as well. She would probably consider other ways.

"Although it would be easier if Hades is alive, but..."

Tump-.

"I don't know when or how he will come back."

YuWon regretted not being able to give Hercules a proper answer, but at this moment, there were no words he could say.

Cause, process, result.

Of the three, the only thing YuWon knew was the result.

In this situation, he couldn't deal with Hades.

He had to think about it, setting Hades aside for now.

However, he still had faith.

"It's no one else but Hades."

Hades, the God of Death.

A name given to him because of his closeness to death.

And also for being a High-Ranker who has even defeated death and come back.