

With The Gods 381

Chapter 381

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Thrrrr-.

YuWon's eyelids slowly lifted.

It felt as if his body floated in the air. The sound of the air surrounding his skin and the loud noises around him had completely disappeared.

'It's like a hallucination...'

YuWon touched his throat.

He couldn't hear his voice. It was clear that this place was disconnected from reality.

'Perhaps it's an illusion.'

Twitch...

Something moved over YuWon's head. When he looked up, he saw someone familiar fluttering about.

"Baat..."

"Danpung?"

While everyone around him had disappeared, Danpung stood on YuWon's head as if nothing had happened.

It seemed like they had arrived together in this place.

However, strangely, unlike YuWon, who couldn't make any sounds, Danpung seemed to be fine.

"Baa, baaat..."

'What the hell is he trying to say?'

Crackle...

At that moment.

A new scene appeared on the black canvas that stretched before his eyes.

Dry leaves rustled against each other, devoid of any moisture. YuWon found himself in a dense black woods, and the wind occasionally blew through the thick undergrowth.

The only word that came to his mind was "Black Woods."

YuWon had seen this landscape once before.

And most likely, it was when he met this creature.

Shhh...

Two pupils appeared in the Black Woods. A crouching goat looked at him and Danpung.

"Beeeh, beeeh..."

"Beeh, beeeeh..."

Goats living in the Black Woods and scattered goats everywhere.

The voices of the goats filled the air, and YuWon's mind was embraced by their melody.

But then, at that moment...

Tuk...

"Baat..."

Danpung tapped YuWon's head.

His slowly drifting mind returned to normal. YuWon shook his head once and raised his hand above his head.

Danpung gently climbed onto YuWon's palm.

"It's okay. Recover."

A voice sounded.

Kim YuWon walked into the woods. He was heading towards Shub-Niggurath, who was crouched somewhere inside the woods.

Ttok...

"Beeh, beeeh..."

As he walked toward the center of the woods, the gazes of the goats turned toward him. The red eyes that appeared all around him were threatening. They were ready to swarm him if he made a single wrong move.

He finally reached the end of the Black Woods.

Goooong...

There, a gigantic goat was crouched.

'Shub-Niggurath.'

YuWon swallowed hard. Although he had expected to encounter him here, involuntarily, a lump formed in his throat.

It's not that YuWon was weak at all. But in the presence of this being, he couldn't help but feel weak.

Beeeh...

The Black Goat of the Woods lowered its head and let out a bleat. The madness flowing in its eyes pressed against YuWon's body.

Menacing, but YuWon knew it clearly.

What he had in front of his eyes was not the real Shub-Niggurath.

YuWon found something in the pupils of the giant goat.

Why would he have been called here?

YuWon stared at Shub-Niggurath's eyes for a while and found something in the center of those large pupils.

'Is it you?'

"Baat..."

Shub-Niggurath seemed interested only in Danpung, not in Kim YuWon.

-It's just as Nyarla said.

It was a familiar name.

YuWon looked around in surprise. The voice entered his mind like the System, and there were only young goats around.

That meant...

"Is this your voice?"

There was no response. It was as if his voice didn't matter at all.

-## ### has become such a small vessel. Is it a return to the beginning or a new evolution...?

'Is he talking about Danpung?'

Danpung had just hatched from his Egg. His birth had occurred only a few years ago, which was insignificant compared to the eons of time the Outer Gods and Shub-Niggurath had existed.

YuWon was curious about what the name he hadn't heard meant.

How could Danpung know so much about himself when he had just hatched from an Egg?

What was this being?

But Kim YuWon didn't ask.

'He probably won't hear.'

This was Shub-Niggurath's space.

He saw only what he wanted to see, and YuWon didn't exist in his eyes.

Probably, his voice wouldn't transmit either.

Silent steps...

The trees of the Black Woods where YuWon stood began to decompose. The dry leaves, devoid of any moisture, broke apart and turned into falling earth. The goats returned to Shub-Niggurath's embrace.

Shub-Niggurath's attention reached there.

The being that had raised its head for a moment lowered it again and crouched.

-Anyway, we've confirmed enough, so now...

The world spinning around Shub-Niggurath gradually disappeared.

And at that moment...

"Baaat, baat..."

Danpung began to approach Shub-Niggurath.

Tick, tock...

['Time Reversion' is beginning.]

Gu, gu, gu...

The collapsed wall began to restore itself to its original form.

Son Ohgong, who had been forcibly opening the Golden Headband and injecting Arcane Power into the Ru Yi Bang, looked around.

"Chronos?"

Grrr...

The Golden Cinder Eyes examined his surroundings. Finding the opponent he sought was child's play for him.

Over there...

Chronos was approaching.

Woosh...

Chronos' hair was gradually turning white.

To the naked eye, the change was so subtle that it was barely noticeable.

But Son OhGong saw it.

Chronos was sacrificing his own life to do it.

Just like when he sent YuWon back to the past.

Labored breathing...

The sound played in reverse. The crack that Shub-Niggurath had worked so hard on was gradually closing, and the wall was being repaired.

But in the reverse time flow...

There was a single entity moving in the opposite direction.

-Beeh... Beeeh!

The Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young.

Shub-Niggurath was trying to tear open the rift again and enter.

"Time doesn't affect these Outer creatures."

The incomprehensible beings, including the world they inhabit and the flow of time, are immune.

Among these Outer Gods, Shub-Niggurath was one of the most powerful.

Even if Chronos acquired power similar to theirs, rewinding time to send Shub-Niggurath back to its place of origin would be an impossible task.

"Push it."

"No need to tell me."

Son OhGong raised his Ru Yi Bang.

"Grow..."

Buzz...

The Golden Headband Son OhGong wore began to glow.

"Ru Yi."

Chung!

Ru Yi Bang pushed Shub-Niggurath's body.

And that wasn't all.

Buzzzz...

Hundreds of magic circles were etched on the surface of the gigantic Ru Yi Bang.

"It's been a while since I supported you."

Odin raised his hands and bestowed spells upon Son OhGong's Ru Yi Bang.

Ka-ga-ga-ga-gak...

Son OhGong's Ru Yi Bang filled with strength. Odin decided it would be better to assist Son OhGong rather than use his own fist, which was already completely broken.

Chronos' Time Reversion.

Son OhGong's Ru Yi Bang.

And Odin's magic.

When three of the Tower's most prominent High-Rankers began channeling their power, Shub-Niggurath's body began to slowly retract.

Ki-ki-ki-gik...

His body, which had shown no signs of movement until now, began to retreat.

"Now is the time!"

"Attack with everything you've got!"

"This is our chance! Push that monster out of here!"

The other Rankers who had been watching from a distance also began to move.

They all shared the same goal.

To push Shub-Niggurath back to the other side of the wall.

Ku-ggung... Ku-gu-gu-gung...

Kwa-uuuu...

The wall was smoothly restored, and Shub-Niggurath began to retreat slowly.

From the outside, it seemed like everything was over.

But...

Pas-sus-sus...

Chronos's beard dried up and turned to dust, scattering into the air.

Chronos's hair and beard, which had slowly turned white, became those of an old man.

The wrinkles on his face deepened. Son OhGong observed Chronos's face.

"That old man..."

Chronos's power was not infinite.

There were certainly limits to the amount of time he could use. Moreover, unlike the magic that ordinary Players used, his power did not regenerate over time.

When all his power ran out, Chronos would disappear from this world once again.

This time, it might result in an even worse outcome than being thrown out of the Tower.

-Beee-h!

Thud-d-d-d...

Shub-Niggurath waved its purple fur and tore through the wall regenerating around it.

As Chronos reconstructed the wall, the speed at which Shub-Niggurath tore it apart and opened the rift also increased.

As if mocking everyone in the Tower.

So...

'There's no other choice.'

Kwok...

Son OhGong grabbed the Golden Headband that encircled his head.

-This is a curse that seals your power. However, it is a curse that must not be released.

On the Celestial Floor.

Son OhGong heard the same words he had heard before returning.

'But this time, I know how to break it.'

A brief hesitation.

'If I break this...'

Son OhGong tilted his head.

That was all he thought. Instead of watching Shub-Niggurath enter the Tower, it would be better to release the seal.

Probably, if Shub-Niggurath entered the Tower, it would cause an even greater catastrophe.

So, just as Son OhGong was preparing to break the seal of the Golden Headband...

"Stop."

Kwok...

A hand extended from behind and grabbed Son OhGong's wrist.

Son OhGong turned his head. Although he had recognized him by his voice, YuWon, who had been in a trance for a moment, was holding him.

"There's no other way."

Son OhGong was firm.

In his mind, this was the only way to remedy the situation at this moment.

In reality, Odin, who was also fighting by his side, was in the same situation, without options.

But even so, YuWon shook his head.

"It doesn't have to be done this way."

"Is there another way?"

"Yes."

Son OhGong frowned at YuWon's response without hesitation. The strength in the hand holding the Golden Headband loosened.

Was there really another way?

YuWon's gaze shifted away from Son OhGong's face, who was asking what other option there was.

"From now on..."

Above Shub-Niggurath's head...

Swish... Grr...

A black mouth revealed its teeth in the direction of Shub-Niggurath's neck.

"He'll do it himself."

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['Predator' bares its teeth towards 'Shub-Niggurath']

Kwok...

The Predator bared its teeth towards Shub-Niggurath.

YuWon observed that scene.

If what he had experienced hadn't just been a dream, then undoubtedly...

Kwack!

Those teeth would pierce through Shub-Niggurath's robust body.

Kwaduk, Kwakwadduk...

The Predator's teeth sank into Shub-Niggurath's neck.

There was no blood.

Instead, the goat that formed Shub-Niggurath's body began to bleat.

Beee, beeeeeeee...

Were they suffering in place of their mother?

The Rankers, who had been pouring out their abilities as the goat bleated for a long time, clutched their heads.

"Stop... Kugh... What kind of convulsion is this all of a sudden?"

"Aaah! Aaah!"

Their heads throbbed, and their vision became blurry.

In one way or another.

Even the Rankers, including Son OhGong and Odin, who were closer to Shub-Niggurath, lost their expressions as they gaped in astonishment at what they had before them.

"What is this...?"

"Is it working?"

Kwadadad...

The Predator's teeth sank deep into Shub-Niggurath's neck.

And then, instantly...

Kwack!

The Predator's teeth bit into Shub-Niggurath's flesh.

And at that moment...

[The 'Predator' has bitten 'Shub-Niggurath's neck']

[The 'Predator' has consumed part of 'Shub-Niggurath']

A message that YuWon had been waiting for in his mind appeared.

'I had considered it, but...'

An incredible message.

Kwadad...

Part of Shub-Niggurath's body disappeared. No matter how much it was cut or damaged, Shub-Niggurath's body, which normally recovered its original form as if it had never been damaged, was not regenerating.

'It really consumed it.'

Of the two assurances YuWon had been waiting for, one was the existence of Danpung.

"Bat, baat-."

YuWon looked at Danpung, who had climbed onto his shoulder and was pointing noisily at Shub-Niggurath while wrapping his arm around YuWon's neck.

'Even Danpung or the Predator, neither of them is stronger than Shub-Niggurath.'

Of course, the Predator's power was the natural enemy of the Outers. He knew that very well. However, the power gap between the Predator that YuWon knew and Shub-Niggurath was not something that could be simply resolved with the label of "natural enemy."

Despite that, the Predator's teeth sank into Shub-Niggurath's neck and managed to consume a part of his body.

There was only one possible reason for this.

'Is it an entity of a higher level than Shub-Niggurath?'

[The level of 'Danpung' has increased]

[The level of 'Danpung' has increased]

[The Divine Power of 'Danpung' has increased by 12]

[The growth rate has increased by 0.01%]

[The Arcane Power has increased by 5]

Increases in level, Divine Power, and Arcane Power were not common at all. A 12-level increase in Divine Power and a total of 5 levels of Arcane Power. Usually, even a single level of stats made a huge difference in the world.

Perhaps it was because of this? Thanks to the five attributes that suddenly increased, YuWon felt like he had become a completely different person.

[The growth rate has reached 100%]

[The growth of 'Danpung' is beginning]

Finally, those three words slipped out of YuWon's mouth without warning.

Since passing the Tutorial and entering the Tower, how long had he been waiting for this moment? Maybe this upgrade would allow him to learn a bit more about Danpung.

Of course...

"First of all, that guy."

-Beeeh-

Shub-Niggurath let out a cry of agony. With its neck half torn and evident suffering, it struggled frantically.

Thud~

Yuwon's body jumped. At the same time, Nir, the spear blocked by Satan, returned to YuWon's hand.

Swoosh~

A flow of Arcane Power emanated from the spear that YuWon held in his hand, even though it hadn't fully activated yet.

'More important than strength is timing.'

Woom~

The tip of the spear quivered. Even though it hadn't fully activated yet, a different kind of power flowed into the spear.

[Divine Power has been imbued]

[A Giant's power is imbued in the right arm]

Thud, Thuddudduk

The arm swelled due to Gigantification.

YuWon, who was in a throwing stance in the air, pushed his waist with all his might and hurled the spear with all his strength.

Thwack

The spear sank into Shub-Niggurath's body. Pushed back by Ru Yi Bang and weakened by the loss of its neck to the Predator, this was the final thrust for Shub-Niggurath.

-Beeeeeeh-!

It seemed very unfair.

Shub-Niggurath, as if feeling aggrieved, flew to the other side of the wall, emitting a terrifying scream.

Shub-Niggurath's body quickly moved away. At the same time, time began to move rapidly once again.

Tic-tac, tic-tac...

Tic-tac, tic-tac...

The space where Shub-Niggurath had entered was rapidly restored.

YuWon turned his head. He saw Chronos restoring the wall to its original state on the other side of the wall. The wrinkles on his face were already countless, and his white hair was whiter than the last time YuWon had seen him.

Tic-tac, tic-tac...

The wall had returned to normal. The wall was flawless, without a single mark. As Shub-Niggurath was pushed out, and the boundary between the Tower and the Outside returned to its place, a brief silence fell over the place.

And then, in an instant...

"Is it over? Did we win?"

"We won, right?"

"Ah, ah..."

Relieved Rankers began to celebrate.

"We won!!"

Nothing spread faster than the cry of joy.

In the blink of an eye, the battlefield was filled with cries of joy, happiness, and relief. Instead of the bleating of the goat, there were joyful shouts filling the ears.

Perhaps because of that...

Son OhGong, who had especially sensitive ears, covered his ears with his fingers as if complaining about the noise.

"Jeez, what are they celebrating so much?"

Although he said that, he was relieved too.

Son OhGong looked at the wall that had been collapsed until recently.

'Shub-Niggurath.'

What exactly had he been facing all this time?

The battlefield was quickly cleaned up. Each Guild assessed the situation of the wounded and prepared funerals for the dead.

Half of the players who had been caught in Shub-Niggurath's bleating died on the spot or were gravely injured. Several Guilds were eager to find out the identity of this creature.

And another matter...

Satan fled while battling Zeus. It happened right after Shub-Niggurath was expelled, and the murim was restored.

"He has lost a wing. He probably can't fly like before."

Zeus uttered those words before disappearing somewhere.

Fortunately, Chronos did not become a target for the Guilds. No one identified him as Chronos from the start, as he always wore the mask of Poseidon.

Inside the submerged and ruined city, YuWon and Son OhGong found refuge in the most intact house.

Son OhGong, who had disappeared somewhere, returned with his hands full of food.

"The old man still hasn't woken up?"

Thump.

Son OhGong placed the box he was carrying on the table. The large box was filled with fruits, processed sausages, dried meat, bread, and more.

Inside the room, Chronos was sleeping. His body was so frail it looked like it would break if lifted.

"Will he wake up?"

"Am I a doctor? I don't know."

"How long do you plan to wait?"

"I don't know."

The door was closed.

Chronos lay inside.

"Anyway, shouldn't we be with him in his final moments?"

Chronos sacrificed himself for them. Although what happened afterward was a result of their actions, his sacrifice had already occurred once before this incident.

It had been two days since he lost consciousness.

YuWon planned to wait until Chronos woke up.

"Where did you get all this food?"

Crunch...

YuWon picked an unknown fruit from the box that Son OhGong had brought.

Where had he acquired this in a ruined and desolate city? If this was also part of his ability, then it was astonishing.

"I was given it."

"By whom?"

"A guy from the Outside."

"He wouldn't have just given it to you all of a sudden. Did you steal it?"

"He gave it to me because I asked."

He had stolen it.

Son OhGong had claimed that someone from outside had given it to him, but in this place, how many people could refuse a request from him? Even an ordinary Player, let alone a High-Ranker, would probably give away their underwear if asked.

Son OhGong was known for his violence long before he shook the Celestial Realm, no doubt.

Crunch...

Like YuWon, Son OhGong also ate another piece of fruit. It seemed less boring once the food entered his mouth, and he finally sat down on a chair after a while.

"Still, it's a shame. I was hoping to see the old man again."

"Thanks to him, we stopped Shub-Niggurath."

"Why the hell did it show up out of nowhere?"

Most of Chronos's time was spent stopping Shub-Niggurath. Shub-Niggurath's strength was formidable enough that only by combining the power of Son OhGong, Odin, and Chronos could they stop it.

No.

"Well, at least we stopped it. If that thing had entered here, things wouldn't have ended like this."

Rather, this is a relief.

Shub-Niggurath was an uncontrollable catastrophe in the Tower at this moment, and it would be in the future as well.

The day when its thousand young were released into the Tower and the Black Woods approached.

YuWon and his companions gave up on winning the fight against the Outers.

"With this, the Tower will be in turmoil for a while. Now that they know about the Outsiders."

"Of course, it will be noisy. Especially Odin."

"He's probably thinking a lot right now. Maybe he can even open that door and come here right away."

"That could be quite fun."

Son OhGong laughed heartily. For him, who loved chaos and fights, this aimless waiting was a boring monotony he couldn't stand.

Instead, he would prefer Odin to come in and wreak havoc here; it would be much better for Son OhGong.

Thud...

Son OhGong, as if he were having fun just with the idea, grabbed one of the foods that had been scattered on the table.

A small purple egg.

It was the size of a fist, quite appetizing in appearance.

Son OhGong brought the egg to his mouth as if he were going to eat it in one bite.

But...

"That's not meant to be eaten."

YuWon's words made Son OhGong's hand, which was carrying the egg toward his mouth, stop.

Not meant to be eaten, huh?

As if asking what this was, surprise filled Son OhGong's eyes as he looked at the egg in his hand.

"What's wrong with you? Why are you like this?"

"...Look behind you."

With a gesture, YuWon pointed backward with his finger.

A motion that requested him to check what was behind.

Why is he acting like this?

Son OhGong turned his head to look behind him, as indicated.

And at that moment...

"...Huh?"

Son OhGong's expression changed just like YuWon's.

There, right behind him...

A massive abyss with numerous gaping mouths filled with sharp teeth was preparing to devour Son OhGong.

All of this to protect the egg in Son OhGong's hand.

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Son OhGong looked at the sharp jaws behind him with a puzzled expression.

They were ready to pierce his neck at any moment.

If Son OhGong hadn't noticed and had brought the egg to his mouth, he probably would have been devoured whole by the Predator.

"First, remove that from your hand."

"Oh, right."

Son OhGong stared at the Egg near his mouth. He should have originally put it away immediately, but his playful spirit led him to smile sideways.

"...?"

Seeing Son OhGong's expression, YuWon looked at him in surprise.

He slid the Egg slightly out of his mouth and then put it back in place.

The Predator behind Son OhGong began to move its jaws slightly as it waited for Son OhGong to make a move on the egg, but Son OhGong didn't release it, keeping it in place.

Son OhGong kept bringing the Egg closer to and farther from his mouth repeatedly.

The Predator didn't know what to do. It continued to watch Son OhGong play with it.

"Stop now."

"Isn't it fun?"

Despite the request to stop, Son OhGong didn't stop.

Well, if Son OhGong had been a bit smarter and paid attention to what people told him, he probably would have climbed up at least one or two levels in the rankings.

"Don't overdo it. He also doesn't seem to know what to do. Besides, this could become dangerous."

"If we get hurt, we'll stay with that old man for a while, right?"

"Haven't you seen him? How he dealt with Shub-Niggurath?"

"Shub-Niggurath...".

The image of the Predator tearing Shub-Niggurath's throat came to his mind.

When he turned his head to look, the Predator still had its mouth open behind him.

Despite its slightly comical behavior, the Predator was clearly a dangerous entity.

Finally, Son OhGong carefully placed the Egg back on the table. The Predator watched his action for a moment and then withdrew quietly.

A little hiccup. However, at least he could understand one thing.

'As long as I don't touch the Egg, it doesn't seem that threatening.'

Son OhGong touched the Egg, and as he accidentally tried to eat it, the Predator watched him cautiously without attacking Son OhGong until the last moment, all thanks to being YuWon's companion.

'Is it friendly for now?'

When he initially obtained the Egg, YuWon had pointed his sword threateningly at it since he had to stop the Egg from hatching in case it posed a threat.

But fortunately, the Egg seemed to favor YuWon. The same had happened with Danpung.

And the same happened with the new Egg, which was even larger than the original.

"For now..."

YuWon looked at the Egg.

Suddenly, he remembered the day they stopped Shub-Niggurath.

The Black Woods.

Danpung approached Shub-Niggurath, who was looking up.

Step by step, he moved stealthily. As silently as ever.

However, this time, YuWon didn't dare to follow him.

Kaaaah!

What made YuWon unable to follow was the immense pressure he felt from Danpung as he approached the being.

Gwuuuuuh!

YuWon could barely see Shub-Niggurath's figure behind the familiar roundness of Danpung.

Curse...

Although Shub-Niggurath's figure wasn't visible, the tremendous strength emanating from him was undeniable.

Grrr...

It was at that moment that the Predator, enveloping Shub-Niggurath's body, appeared.

YuWon had already seen the Predator many times before.

Its existence didn't surprise him in the least.

However...

"What the hell is that?"

Woosh...

When the mass of the Predator that was engulfing Shub-Niggurath appeared, it was a shock.

The size of the Predator that was swallowing Shub-Niggurath was completely different from what YuWon had imagined so far.

Even if Shub-Niggurath were to resist, the size difference between him and the Predator was astonishing.

The Predator not only ate Shub-Niggurath but also swallowed the entire Black Woods.

Even though Shub-Niggurath could have resisted, he acted as if everything happening at that moment was completely natural.

Grrrr...

The Predator devouring the Black Woods.

While looking at Danpung, who was handling the Predator, Shub-Niggurath spoke.

- "A shapeless entity (無定形) that endlessly repeats destruction and creation."

- "Now, it will take a form (形) before us..."

- "Please, we hope you will withdraw your teeth from us."

All-Mother, the Black Goat of the Woods, closed her purple-glowing eyes.

Thus, within the Black Woods that were being swept away by Shub-Niggurath...

Zwit!

YuWon finally understood Danpung's true form.

'A shapeless entity (無定形) that endlessly repeats destruction and creation, and has taken a form...'

For the Outer Gods, they all had an alias instead of their true names. In reality, these were false names created by Tower Players. Names created to avoid dealing with the real names of the Outer Gods due to their incomprehensibility.

But what Shub-Niggurath said seemed to describe one of the Outer Gods in particular.

"It seems you've found something tremendous."

YuWon looked up at Son OhGong's comment.

"Rather than finding, it would be more appropriate to say that I've raised it."

"Are you its father or something?"

"I'm raising it with similar feelings."

"You don't fit at all."

"Umm..."

A groan was heard during their conversation.

Both YuWon and Son OhGong turned their heads at the same time.

A closed door.

YuWon got up and opened the door.

Creak...

When the door opened, they saw Chronos slowly waking up in a bed on one side of the wall.

His eyes, which had been dull, gradually began to focus, and his mind returned slowly.

"Ahjussi."

"Hey, old man (영감). Are you awake?"

The title was different.

But Chronos responded to both names.

"Where are we... what year is it?"

"Suddenly asking the year? You've become senile, old man."

"Year 2120 of the Tower."

Upon YuWon's answer, Son OhGong looked at him.

There was no doubt in YuWon's response.

And in response to that answer, Chronos repeated the same words over and over with murmurs.

"2120... 2120..."

He had repeated those same words about ten times.

YuWon spoke.

"If you have something to say, tell us. Anything will be better than listening to the years in a loop."

Chronos stopped briefly.

Then he uttered a different word.

"Time travel."

Time travel.

It didn't simply refer to Regression using the Clock Movement. YuWon saw through his eyes many different familiar faces.

"I've met countless 'me.' They lived different lives in different worlds."

This wasn't the same Chronos that existed a few days ago. Through the Clock Movement, he had become an amalgamation of countless Chronos, converging into one.

From multiple futures and pasts to the present.

Chronos had experienced himself at multiple moments and found a common denominator.

His eyelids moved slowly as if he were drowsy. His eyes, which moved with difficulty, focused on YuWon and Son OhGong, and his voice, hoarse and broken, emerged with effort.

"They were in my future."

YuWon and Son OhGong.

Chronos saw and experienced the two of them and many other colleagues over various time periods.

"Everyone except me fought against the Outer Gods. All of them."

"Why only here?"

In response to Son OhGong's question, YuWon answered.

"Probably because of us."

Us.

Both of them had returned to the past using the Clock Movement.

Chronos's banishment from the Tower, along with everyone's forgetfulness, had been a consequence, a retribution for breaking the Tower's laws.

"No, to be precise, it's probably because of me. I came here in exchange for Mimir's eyes."

"No matter who's responsible. What I'm saying is that I didn't know myself."

The Second Sacrifice

Chronos's eyes, which had barely opened, began to take on an earthy hue. He had long exceeded his life expectancy. He continued to function solely due to his High-Ranker body and mind that he had trained for a long time.

Kim YuWon bit his expressionless lip. He clenched his fist so tightly that his nails dug into his palm.

Chronos spoke in response to YuWon's reaction.

"This was my choice and the consequences that followed. So don't regret it."

"Actually, I knew."

Chronos's time was limited.

He knew he would reach this point if he used up all his time.

Although he had hoped it wouldn't be this way, he thought he had no other choice.

"...Anyway, the worst part was that he would go through it."

What would have happened if Shub-Niggurath had crossed?

Not only YuWon but also Son OhGong, Odin, Chronos, and possibly dozens, hundreds, perhaps even thousands of Players could have died.

Shub-Niggurath was such an entity.

An Outer God with power that surpassed any imaginable calamity for humans.

YuWon only thought about how to stop it somehow.

There was no other option.

If Shub-Niggurath crossed the wall, it would be a point of no return even for Chronos's power.

"That's why I left it to you, Ahjussi. I knew it would be like this..."

"You've always been like that, asking me to save time. Saying it's more valuable than gold."

YuWon's eyes trembled. He was sure he had said those words many times. Even more than a dozen times.

But at least not in this timeline.

In a very distant future.

So, that was after the battle with the Outers had begun.

"Save time, Ahjussi. Otherwise, you'll really become a grandpa."

"How many times have I heard that?"

"I remember you saying it more than ten times. Should I rewind time and see how many times you said it?"

"It hasn't even been a minute since I mentioned that."

Words he always said like a scolding.

Still, words that were not enough.

Chronos was mentioning those words right now.

"I know you'll apologize. It wasn't just for your convenience, I want you to know that."

Suddenly, the door that had closed opened again.

Son OhGong, whom they hadn't heard from before, came out. When a scream that sounded like a piercing scream was heard, Chronos smiled slightly.

"It seems he's quite angry too."

Chronos's face dried up and wrinkled like a raisin. With his eyes unblinking, almost like two black holes, Chronos continued to speak.

"Do you remember the day you first used the Clock Movement?"

A hoarse voice came out of his extremely dry mouth.

Although his voice began to break gradually, Chronos's words did not slow down at all; it was quite the opposite.

YuWon didn't respond.

Even that brief moment of response was now more valuable to him than gold.

"That day, I planned to face them by throwing my life away. But anyway, I didn't end up dying. So nothing has changed."

He wanted to die but didn't.

Although he could have chosen to live again if he had been resurrected, Chronos chose to die again.

That was his choice.

"This is simply an extension of that day."

Chapter 384

C384

Chronos turned to dust and disappeared.

Gathering that dust, YuWon and Son OhGong constructed a small tomb on the first floor.

It wasn't an impressive tomb.

YuWon leaned over the grave and then turned around.

"I'll relay the message to Zeus. I made a grave here, so he can move it later."

"He doesn't remember the old man, does he?"

"He does. It seems he found him."

"Really? That guy is impressive even without being a wizard or sorcerer."

"If we send him a message, he'll probably come by himself."

Although their relationship wasn't close, Chronos and Zeus were father and son, after all.

It was natural to announce Chronos's death.

Passtss-.

The clothes YuWon was wearing disappeared, and he returned to his original attire, including the Garment Of The Four Great Elements.

Seeing YuWon like this, Son OhGong said curiously.

"You wear that clothing every time someone dies."

The black suit wasn't just for Chronos; YuWon had been wearing it for a long time whenever one of his comrades died.

It was a minimal gesture of respect to them.

They couldn't give them a proper funeral, but at least they could show up in front of them wearing elegant clothes.

"It's the clothing I used to wear in my world."

"I suspected as much. I've never seen anyone else wear it besides you."

Son OhGong pictured himself in a suit in his mind.

It turned out to be a rather stylish design.

"I want one of those too."

"Do you really need one?"

"Why not? It would be great if we all dressed the same."

It made sense.

In situations like this, where you have to bid farewell to someone, it makes sense to dress appropriately to some extent. It's not necessary to overdo the formality, but not doing so would be rude.

But...

"I'd rather not prepare to bid farewell to anyone if possible."

After changing clothes that way, Kim YuWon boarded the ship with Son OhGong.

It was a ship sent from Asgard.

"And now what?"

Son OhGong asked as he watched YuWon board the ship.

YuWon, climbing the ship's rope, responded:

"I have to go up."

"Anyway, the answers are up there, right?"

"It's a common story."

Having banished All-Mother was already a significant harvest, Kim YuWon thought.

But thanks to that, he came to his senses again.

"We need to move a little faster."

Shub-Niggurath appeared. Faster than they had expected, so they should also move quickly.

Was it because they needed to deal with Shub-Niggurath immediately? Even though they managed to push him away for now, they knew they would eventually have to face him. At that moment, they might not be able to escape as they had just done.

"Can you go alone?" Son OhGong asked, and YuWon responded as if puzzled.

"Am I a child?"

"I thought someone was watching you."

"It's fine. But what about you? Do you have anywhere to go?"

"Hmph, did you think I would return through the Clock Movement without having anything in mind?"

Thinking about it, it made sense. Son OhGong might be a bit impulsive, but he was the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, a proud and magnificent being who ruled the heavens. He wouldn't have come here without making any kind of preparations.

"I plan to return to the Celestial Floor."

"To the Celestial Floor?"

"It's a place I've only reached through the Trials, but..."

Celestial Floor, a mysterious place mentioned in Buddhist sutras. Son OhGong gained new powers and abilities there. But...

"Perhaps it exists in reality. In fact, I'm quite sure it does."

Son OhGong felt that this place might exist not only as a Trial but somewhere in this Tower. It wasn't a mere hunch, and he had never been wrong in his intuitions before.

And YuWon thought the same way.

"If you feel that way, you're probably right."

It wasn't something that had recently arisen. After observing him for a long time by his side, YuWon knew that Son OhGong's intuitions were more than mere hunches. Probably because of the mastery of the Golden Cinder Eyes, his intuitions were so sharp.

Swish~

Then, under Son OhGong's feet, a cloud appeared.

Riding on the Flying Nimbus, Son OhGong looked down at YuWon.

"So, we'll see each other later, buddy."

Son OhGong waved his hand casually.

Although they hadn't been apart for long since they reunited.

The path they were going to take now was different, and they had to part for a while.

Tu-gwak-. Son OhGong's figure quickly receded.

With the Flying Nimbus, he could probably freely explore this vast Tower in search of the Celestial Floor. They didn't know how long it would take, but YuWon was confident that Son OhGong would reach the true Celestial Floor and obtain the Buddhist sutras.

"Then, I..."

Kim YuWon raised his head.

On the moving ship from Asgard.

The sky was gradually approaching.

"I have to go."

The Tower's wall collapsed. Although it was soon restored, the presence of Shub-Niggurath that entered from outside was enough to threaten the Tower's Rankers.

"They say Odin fought."

"Just that? I also heard that Zeus and the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, were there."

"Veda Rankers were also present, and the number of Rankers there was in the thousands. It's probably a formidable power significant enough to be recorded in history."

"What kind of monster is capable of surpassing that power?"

Rumors about the Outer Beings spread rapidly. Through the Player Kits, various reporters issued articles speculating on Shub-Niggurath's identity. Some Rankers even took pictures, but all the images had something in common.

"What is this?"

"How did it turn out like this?"

"Everything is blurry."

The photos showed indistinct, hard-to-identify shapes, as if all the pictures were blurry or out of focus. There were about ten such photos, making the possibility of it being a mere coincidence very low. And not only Shub-Niggurath, but other Rankers also had similar images.

"Was the wall... protecting us?"

"If it can collapse at any moment..."

"That would be a big problem, wouldn't it?"

No one knew Shub-Niggurath's name. His name was only known to YuWon and Son OhGong, and there was no way to find out. Therefore, the Tower's Rankers referred to Shub-Niggurath and similar creatures as "Outers."

And when information about the Outers began to gradually spread...

"A meeting of Grand Guilds has been requested in Asgard."

"In Asgard?"

"It seems Odin is very shaken. He says he won't show himself to the public until the meeting arrives."

"It's understandable. After all, a creature even Odin can't face has appeared..."

"If it's the Grand Guilds, which ones are they?"

"All of them."

"All of them, you say?"

Invitations to the Grand Guilds, including Olympus, Veda, Demon Kings, Round Table, and many others, were sent out.

"By the way, I heard that many Veda Rankers died this time."

"Agni and Kubera?"

"So, the Three Veda Gods... are they taking action this time?"

"It seems only Shiva has shown up, despite an invitation from Odin."

Veda was one of the prominent Guilds in the Tower, along with Asgard and Olympus. Leading Veda were the Three Veda Gods. Everyone's attention was focused on whether the Three Veda Gods would accept Asgard's invitation.

And at that moment, on Veda's star on the 98th floor, a bright light burned.

Flicker, Flicker...

"I know you've been here for a long time."

Agni, with his tied-up orange hair, approached a slender man with white hair who stood on a small star the size of an island in the corner of the universe. At the end of this small star, the man held a fine thread with one finger.

"Odin has sent an invitation."

"..."

"How long do you plan to cling to that thread?"

"..."

The man still didn't respond to Agni's question. Like a puppet from which the soul had escaped, he remained motionless.

At the same time, Kubera was also in a similar situation.

"It's been a long time, Lord Brahma."

Kubera encountered a young boy. Standing in the midst of a vast forest, the boy noticed Kubera and smiled brightly.

The Veda Rankers who had faced Shub-Niggurath began to move to approach the Three Gods.

And at that moment...

"I know his name."

Mimir, who had been asleep for a while, spoke while sweating profusely and looking at Odin, who was carrying a small mountain of rocks.

"It seems that..."

And behind that mountain of rocks.

Gooong~

A massive tree stood, stretching its branches towards infinity.

"It seems like we'll have to move Yggdrasil."

Thud-.

The ship had arrived.

YuWon returned the ship he had rented in Asgard and immediately called the Administrator.

However, strangely, there was no response.

-The Administrator is busy right now.

Instead, an Envoy of the Administrator appeared before YuWon and uttered those words before quickly disappearing.

It seemed incredibly occupied.

"Could it be due to the wall's collapse or perhaps the absence of the Floor 1 Administrator?"

Probably both.

The Administrator's absence was a major problem for them. Few things were more urgent for an Administrator than leaving an empty world.

Furthermore, with the appearance of Shub-Niggurath, the situation had become even more complicated.

"I guess a fast track is out of the question."

Although he had planned to ascend quickly through the Administrator's Trial, even if he had to spend Points, it seemed difficult due to the busy Administrator.

So YuWon turned around, heading for the testing room.

And at that moment...

Shriek~.

From the bow of the ship YuWon had arrived on, light footsteps could be heard. YuWon turned his head toward the bow.

A figure that seemed as dark as a shadow.

A sinister presence made YuWon's skin crawl. It was a man of small and deformed stature, with only one wing and one arm.

The same individual he had encountered not long ago.

"Is it Satan?"

He knew this individual had been targeting him.

Even Son OhGong was concerned about YuWon because of Satan.

However, YuWon had no intention of relying on Son OhGong for that reason.

"Get down."

YuWon's gesture made the corners of Satan's lips rise. It seemed that this individual had been waiting for him here for a while.

Satan unfurled his wings from the start.

Though he now had only one left due to his fight with Zeus, his wings were the very source of his power.

Unfurling them meant he was willing to give it his all from the outset.

"Better this way."

Anyway, this was something that had to be resolved once and for all.

Moreover, Satan, that guy, was like a troublemaker you never knew when or where he would cause problems.

It would be better to catch him here instead of wasting more time creating other variables.

Besides...

"I gained a little more this time."

YuWon had gained much more power in this fight than usual.

Craaack-!

A Lightning Bolt burst from his hand.

Along with the Lightning Bolt, he also held the Nir.

"It's probably different from last time."

At the same time...

Through Satan's eyes, the image of YuWon holding the Lightning Bolt and Zeus overlapped.

The Tower was going through a tumultuous period in various places.

Chapter 385

C385

After numerous Rankers joined forces to drive Shub-Niggurath out on the first floor, the busiest agency remained the Ranking Office.

Since that day, there were several changes in the rankings.

Odin's ranking didn't change at all.

The rankings of Zeus and Son OhGong increased significantly, to the point where their names were mentioned more frequently than anyone else in the world.

YuWon's ranking also increased.

Although he wasn't on the same level as High-Rankers like Zeus and Son OhGong, in terms of the increase in his ranking, YuWon clearly stood out.

He went from being ranked 50th to reaching the 38th position.

On the other hand...

There were High-Rankers whose rankings decreased due to the previous battle.

Satan was one of them.

Crunch-.

YuWon's grip closed around Satan's arm as the latter tried to strike him. YuWon, with his increased strength, bent Satan's arm in the opposite direction.

Crack-!

It sounded as if a thick tree trunk had snapped.

Satan screamed in pain as his arm was twisted.

"Argh!"

"They say your ranking dropped to 16th place."

Thump-!

Satan's foot collided with YuWon's chest.

YuWon was sent flying, although the impact was mitigated, and he didn't suffer serious damage.

["Blessing of the Sea" is activated in your body.]

There were means to protect his body during battle, so the impact wasn't as severe.

"You lost an arm and your wings."

The arm and wings.

Satan lost a lot in the last battle.

Losing the wings, in particular, was significant.

Both wings were the very source of his power, and their fall deeply affected his ranking.

Of course...

Even if that were true, a single-digit High-Ranker wouldn't be defeated so easily.

Crack-.

A long, shallow wound opened on YuWon's chest.

Blood splattered upward, almost at the same time as Satan's arm was being broken...

'It's fast.'

Even with just one wing, Satan was still Satan.

Although their bodies were completely opposite in terms of size, Satan's physical strength rivaled that of Hercules.

Or even more.

His body's endurance was probably even greater.

Krrrack-!

A Lightning Bolt fell from the sky.

Satan's body trembled momentarily. Taking advantage of that opportunity, YuWon retreated and watched Satan recover.

This wouldn't end easily.

He remained standing after being struck by a Lightning Bolt.

'This has no end.'

If they dragged this out for too long, they would eventually reach a conclusion. If he kept throwing Lightning Bolts and eroding Satan's body with Dark Arcane Power, openings would appear.

But before that happened, if he were the first to fall.

YuWon didn't want to fight uncertainly.

So.

"I've thought about it."

Swoosh-.

YuWon pulled out a shield made of mirrors from his inventory.

[Yata's Mirror]

A shield composed of numerous faces, a treasure coveted by the Three Precious Children.

And in his other hand...

"What method is there to get through your solid body?"

Buzz, buzz-.

An item that had slipped from Satan's hand.

Nir activated.

"Of course, the safest thing is this."

Ziiiiing-.

At the same time, the light emitted by Yata's Mirror.

['Yata's Chamber' has been created]

Ziing, Zzzhezzehzzehzz-.

Zzzhezzehzzehzz-.

Numerous mirrors formed around YuWon and Satan. Walls and ceilings made of mirrors. The numerous surfaces reflected YuWon's image holding Nir.

Thousands, tens of thousands of spears.

Satan's eyes widened at the sight.

"No!"

Zzzeung-!

Breaking a nearby mirror with his fist, Satan lunged at YuWon.

Nir was such a powerful item that it could tear through Satan's arm. It was obvious that the flow of the battle would change the moment it activated. But...

Zzzeeng, Zzzzeung, Zzzzezzz-!

No matter how many mirrors he shattered.

Satan couldn't find YuWon.

Instead, due to the shattered fragments, more images of YuWon became visible.

He couldn't keep breaking mirrors indefinitely with simple punches.

Finally, Satan changed tactics.

Tzztzztzztzztzz-.

Darkness emanated from Satan's body and began to devour the mirrors.

Light was necessary for the mirrors to function.

So, the mirrors were swallowed by darkness one by one, concealing YuWon's image within.

The mirrors disappeared into the darkness.

However...

Paz, Pazijizijzi-.

During that time, Nir was already prepared.

Woosh-.

Satan lunged toward YuWon.

He had to stop YuWon's movement before he started throwing the spear.

But...

-Don't call something like this so soon!

Swooosh-.

Until a moment ago, a strong wind blew from the mirror reflecting YuWon.

Swoosh-.

Amidst the gusts of wind, flashes of red light.

-It's Satan.

Kwuuuuuuu-.

At that moment, Susanoo was preparing a skill while holding a Kusanagi with the Magatama Jewel.

"He seems like a delightful opponent."

Kwut-!

[Violent Storm]

A strong wind carried thousands and thousands of blades that surrounded and enveloped Satan's body.

Satan's advancing body was pushed back by the strong wind. The storms piled up on top of each other, forming a gigantic castle and leaving many marks on Satan's sturdy body.

Slash, slash, slash-.

They were small wounds, small enough to be considered scratches.

But as they accumulated and pierced, they finally managed to break through Satan's body.

Tsuuuuh-!

"Ah..."

Satan groaned as he trembled in pain from the wound on his waist.

The same spot had been cut dozens, even hundreds of times. However, the wounds were only deep enough to be considered the size of a fingernail.

And that was also possible thanks to Kusanagi's technique.

Susanoo, who used the skill, finally stuck out his tongue.

-He's quite resilient.

The Violent Storm was Susanoo's most destructive ability. It consumed a significant amount of Arcane Power, and Susanoo unleashed the skill at its maximum power without worrying about the amount of Arcane Power he had.

YuWon, who had a large reserve of Arcane Power, had enough Arcane Power for it.

In that way, for a brief period...

While Susanoo continued to delay time.

Crack-.

[Nir is activating]

In the distance, a spear that would pierce Satan's body was ready.

Flash-!

[Satan disappears from the rankings. What did he hope to achieve...?]

[Zeus, the supreme god, returns to Olympus. Hades suddenly disappears, saying, "It's time to go higher."]

[Is Satan's death the work of someone? Some believe it was a secret act of a Hidden High-Ranker.]

News reports multiplied.

All because of Satan's corpse lying on the 93rd floor.

And among other news.

[Kim YuWon, the High-Ranker, advances to the 93rd floor. Enters the 94th floor in the shortest time]

[A 'true' High-Ranker stands before us. About Kim YuWon...]

YuWon had barely responded to journalists' interviews until now.

Therefore, a series of articles based on speculations and unconfirmed facts started.

[An unexpected rise in the rankings. Kim YuWon dethrones Satan]

[Kim YuWon enters the top 20 of the rankings. A meteoric rise]

[Interview! Meeting with Kim YuWon. In his homeland 'Earth,' he is...]

There were reports claiming that they encountered YuWon unexpectedly, and others speculated about why his ranking was rising.

Who was the Ranker who defeated Satan?

The truth about it was ambiguous.

"If it really was Kim YuWon who caught him, shouldn't he be ranked even higher than 20th place?"

"His increase in ranking is too sudden. Could the Administration be intervening?"

"Intervening? Who are those Administration guys anyway?"

"That's right. How many times have the Great Guilds tried to bribe them? Not even a single coin got through."

"So what are we supposed to do...?"

While opinions about YuWon's ranking were diverse.

"Damn idiots!"

The shouts echoed in the headquarters of the Ranking Office.

"What kind of nonsense are they talking about whether Kim YuWon killed Satan or not? What the hell is going on?"

"There's evidence, but..."

"What evidence? Shouldn't there be a record in the system?"

"Yes, there's a record. That's what complicates things."

"Complicates things?"

The Administration was also in a state of confusion. **(Note: From now on, I'll refer to the Ranking Office as the Administration)**

It was evident that YuWon and Satan had fought. The problem was whether the fight was one-on-one, one against many, or in what condition Satan was.

With an Administrator dead and the Outer Gods beginning to move officially, the Administration was understaffed and under-resourced. The only way to verify was through the system records and the "eyes" scattered throughout the Tower by some Envoys.

"Damn... So does that mean they raised Kim YuWon's ranking this way because they couldn't do it properly?"

"What else could we do? We couldn't just not increase his ranking."

"Are you saying we should do it now? Hey!"

"It's not about that... Uh, uh!"

As a result, there was a great commotion in the Administration because of this.

The Envoys who handled the 93rd floor were disciplined as a group, and especially the Envoy who last encountered YuWon was demoted to the more challenging world, the "Hell."

And at that moment...

[You have passed the 94th-Floor Trial.]

YuWon continued to advance, floor after floor.

And so, he climbed the Tower.

[You have passed the 95th-Floor Trial.]

[You have passed the 96th-Floor Trial...]

[You have passed the 97th-Floor Trial...]

[...]

[You have reached the 99th floor.]

Finally, YuWon challenged the Tower's last Trial.

"You've climbed quickly."

The Administrator of the 99th Floor.

The one overseeing the most challenging Trial known so far.

YuWon stepped forward to him.

"Let's begin at once."

From the 93rd floor to the 99th floor.

YuWon continued to ascend the Tower, facing the Administrators' Trials without pause.

He scored perfectly on all Trials. His determination to climb the Tower without stopping was like an unstoppable locomotive.

"There's no time, right?"

The Administrator also acknowledged YuWon's urgency.

Tsutsu, tsutsutsu...

The world centered around the Administrator and YuWon began to take on a different color.

A phenomenon that heralded the beginning of the Trial.

"Perhaps this Trial is a bit different from what you knew."

The 99th Floor Trial was a Trial that distinguished between normal players and Rankers.

More than half of the Players who reached the 99th floor failed to pass this Trial and fell into despair or, worse, died.

Furthermore, the difficulty of the Trial varied for each player, and simply being strong did not guarantee becoming a Ranker.

That's why Rankers were sometimes called that in the Tower.

The Chosen Ones.

Gooo...

Before YuWon's eyes appeared a gigantic goat-like creature.

Although it was slightly different in size and shape, the creature's appearance resembled the Outer God that appeared on the 1st floor, Shub-Niggurath.

And in the next moment...

"I hope you pass the Trial..."

Szzz...

A red line was drawn vertically on the body of the gigantic goat.

Chaaa...

The form of the creature that had appeared as an opponent in the Trial disappeared completely. This meant its complete annihilation as an opponent in the Trial.

And at that moment...

[You have passed the 99th-Floor Trial.]

[You have obtained 1,000,000 points.]

[You have passed all Tower Trials.]

[You have reached the 100th floor in the shortest possible time.]

[You have obtained 5,000,000 points...]

[...]

[Your level has increased.]

[Your ranking will be measured by the Administration.]

[Your ranking already exists.]

YuWon officially became a Ranker.

Chapter 386

C386

The 99th Floor Trial was special.

A trial conducted uniquely for each individual. The 99th Floor Trial brought before the Player's eyes the entity they feared the most.

However, that was only a visible form.

YuWon, who had already passed the Trial once, knew that the entity before him was not real.

Beeeh...

With an unpleasant bleat, a gigantic goat appeared.

YuWon looked at his enemy, which appeared as if drawn on a white background.

"Shub-Niggurath?"

The fact that the entity he feared the most was Shub-Niggurath was surprising. Undoubtedly, Shub-Niggurath was one of the strongest opponents YuWon knew, even more so than Foolish Chaos.

However, he should not be fooled by appearances.

"Anyway..."

Swish...

YuWon unsheathed his sword.

['Kusanagi Sword']

"It's just a Trial to overcome fear."

Slash...

It was a single stroke.

That sword was the sharpest in the entire Tower, and that was enough to undo the fake Shub-Niggurath that appeared before him.

From the beginning, those who felt no fear were not so strong.

A red line was drawn on Shub-Niggurath's body.

At that moment...

Fssss...

Shub-Niggurath, split in two, disappeared completely.

[You have passed the 99th Floor Trial]

[You have obtained 1,000,000 points]

[You have passed all the Tower Trials]

[...]

YuWon looked at the Administrator. Looking like an ordinary elderly man from the neighborhood, he stroked his long beard and hunched with an unpleasant smile.

"Aren't you afraid of anything?"

He had seen many Rankers.

In fact, all Rankers had passed their Trials.

Odin, Zeus, Son OhGong, Hercules, and many other Rankers who had left their mark on the Tower had also passed this very Trial.

But this was the first time the Trial ended so easily.

"Anyway, it's a fake... What is there to fear?"

"If it were that easy, anyone could be a Ranker."

"Then, let's make it interesting."

YuWon also knew.

He knew how challenging this Trial was.

But in reality, this was the easiest Trial for YuWon.

"It's just a fake. The hard part is realizing that what's in front of you is fake and being sure of it."

Moreover, YuWon had already passed this Trial before.

Back then, he also passed it quite easily.

"As they say, you have many secrets."

YuWon was famous even among the Administrators.

While he seemed to have many secrets, they had not been properly revealed.

"Does Odin know anything about you?"

Recently, Odin's movements had also caught the attention of the Administrators.

With the appearance of the Outer God, the King of Asgard gathered the guilds scattered throughout the Tower. The Gathering Day was approaching, and that event was worthy of the Administrators' attention.

"I'm intrigued."

The Administrator glanced at the spot where the fake Shub-Niggurath had disappeared from YuWon's hands.

"We'll see if what I just witnessed happens or not."

Ssshhhh-

The space around YuWon and the Administrator gradually became blurry.

[You have reached Floor 100.]

At the same time, as his stomach churned a bit, the scenery disappeared completely and was replaced by a completely different landscape.

There were clouds in the sky, thick and oily land below, towering castles and buildings that rose high enough to tilt your head to see them, and a world filled with fresh air.

YuWon closed his eyes for a moment, admiring the newly arrived scenery.

"Finally, I've arrived."

At the top.

[Kim YuWon, Ascended to the Top in the Shortest Time! Will His Ranking Increase?]

[He has become a Ranker, but there have been no changes in his ranking. The Administration says, "It holds no special significance."]

[Kim YuWon's Future Moves. Which Guild is Interested?]

[Murim Guild: "Now is the time to focus on Asgard's harmony."]

As if they had been waiting, countless articles arrived.

It was already expected that YuWon would become a Ranker. From the beginning, YuWon had been classified as a High-Ranker, demonstrating the Administration's faith in his growth potential.

No one was surprised.

In fact, some thought it took longer than expected.

Furthermore, no one doubted YuWon's ability at this point.

"That guy is already a High-Ranker."

"At first, I thought the Administration made a mistake, but..."

"At this point, too many people have seen him."

YuWon's ability had already been demonstrated through many events.

From destroying Olympus, Ragnarok, the Great Heaven Demon War, to his recent confrontation with Shub-Niggurath on the first floor.

YuWon had showcased his skill in countless battles.

Although he was currently ranked 28th, no one doubted that YuWon would become one of the Tower's Kings, much like Odin, in the not-so-distant future.

"There's been a lot going on."

YuWon chose a place to stay on the 100th floor.

Although the last Trial was not difficult, constantly climbing the Tower had exhausted him. Besides, he hadn't been too concerned about worldly affairs.

As if arriving in a dream-like world, the first thing YuWon did upon arrival was book a good room like in a hotel, take a bath, and lie down on the bed.

"It's truly a wonderful world."

YuWon looked at the world reflected in the window.

Always a clear sky with no sign of darkness, not even a drop of rain falling. The land was prosperous and rich, and the city was filled with luxury shops and entertainment.

There was a reason why this world, blessed by the gods, was the best place to live. The best quality of life in the Tower was found at the highest point.

"Well... it's expensive here too."

Despite how good it was, the cost for one night in this room was 200 points.

A price that far exceeded that of any other world.

"But it's so nice to live here."

Thanks to this rest, YuWon could catch up on some news from the world.

"The Asgard Gathering?"

An event organized by Odin.

He didn't even know there was such a thing; he had really rushed up.

Yuwon also obtained additional information.

Interestingly, half of the recent reports were related to him.

"Rank 28..."

Apparently, his battle with Satan had influenced his ranking.

Of course, if that were the case, he should have been at least in the top 10, not the top 20.

"Well..."

Yuwon looked at the Egg on his bed.

"I guess I more or less understand why."

Not much had happened apart from that.

Most of the articles were centered around the appearance of Shub-Niggurath on the first floor, but none of them provided useful information.

It was natural. At this point, it was unlikely that there would be journalists who knew anything concrete about the Outer Gods.

Mostly, the articles were speculative and ended in fruitless conjecture.

"Some of them have their own guesses, more or less accurate."

Yuwon refocused on the Asgard Gathering.

December 31st.

"About a month from now."

The deadline was quite generous. Probably, that much time was needed for all the Guilds to gather.

"Will I be able to finish it by then?"

On the 100th floor, YuWon had two things to do.

Yuwon got up from his place to address the first of them and left his lodgings.

The city streets were quite crowded.

Among the people walking the streets, all those who could be considered players were Rankers.

Some of them, like residents of other floors, had their own shops or acted as mercenaries.

Even though they had rankings, not everyone paid attention to their rankings.

"Isn't that Kim YuWon?"

"They said he recently ascended..."

"Is he here to watch?"

Curious glances towards YuWon.

But that was it. Most of the Ranker Players were part of quite large Guilds and had seen High-Rankers before.

As a result, interest faded quickly.

At that moment, YuWon moved towards a corner, then deeper into another corner.

The towering buildings that seemed to touch the sky disappeared, and the atmosphere became dark and foul, with narrow alleyways.

And in places like these, there were always troublesome types.

"Rumble-."

Growls that rumbled beneath his feet.

"Pich, pach, pich, pach!"

Sharp, thick teeth dug beneath YuWon.

YuWon halted his steps and looked up. At the top of a building in the alley, a group of people was watching him.

"Is that the guy?"

"Oh..."

"Good choice to wait. At least we've done something."

Swish.

Several guys emerged into view in the dark alleyways.

But unlike their scruffy appearances, they were all Rankers.

They were like a gang of thugs from the first floor, devouring another Ranker who had reached the 100th floor.

YuWon looked around, surveying every corner of the alley.

There were quite a few of them.

If all those scattered nearby gathered, they would probably easily surpass twenty.

"I've never seen that face before..."

"Wait a minute."

"This seems like a mistake..."

The Rankers who approached to inspect YuWon's face felt uncertain.

Even if they were Rankers who had given up their rankings, they at least knew a bit about the world's affairs.

Especially lately, if you asked who the most famous person in this Tower was, they would probably mention one name.

"Is that really Kim YuWon?"

"Damn..."

"You see? That's what happens when you unleash your abilities without warning."

"Why do you always have to be so annoying?"

The Rankers scrutinizing YuWon's face sparked a division within the group. Suddenly, amidst the discussion unfolding before their eyes, fragments of blue ice began to emerge beneath YuWon's shadow.

"Arturo."

-Yes.

"Finish this and come back."

YuWon resumed his steps with those words.

And at the same time...

Crunch, crunch.

The ground began to freeze.

Arturo, who was fully armored in blue, raised his head.

-I accept the orders.

With a wave of his hand, Arturo conjured an ice sword next to Excalibur.

To him, being one of the top-ranked, the twenty Rankers in front of him weren't even a light exercise.

Crash~.

Ugh!!

"Ahh!"

"M-my leg!"

"It's ice! Someone with fire abilities, attack him!"

Chaos erupted.

In any corner of the Tower's alleys, there were always thugs. Stealing others' possessions to earn points was common and not much different between Players on the lower floors and Rankers.

There was no time to get involved with these people.

YuWon advanced deeper into the alley and headed towards a hidden staircase in a corner.

Step~

The smell of dampness permeated the place.

Due to the narrowness of the staircase, the sound of his steps reverberated against the wall several times.

As he continued down the stairs.

"Who goes there?"

Fffr~

A small lamp appeared in the dark staircase.

"Entering here is a bit expensive. And what's inside is even more costly."

"If it's about points, I have more than enough."

Points earned as a reward every time he cleared a Trial.

Furthermore, he set a new record on each Floor, earning a substantial amount of points.

At least 100,000 per Floor.

And sometimes, even several million points.

So far, the amount of points YuWon had accumulated was enough to make journalists trying to guess it make astounding estimates.

And, since acquiring Adamantium, YuWon had been accumulating most of the Points.

"After all, I'm quite rich."

[You have: 152,478,900 points]

All of this, just for today.

Chapter 387

C387

There were several ways to earn points.

The first one was through Trials. When new players entered, they could earn points through Trials. Although significant amounts of points could be gained this way, Trials always put their lives at risk. Naturally, it wasn't the preferred option for many players.

The second way was through labor. Selling items, crafting items using skills like Hephaestus, and similar methods didn't differ much from earning money in the real world.

The third way was to establish a realm like Asgard or Olympus and collect taxes in the form of protection fees. Although this option allowed for significant point gains, it required a large amount of labor.

Yuwon had opted for the first option to earn points.

"... So, that's what's going on."

Fffsh~

The lamp lit up in the dark staircase.

The light made the surprised goblin's face visible.

"You really have a lot of money."

His tone changed, and his lips curved upwards.

The goblin couldn't hide his expression of joy.

The amount of points YuWon had revealed was the reason.

"It's been a while since I started working here, but it's the first time I've seen someone so wealthy."

"Can we go in?"

"Yes."

The goblin reached forward with his hand.

"The entrance fee is 100,000 points."

100,000 points.

It was an excessive amount for what seemed like a simple entrance fee. It was enough money for even Rankers to buy tempting items.

An absurd condition.

But YuWon paid the amount without hesitation.

[You have spent 100,000 points]

When YuWon handed over the money right away, the goblin chuckled.

"It's been a long time since I've seen an outsider spend so much money here."

Swish~

The lights came on in the dim lanterns between the dark stairs.

There was no magical energy felt, they were flames created by mechanical devices instead of magic.

"Follow me."

The goblin turned and began descending the stairs.

Yuwon followed.

The stairs gradually widened.

And then...

Pak...

At the end of the stairs, a wide open space appeared.

[You have paid the entrance fee]

[You have arrived in the 'Goblin Country']

As far as he remembered, it was daytime before descending the stairs.

Originally, in the 100th Floor World, there was no night, so it couldn't be night no matter how much time had passed.

But when they descended the stairs and arrived at this place, the sky was clearly lit by the moon.

'Three moons.'

YuWon looked up and observed the three moons in the sky.

"We've arrived."

Goblin Country, where three moons hung in the sky.

This was a world that was always night. The reason the 100th Floor World was always day was because there existed an opposite world where it was always night.

Ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching

"Let's play, let's play, Ehécatl!"

"Let's play, let's play, even if we grow old."

"Woo-hoo! Joskuna!"

"Woo-hoo? Where did you get that word?"

"They say the youngsters on the lower floors use it these days. Woo-hoo!"

They played instruments, danced, and sang. The goblins were enjoying themselves to the fullest with music and dance everywhere.

Here, it was always night, so the Goblins never saw the day.

"What's going on? Regretting it already?"

The Goblin who followed YuWon chuckled softly.

"You paid 100,000 points to enter a place like this."

"That's true."

"Really? Well, I suppose you must have come here knowing what you're doing."

The Goblin narrowed his eyes as he looked at YuWon.

"Did you hear about this from Odin?"

YuWon nodded.

Yes, he did. The Goblin mocked the fact that YuWon knew about their country.

Well, so what?

There probably wasn't another fool who would pay 100,000 points to enter a place like this without any information.

"That stubborn brat. He said he wouldn't say anything..."

Brat.

A word directed at Odin, the lord of everything.

But YuWon didn't find it strange that the Goblin used that word.

All the Goblins living in this country were the same.

'The oldest race that has been alongside the history of the Tower.'

In general, it was known that among those who hadn't become Rankers, the race that lived the longest were the Dragons.

From birth, they possessed magic, and as they aged, they accumulated a large amount of Arcane Power in their hearts.

That's how the Dragons, a race capable of living for thousands or even tens of thousands of years, earned that reputation.

But the Tower was vast, and apart from the Dragons, there were other races with long lifespans.

"How long have you lived?"

"It seems you've heard that our lifespan is long."

"I can even tell just from what you said earlier. At least you've lived longer than Odin."

"Despite knowing that, you have a rather arrogant tone."

The Goblin, who seemed to be enjoying himself, picked up a bottle of liquor he had on the side.

As if he wanted to finish it, the bottle still had some liquor left.

Gulp, gulp.

"Ugh... Age? I don't know it very well. Around 50,000 years? A bit more?"

"You've lived a long time."

"Hehe. Even after hearing my age, your way of speaking remains the same."

"It's not necessarily like that, but I've also lived long enough. With time, age doesn't have much meaning."

"You're right about that."

Age doesn't matter.

There probably wasn't anyone else but the Goblins who could fully understand that statement.

For those who had lived for thousands or even millions of years, age was simply an accumulation of time without much meaning.

"So, why has someone like you come to this corner?"

"I want to meet the Goblin King."

"The king?"

The Goblin's expression wrinkled.

Demanding to meet their king in that manner was quite rude. Paying the entrance fee was only a minimal gesture to enter the Goblin Country, it didn't grant the right to move freely and make requests of that nature.

Despite that...

The Goblin looked at YuWon for a moment as if considering something.

"Hmm..."

The Goblin stared at YuWon.

Something in his gaze seemed to be related to money.

"Goblins love points more than anything else."

That was the recommendation from Odin that YuWon had received about this country.

"Points. They drive everyone here crazy. That's probably why everything in this country is so expensive. Even a plate of food or a sip of water."

The greed of the Goblins surpassed all imagination.

Only the entrance fee alone was so high that most Rankers would find it hard to pay.

But that didn't apply to YuWon.

[You have 152,378,900 points]

Yuwon had paid 100,000 points for entry, and he still had an impressive amount of points in his balance. 150 million points didn't even make YuWon bat an eye. It would have even made the richest Goblins roll their eyes.

It would probably be the same for the Goblin King.

However...

"It doesn't seem impossible," the Goblin replied.

Yuwon nodded. He was expecting that response.

"Then, take me there."

With a confident step, as if he were waiting for an answer.

"Toward your King."

Yuwon headed towards the castle in the distance.

The Goblin Country was small, barely a territory the size of a city. The tall castle in the center was made exclusively for the Goblin King.

Yuwon followed the Goblin guide and entered the castle.

The Goblin, who had been chatting about his country, suddenly changed the subject.

"By the way, that face... I've seen it somewhere."

The Goblin Country was practically isolated from the outside world, but it seemed that statement was true.

"It's because I'm a bit famous outside."

"Really? Well, I figured. Kim YuWon, right? You've become famous lately on the lower floors."

The Goblin burst into admiration for his own memory.

It seemed that he had gone outside a few years ago when YuWon began making a name for himself in the Tower, publicizing his name and face.

"But, how did you get here?"

"I climbed."

"Already? Up to the 100th floor?"

The Goblin's eyes blinked briefly.

He had heard news about YuWon just a few years ago. At that time, YuWon was a newcomer on the lower floors and barely known.

But in such a short time, he had already managed to become a Ranker.

"The Tower must have been in an uproar again."

Becoming a Ranker in such a short period of time would surely attract attention. It was not only a sign of skill but also of great latent potential.

"But that doesn't mean you should act too insolent in front of the King. He's different from all the newbie Players you've met so far."

The Goblin opened the door.

Inside the castle, there was no sign of activity, and there was no one present. In the distance, a thick iron door could be seen emanating a strong scent of incense.

"So, go on."

The Goblin opened the door without asking for permission. When the door opened, the scent of incense became much more intense.

What they saw on the other side of the door was...

Glugluglu...

It was a cultural shock.

A gigantic man in the room who was twice the size of Hercules, with a massive body. And next to him, there was a liquor bottle even larger than his own bulk.

Glup...

Liquor flowed from the bottle he held in one hand and trickled down his chin, dripping down.

Then, the giant man lowered the liquor bottle.

Klunk...

The clear sound of the empty bottle resonated in the room.

The only piece of furniture in the room was a large sofa on which the man was sitting.

"It seems to be strong liquor."

Although his face was hidden by the bottle, it seemed that most of the liquors here were so strong that even Rankers would enjoy drinking them. Although there were also some drinks for connoisseurs, that was only a small part.

Most of the drinks were so strong that even Rankers would have difficulty resisting them, specifically designed for getting intoxicated.

"It's delicious."

His eyes clouded over.

However, there was a hidden strength in his eyes that he couldn't hide, and as he lowered the liquor bottle, his eyes settled on YuWon.

"Is it you? You wanted to see me?"

As if he were looking to evaluate him, the Goblin King examined YuWon from head to toe.

It seemed that he already knew that YuWon would come here.

Yuwon gave him enough time to examine him.

After a moment...

"Interesting..."

The Goblin King laughed as he reached for another bottle of liquor.

"Do you want to drink?"

"I'm not a fan of alcohol."

"Really? That's a shame. You can't know life if you don't know liquor."

Glugluglu...

The Goblin King took a small sip from a liquor bottle as he spoke again.

"So, what's the matter that brings you here?"

"I have leftover points that I don't know how to spend."

The reason YuWon had sought out the Goblin King in this place...

"How much is Gungnir worth?"

It was because he knew that there were hidden treasures of immeasurable value in this world.

Chapter 388

C388

"From the beginning, I had no intention of talking about the goblins."

"Where did you get Gungnir?"

It was a cautiously asked question by someone during the meeting.

The meeting room fell silent immediately; even among comrades, this question was considered taboo.

"What's going on? Why is the atmosphere so tense?"

"Because of Gungnir..."

"Weren't we not supposed to tell anyone about it?"

"Oh, since it's come up, just tell it casually. Don't look so frustrated."

The last part was said by Son OhGong, the least patient of all.

After that statement, some of his comrades shot him annoyed looks. That's what the information about Gungnir being a forbidden topic meant.

However...

"I bought it from the goblins."

Unexpectedly, Odin responded smoothly.

Even comrades who had been fiercely opposing until a moment ago perked up their pointed ears with interest now. Seeing this, Son OhGong shook off Hercules, who was holding his arm from behind, and asked.

"From the goblins?"

"Yes. It was those guys I met on the 100th floor."

"I had heard that goblins existed. Have you had encounters with them?"

"Then, you bought Gungnir from those guys?"

Odin reached for Gungnir, which was behind him.

"It immediately stole my heart when I first saw it. It was more than any beautiful lady; I felt it was my destiny."

"Uh... how romantic..."

"I can't say it's the same as at the beginning, but it still takes my breath away. Every time I throw it, it feels like my heart is leaping."

"Ugh!"

"Why is he acting like this? It's weird even for him."

"He's usually an exaggerator, but he's even worse when it comes to Gungnir."

Though the murmuring noise was loud enough to be heard, Odin's praise for Gungnir didn't stop.

Gungnir was so important to Odin; it was like his very life.

"I thought I had to have it, no matter the means. But the price they proposed was unbelievably exorbitant."

"How much was it?"

"How much was it?"

There was no one who truly hated money, and Gungnir was a supreme-quality item that everyone knew about. Moreover, Gungnir had never appeared in any auction, so its value remained a mystery.

Curiosity was at its peak.

"For Gungnir, I paid...."

"A hundred million points, I believe."

The Goblin King muttered as he recalled the time.

The price at which Gungnir, originally belonging to the goblins, was sold to Odin.

Odin had spent nearly all the wealth he had amassed as the King of Asgard on it.

Of course...

The nation's wealth was untouched. It was only his personal wealth as a king that Odin touched.

"That guy really worked hard to get it. He created Asgard Merchant, participated in various businesses. Gathering 100 million points wasn't so difficult, it seems."

The Goblin King, who had no idea that Odin would actually raise so much money, licked his lips with regret.

"If I had known, I would have bid up to 200 million points."

From the beginning, the price of Gungnir was not fixed; it was an item whose value depended on how you called it, literally.

However, even for the Goblin King, 100 million points was an incredibly high price that had never been negotiated before.

Despite that, the Goblin King was not satisfied at all.

"At least you seem to be a bit better."

The Goblin King looked at YuWon greedily.

150 million points. Given that YuWon's points were astronomically high, the Goblin King began to feel ambitious.

"Well, what do you want? If you've come all the way here after hearing about Odin, you must want something big."

"Before that..."

Yuwon reached into his inventory. In his hand, he held a massive bottle of alcohol, which was infinitely smaller than the goblin king's.

Swish...

Thud...

A liquor bottle the size of the Goblin King's head.

The Goblin King showed interest as if asking what this was. The liquor bottle was completely black with no special color.

"It's the liquor Dionysus has been keeping."

"Dionysus?"

The Goblin King's eyes gleamed.

Most High-Rankers were very similar, but not Dionysus, who didn't resemble any other.

He was the most famous Ranker for his drinks in the Tower. It was said that there was no Ranker who hadn't tasted his liquor, so Dionysus's liquor held a special place.

Even the liquor mass-produced by him was exquisite enough to satisfy the palates of High-Rankers.

But still, the Goblin King couldn't help but be interested in the liquor that Dionysus had been keeping.

"That's wine Dionysus made a long time ago. He made it before starting his business and kept it for a long time, waiting for it to mature."

"Before Dionysus started his business?"

"It's definitely not something mass-produced. It's liquor made by Dionysus personally."

Liquor made by Dionysus personally held high value. The value of Dionysus's personally made liquor was higher than anything else, reaching hundreds or thousands of points per bottle.

But if this liquor was made by Dionysus before he started his business, obviously, he would have invested even more effort into it than any other liquor.

Furthermore...

"As you know, wine becomes more valuable over time. Of course, sometimes it can deteriorate if not handled properly, but the liquor made by Dionysus shouldn't have suffered that."

Glug...

Liquor that Dionysus had invested thousands of years in making personally.

How much would it sell for at the auction house if it appeared? It would probably surpass any imaginable price.

No...

Even if you had money, you probably couldn't get it.

"I'll buy it."

The direction of the negotiation changed immediately.

"How much does it cost? A hundred thousand? Or a million?"

"Isn't the price something that varies depending on the moment, place, and person?"

YuWon put the liquor bottle back into his inventory.

The Goblin King's gaze followed the liquor bottle.

"Well, you're not a human; you're a goblin, after all."

"What do you want?"

The Goblin King, with saliva accumulated in his mouth, asked again as if mocking YuWon. Fortunately, this was what YuWon expected.

"What the Goblin King likes most is liquor. And not just any liquor, but something very special."

As someone who didn't enjoy liquor much, Odin's warnings didn't mean much to YuWon.

But that didn't mean he could ignore the advice.

YuWon helped Olympus and met Dionysus.

"Do you have any stored liquor?"

"Why? Would you like to have a drink together?"

Dionysus, who was initially radiant at YuWon's question, couldn't help but stiffen his expression at YuWon's response.

"No. I just want one."

YuWon was shamelessly asking for liquor. Moreover, among all the liquors Dionysus had been keeping, YuWon was asking for the most valuable one. It was a bold request, but at that moment, YuWon was in a position almost equal to a benefactor of Olympus.

In the destruction of Olympus, and in Hera's rebellion that followed, YuWon played a significant role. Without YuWon, Olympus would have suffered great harm.

That meant...

"Do you have it?"

"W-well, if I have it, but..."

"What's the matter? Can't you?"

"Alright, I'll give it to you."

Dionysus had no other reason to refuse.

That's how the liquor Dionysus had been keeping for a long time ended up in YuWon's hands as a token of gratitude for the favor he did for Olympus.

It might be the most valuable liquor that existed in this Tower, and Dionysus had only three bottles of it.

"There are many things I want."

You must always lead the conversation from a superior position. If you lose the initiative, you'll be forced to yield, and the relationship will naturally split into a leader and a follower.

Furthermore, this was the Goblin Country, the Goblin Kingdom.

YuWon was not a customer but rather an outsider.

However, with this, YuWon ceased to be just an outsider to the Goblin King. He was now a business interlocutor with the "wine of Dionysus."

"Ten thousand or a million, the amount doesn't matter at all."

"You're not thinking of selling it just for points, it seems."

"It would be a shame to use such a good card for points."

"Well, when it comes to points, I have more than enough."

The Goblin King's mouth curled up.

The situation was amusing.

The one who came to propose negotiations first was actually making the other party feel more anxious.

It was probably thanks to prior preparation for this kind of situation.

"Speak. What is it that you want?"

"I want to borrow your shamanic abilities." **(Note: I am between two: Shamanic Abilites or Sorcery (주술). For now I will leave it as Shamanic Abilites)**

Shamanic abilities.

A technique that only a few Rankers, including the Bull Demon King and Mimir, mastered.

In his quest for a different path from magic, YuWon had finally come to the Goblins.

"Shamanic abilities, you say?"

Suddenly, his interest seemed to dissipate.

The Goblin King reached for another liquor bottle.

Perhaps he didn't feel like getting drunk, as the liquor stopped after one sip.

The Goblin King, who wiped the spilled liquor from the corner of his lips with the back of his hand, asked, "What do you mean by borrowing my shamanic abilities? Is there a seal or curse you want to undo, or maybe you want me to read your fortune?"

The possibilities of shamanism were endless.

Especially the Goblin King right in front of him could be considered the creator in the field of shamanism.

At first glance, he looked like a drinking buddy, but YuWon needed his help.

"There are two matters."

"Two matters? I'll listen to the first one first."

As if willing to listen first and think later, the Goblin King reacted indifferently.

What YuWon wanted seemed more apparent than he thought, and the amusement vanished.

"Before that..."

Hwack-

The color of YuWon's eyes changed.

One turned red, the other golden.

When the Golden Cinder Eyes manifested, the appearance of the Goblin King in front of YuWon also changed differently from before.

'This guy is more dangerous than he looks.'

He felt chills.

A man with a human-looking face that had two horns.

It was a mask.

When he used the Golden Cinder Eyes, the form of the Goblin with a completely different face began to appear blurry over the face of the Goblin King.

But that was it.

The Golden Cinder Eyes could only see half of the Goblin King.

"So, you have Golden Cinder Eyes..."

The Goblin King showed interest, realizing that YuWon was seeing through his essence with those eyes.

As much as the Goblins were ignorant of worldly affairs, if they didn't know the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, they couldn't be considered Tower residents.

He was an entity with power and influence that ranked among the top ten forces within the Tower at this moment.

"You have such an ability, eh? Truly interesting."

Swish-.

The Goblin King's hand momentarily covered his face.

Then...

Rumble-.

['Golden Cinder Eyes' is investigating the true identity of the 'Goblin King.']

[True identity cannot be determined.]

['Golden Cinder Eyes' is resisting the 'Goblin King's Mask.']

['Goblin King's Mask' is affecting 'Golden Cinder Eyes'...]

Messages appeared before YuWon.

The shamanic magic of the Goblin King and the Golden Cinder Eyes clashed. The Golden Cinder Eyes rose fiercely to strip the Goblin King's Mask, but the mask held firm and didn't break.

And so it continued for a moment.

"What's with those eyes?"

At the Goblin King's question, YuWon stopped trying to uncover his true identity.

In reality, no matter how handsome his face might be.

The senseless fight ended here.

"I want to strengthen this ability."

Yuwon responded to the Goblin King's question, explaining the first of the two reasons he had come to the Goblin Country.

And then...

Twist-.

The Goblin King raised an eyebrow in surprise as if perplexed.

"Are you talking about the Eye of Foreknowledge?"

Chapter 389

C389

Eyes of Foreknowledge.

As soon as that name came to light, YuWon's expression wavered a bit.

Although he tried to maintain a neutral expression on the outside, inside, he was silently cheering.

"Have I really come to the right place?"

He mentioned the Eyes of Foreknowledge before he had the chance to speak himself. At least it didn't seem like a fiasco.

"The key point is the Eyes of Foreknowledge."

The conversation with Mimir, who had awakened from sleep, emphasized more than anything else the "Eyes of Foreknowledge."

"If it's you, it's not impossible, unlike others. Among the many abilities that exist in this Tower, the Golden Cinder Eyes are the closest to Foreknowledge."

"I know. The problem is where to find it."

"You can find it if you come across the goblins."

"Goblins?"

When he mentioned the race he had plans to meet anyway, YuWon's gaze seemed to shine as if things were aligning in his favor.

And Mimir couldn't help but notice YuWon's reaction.

"You seem to know."

"I heard it from Odin."

"It seems you didn't hear it from the Odin of this time. But, well, it's good that you know. Find them, and perhaps you'll find answers."

There was no certainty.

Even if he were to encounter an outstanding entity, Foreknowledge was an ability that no one else in this Tower had managed to obtain, not even Mimir, who had suffered the Curse of Knowledge.

Rumble-.

The fire of the Golden Cinder Eyes burned even brighter.

Facing those eyes without looking away, the Goblin King asked:

"Do you know about the Eyes of Foreknowledge?"

"Wow, you really know. I see my expectations didn't fail me."

The Goblin King scratched his head uncomfortably, as if he were in a bind.

"You do know it's not something you can get with just a bottle of liquor, right?"

The Eyes of Foreknowledge was such a special ability that even calling it "just a bit of liquor" in reference to Dionysus's wine was indicative of its uniqueness.

No ability in this Tower, not even the Curse of Knowledge that affected Mimir, could compare to the ability said to exist in legends.

"No, the problem isn't the liquor. Even if you had all the liquor in this Tower at your disposal, it would be difficult."

"Just give it a try. Don't hesitate."

"Sigh..."

Looking as if he were genuinely perplexed, the Goblin King looked at YuWon.

Golden Cinder Eyes.

The eyes of the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, that could see through truth and lies, that could penetrate reality.

There was a slight hint of interest in those eyes.

"Maybe really..."

After a brief moment of reflection, the Goblin King spoke.

"Guard."

"Yes, Your Majesty, how can I assist you...?"

"No beating around the bush, select twenty competent individuals."

"Twenty?"

The goblin who inadvertently muttered a quick question quickly raised his voice to respond.

"Yes! I understand!"

The goblin hurriedly left the room without looking back.

Watching the goblin's retreating back, the Goblin King shook his head in disapproval.

"How foolish they are calling themselves 'guards'."

"Do you need twenty people for this?"

"It's not about the quantity."

The Goblin King raised his hand and drew a circle with his thumb and index finger.

"This is what matters in the end."

"The points?"

"Yes."

The method to obtain the Eyes of Foreknowledge turned out to be none other than points.

YuWon's expression showed his lack of understanding, and the Goblin King explained.

"Saying 'points' ultimately refers to the power that challenges the Tower's system and rules. It makes the impossible possible, creates something out of nothing. All of that comes from points."

A power that defies the rules.

It was an unfamiliar expression to him.

"Have you ever heard this expression? 'With just points, one can become a god'."

The Goblins.

He thought they were just a race obsessed with points.

"We invented it ourselves."

Apparently, there was a reason behind it.

"With points, you can become a god. Ultimately, points are equivalent to the amount of power. Now, you will learn how to use them."

Swish-.

The Goblin King rose from his seat. Although only for a moment, his face reflected a glimmer of satisfaction.

"Watch closely."

The goblins gathered one after another in the castle.

It was quieter than expected.

But should it be this quiet?

"What's wrong? Are you nervous?"

The Goblin King, who had temporarily disappeared, approached YuWon from behind.

No one knew when he had arrived; there were no signs.

"Goblins are a kind race as long as you have enough points. You're richer than any of us."

"Are you saying they will strip me of everything?"

"Don't worry, they won't charge you a fee. Bringing Dionysus's wine was a very clever choice."

In the end, they would take what he had.

"I'm also a bit curious."

"...?"

"I want to know if the Eyes of Foreknowledge is really possible."

For them, it was also a kind of fun experiment.

A creak and a whisper.

The goblins began inscribing letters on the ground in an incomprehensible language. The Goblin King walked among the letters.

"The Eyes of Foreknowledge is eyes that bring the ordered sequence of time forward. Of course, even though it's called an eye, its form doesn't necessarily have to be an eye."

A dull thud echoed as the Goblin King began to move, and the castle trembled slightly.

The Goblin King slowly removed his mask. Normally, one would consider his face to be a goblin's face behind a mask, but right now, it was exactly the opposite. To him, the human face was his mask.

And so, when all the masks were removed...

['The Goblin King's Mask' dissolves]

[You have seen the true identity of 'The Goblin King']

['The Goblin King' materializes]

A chill ran down YuWon's spine as he saw the true identity of the Goblin King.

"Was this guy like this?"

He was just a big, burly guy who looked like a heavy drinker. Now, he finally began to understand why Odin had supported the guy so much.

"By the way, I want to advise you never, under any circumstances, to think about fighting the Goblin King."

As they made plans to go to Goblin Country.

Odin looked at OhGong with concern.

"Especially you. I'm worried about what you'll do when you meet him."

"What? Why?"

"Because you'll probably jump at the opportunity to fight as soon as you see him."

"Do you see me as a fool who can't distinguish between friends and enemies?"

"So far, it's surprising that you've made that distinction."

"Do you want to fight?"

At that moment, YuWon didn't quite understand why Odin was so worried about OhGong.

He only vaguely knew that the Goblin King was strong.

But seeing him directly, he began to understand a bit.

'He wouldn't be able to handle it if he saw him.'

The creature before his eyes was a monster, and it was so gigantic that it was hard to imagine. The Goblin King wore such a thick mask that even the Golden Cinder Eyes couldn't uncover his true identity, and it concealed his immense power.

"It's all done."

The Goblin King, along with other goblins, carved words into the ground and approached YuWon.

"Come over here."

Yuwon followed the Goblin King's gesture and walked on the words written on the ground. He felt a strange sensation. They were simple letters with no trace of Arcane Power, but standing on them, they strangely felt familiar.

"Are you ready?"

Yuwon looked at the Goblin King standing on the letters. Ready, what was that?

"I mean, are you mentally prepared?"

"To prepare, one must know what they're doing."

"We're going on a time journey."

A time journey. Yuwon had already used the Clock Movement to go back in time. The moment Yuwon existed in currently was precisely that moment. Were they planning to go back in time again?

The Goblin King continued to explain:

"It's not a real-time time journey, but we are going to carve time."

Zzz, zzzzzzzz. Before he finished speaking, the letters surrounding Yuwon began to move eerily.

Around twenty goblins surrounded him. They activated their magic and began performing rituals.

"We'll see if this method can create the Eyes of Foreknowledge. If it's possible to challenge the rules and see the future instead of the past..."

Chaaa. The letters ascended through Yuwon's body.

"But it will all depend on you."

Ssssh, ssssh. Countless letters covered Yuwon's vision.

Yuwon didn't reject it. As it became increasingly difficult to utter a word as the letters enveloped him, the trial began.

['Goblin's Time' responds to 'Golden Cinder Eyes']

[You have spent 100,000 points]

[You will continue to spend points continuously over time]

[Do you accept the 'Goblin King's Deal?']

YuWon felt like he had been asleep for a long time.

When he opened his eyes again, he found himself amidst countless scenes.

'It feels like a movie.'

Countless scenes passed by rapidly.

So many that he couldn't count them.

If he separated them and observed each one individually, some of the unfamiliar scenes mixed with the familiar ones.

"That's the first time I met Son OhGong."

A moment he could never forget.

It was one of the few defeats. During the fight with Son OhGong, YuWon received a strong impact.

This Tower is really vast, and there are many strong types.

And then, another scene.

"That's when Hercules saved me."

One day, while they fought as comrades, Hercules fought in YuWon's place with the determination to die.

Hercules, with his back to him and blocking YuWon's path, fought alone against the Outer Gods.

"I really thought I was going to die."

Suddenly, YuWon wondered what Hercules would be doing right now.

He probably wouldn't remember.

Anyway, to YuWon, Hercules was his savior and an incomparable hero.

And then, another scene...

Odin hurling Gungnir and stopping Shub-Niggurath.

All the scenes unfolded. Surprisingly, many of the scenes were familiar to YuWon.

What the hell is this?

When that question crossed his mind...

"What is this...?"

One scene caught his attention.

Clank...

The image of Odin being devoured by Shub-Niggurath.

He had no memory of seeing that before.

But that wasn't all.

Crunch...

Hercules's arm broke. Not just one arm, but both arms were shattered.

This scene reflected the moment when he fought to protect YuWon from the Outer Gods.

It was as if his head was about to explode. The scenes unfolding before him increased exponentially in number as time passed.

They piled up and piled up, becoming a vast ocean that enveloped him.

And what was even more shocking was that...

"I'm seeing all of this... so many things."

Countless scenes, countless, all entered YuWon's eyes.

What were all these things?

YuWon looked at the scenes entering his eyes again and again and finally realized.

"They could be events that happened in the future, countless events."

Dozens, hundreds, millions.

Countless futures exceeding a billion.

All these "possibilities" that couldn't be counted in numbers stretched out before YuWon's eyes.

Chapter 390

C390

Clank... Clank...

The letters surrounding YuWon's body dispersed and were replaced again and again by new letters.

And as he watched the letters being written and disappearing repeatedly...

"It has begun."

The Goblin King murmured.

Around the Goblin King, who observed YuWon with interested eyes while crossing his arms, another twenty goblins were kneeling and sitting, soaked in sweat.

"What are you saying?"

The Goblin King turned to the question coming right next to him.

Among the twenty sweaty goblins, one goblin seemed to be the most relaxed.

He was the goblin guardian of the Goblin King.

"Can you see these letters?"

"Yes. Most of them are too fast to read, but yes."

"Then, how many of them do you think will remain?"

"How many...?"

The letters disappearing and reappearing.

The goblin guardian responded about the combination of those letters.

"Most of them are meaningless letters."

"To be precise, they cease to make sense. After all, they are things that will never happen."

"Then why make such a fuss about it?"

"Seeing a single prediction of a predetermined future is impossible. However, choosing one among tens, hundreds of thousands, even hundreds of millions of possibilities with the highest probability is entirely possible."

"That..."

The goblin guardian finally understood the true nature of the "Eyes of Foreknowledge" with the Goblin King's words.

"It's impossible."

"That's right, it's impossible. For anyone."

"The head will explode. Don't you know that from Mimir?"

Mimir.

The wisest in this Tower who drank from the Spring of Yggdrasil and was cursed with excess knowledge.

Eventually, he couldn't bear the knowledge overload and was ultimately trapped in the Curse of Knowledge.

"I know."

"Then why...?"

"So that's why we need the Golden Cinder Eyes."

Fwrr...

Among the countless letters inscribed on his body, red flames bloomed over the Golden Cinder Eyes, which lit up in YuWon's eyes.

"To control that curse."

Fwrr...

['Golden Cinder Eyes' responds to 'Goblin's Time']

[You grasp the essence of Sorcery] (Note: From now on, I will choose to call it Sorcery instead of Shamanism)

[You distinguish between falsehood and truth]

Among the countless scenes that unfolded before his eyes, most disappeared like burnt paper.

False times that would never happen and could never happen.

"It's not about seeing a real future."

The Goblin Sorcery was not omnipotent.

To see a future that had not yet happened, no matter how many points you paid, was impossible.

'Eyes of Foreknowledge' was not an existing ability but an ability in which you believed it would exist.

"To see the most probable future among the countless possibilities of what could happen."

Among the hundreds of millions of "futures that could happen."

YuWon had to find the future with the highest probability.

Therefore, from here on, it was YuWon's task. Through the 'Golden Cinder Eyes,' see countless futures, and choose some of them and erase the rest.

Fwrr...

[What will 'happen someday' has been deduced.]

[The power of foresight increases.]

Buzz~

When he finally managed to filter the scenes entering his eyes like a deluge, his head throbbed as if it was going to explode.

Countless scenes flooded his mind.

Predictions about countless possibilities he couldn't count. An understanding of the probabilities of events that exceeded hundreds of millions.

And this went beyond "prediction" to become the realm of "foresight," beyond any anticipation.

"So this is Foreknowledge..."

It didn't seem like acquiring the ability to see the future was something that could simply be obtained.

More than foresight, this was more like probable predictions.

Zzrr, zzrr...

He felt like his brain was vibrating. There was too much information entering his mind, and his brain couldn't handle it all.

"Did Mimir feel like this?"

He hadn't imagined that the day would come when he would understand Mimir in this way.

If he continued like this, there were two options.

He could give up or, like Mimir, face knowledge overload and fall into the Curse of Knowledge.

Under normal circumstances, he would have chosen surrender.

As tempting as the 'Eyes of Foreknowledge' were, he couldn't afford to fall into a curse that would keep him in a state of sleep for a hundred years or more.

But...

"I was too ambitious," Mimir said.

Fortunately, YuWon had Mimir by his side, who had made similar mistakes in similar situations.

"Humans are incapable of seeing a single step ahead. In fact, regardless of race, they are all the same in that regard."

In a distant future.

One of those images appeared in front of YuWon.

"I wanted to know too much. I wasn't satisfied with seeing and knowing things I couldn't see, so I wanted to know everything that would happen in a distant future."

Ambition for knowledge.

That was the main reason why Mimir ruined himself.

"In the end, I failed. But I also succeeded. It was a partial success."

"Are you talking about the Curse of Knowledge?"

"Not just that."

If all that affected him was the Curse of Knowledge, Mimir probably wouldn't have viewed his situation so pessimistically.

He didn't mind having only one day a year instead of a hundred years. He wanted to see the end of knowledge, and he believed that the end of knowledge was seeing the future fully.

But he couldn't see the future.

"The future I can see is fragmented. It has a high probability, but I can't say it's certain."

"You're talking about the 'Eyes of Foreknowledge.'"

"Yes, that's exactly what I wanted."

That was why Mimir called his knowledge a partial success and a failure.

His knowledge provided countless possibilities, but in the end, he couldn't narrow it down to one.

Mimir remembered when he was drinking from the Spring of Yggdrasil.

"Don't look too far ahead. Both you and I have problems because we look too far ahead and don't see what's right in front of us."

"What's right in front of us..."

YuWon's eyes moved.

He saw an image right in front of him. It wasn't the battle with the Outers he had been watching but a scene that had happened closer.

YuWon was surrounded by goblins.

And he could also see the surprise of the Goblin King and the other goblins.

"Don't look so far, that's all."

YuWon took a small bottle from his inventory.

[Ambrosia]

#Believed to be the sap of the golden apple tree. The true identity is unclear.#Randomly boosts statistics when consumed.#Strengthens mental resistance when consumed.#Increases recovery ability when consumed.#Greatly increases resistance to all attributes when applied to the body.#Increases physical defense when applied to the body.#Increases magic resistance when applied to the body.

Ambrosia.

Plucked from a golden apple tree, this item made Achilles semi-immortal.

It was a kind of "potion," harder to find than a star in the sky.

And because of that...

"I'll follow your advice."

Although it was an item he had been saving because he had no immediate need to use it, YuWon decided that now was the right time to use it and opened the bottle cap containing Ambrosia.

Kak~

"Anyway, I've always been a bit ambitious."

After opening the bottle, he brought it to his mouth and drank it all in one gulp.

Gulp.

[You have consumed 'Ambrosia']

[Your mental resistance has temporarily strengthened significantly]

['Ambrosia' resists 'Goblin's Time']

['Golden Cinder Eyes' controls 'Goblin's Time']

['The Curse of Knowledge' weakens].

['The Curse of Knowledge'...].

To the last drop remaining.

YuWon threw the empty bottle to the ground.

Thud.

"I won't give up."

Definitely.

Thud-.

YuWon dropped the flask he had in his hand. His body, after drinking the crystalline potion, was already densely covered in black letters.

"He's in a completely different world."

"I think he could collapse into madness at any moment."

"We should at least acknowledge his mental resilience."

The goblins who were using Sorcery grimaced and nodded.

The effect of the Sorcery inscribed on YuWon's body was the injection of countless data and information, as well as possibilities. The power of Sorcery would constantly present future events to YuWon, regardless of his will, and continue to do so.

The problem was that control over it rested with YuWon.

For an ordinary person, the constant and visualized future unfolding in front of them would cause their minds to collapse or go insane.

But YuWon had a means to control it.

"I thought I only had the 'Golden Cinder Eyes'..."

No.

That's what he thought.

"Was he hiding Ambrosia?"

The Goblin King looked at the shattered fragments of the flask on the ground.

The flask contained Ambrosia. Thanks to that, YuWon was able to gain a bit more control over the Sorcery inscribed on his body.

Ambrosia was an elixir and, at the same time, a kind of narcotic. Its effect instantly increased the consumer's mental resistance several times over.

Perhaps the most necessary item in this situation.

The Goblin King muttered as if he were enjoying the situation.

"He's certainly not an ordinary individual."

"In this situation, we might actually obtain the 'Eyes of Foreknowledge.'"

"Who knows."

The guardian goblin chuckled at the Goblin King's words.

"It would be fortunate if he doesn't go mad."

"Really?"

"Or live sleeping for about ninety out of every hundred years. It's basically like Mimir, but with a slightly better situation."

Mimir couldn't obtain the 'Eyes of Foreknowledge' because he couldn't handle all that knowledge and fell into the Curse of Knowledge.

Of course, the two were different in certain aspects. While Mimir had gained wisdom through the Spring of Yggdrasil, YuWon had received information through Sorcery.

But even though the methods were different, the results were the same.

Brain overload.

Resulting mental collapse. Or a long slumber.

Thanks to Ambrosia, YuWon had found some stability, but that wouldn't change the outcome.

"Of course, maybe if we had a great Sorcerer here to assist us, things would be different."

"From our perspective, this is the best we can do."

Twenty elite goblins, including the Goblin King, who was the center of the Sorcery.

Even with their Sorcery, what they couldn't create were the 'Eyes of Foreknowledge.'

"Yes, we are at our limit."

Then, a sound resonated.

A single step at the entrance of the Goblin King's castle.

"But there's one."

The Goblin King turned to look at the man who had been eyeing him with hostility for quite some time.

"Someone who truly knows the subject."

A resounding sound.

As his overwhelming presence weighed upon the massive castle, the other goblins knelt one by one and bowed. The Goblin King, meanwhile, smiled with satisfaction.

The tall man, surrounded by the goblins and their Sorcery, alternated his gaze between the Goblin King and YuWon.

The Goblin King greeted the man.

"Step forward, Bull Demon King."

A Yokai who declared himself to have no rival under the heavens, claiming to have conquered the sky.

The Great Sage, Who Pacifies Heaven, the Bull Demon King, looked at the Goblin King with hostility.