

## With The Gods 531

Chapter 531

C7

The bright sunlight streamed through the window.

Pandora blinked as she looked at her reflection in the mirror. Half of her face covered with a mask and dressed in a white dress, she checked her appearance in front of the mirror.

Even though she just tied her hair and changed clothes, her beauty shone.

From the beginning, she was known as one of the three most important beauties of the Tower.

Just as it's said that half of Aphrodite's ranking, known at a similar level, comes from her appearance, when people encountered Pandora, they couldn't help but fall for her looks.

It was natural for her to attract attention when stepping into a crowded city.

Pandora, in particular, did not willingly volunteer for such a tedious task.

"Are you ready?"

YuWon, dressed in trousers and a coat, opened the door and entered.

Pandora nodded and approached YuWon.

The two managed most of their life at home.

Partly because Pandora was too conspicuous, but also because she had never been mentally prepared to mingle with people.

"Yes!"

"Are you sure?"

She stopped.

Pandora's movement froze for a moment at YuWon's question.

Venturing into the hustle and bustle of people was something she had been considering for quite some time.

No one has it easy in the beginning.

That was true for Pandora, a double-digit High-Ranker as well.

She preferred fighting monsters. For her, people and the world were tougher opponents.

"...yes."

A smaller response than before. Pandora's shoulders trembled slightly, but YuWon made an effort not to dissuade her or anything.

He couldn't let her live in this small house forever.

"Then, let's go out."

YuWon and Pandora walked out side by side.

Pandora's steps were slow, as if she was still trembling.

Thanks to that, YuWon could walk calmly down the street, occasionally glancing at Pandora, who walked beside him, clutching his sleeve.

Although she covered half her face with a mask, by looking at her eyes and the cheek that briefly revealed, it could be noticed that she had put in quite an effort. Although, her makeup was a bit clumsy.

'This is the first time I've seen her dressed up like this.'

Thinking about it, she had never been like this. Pandora had never dressed properly or put on makeup.

At least not in the last 10 years.

'She's beautiful.'

At that moment, YuWon looked at the mask Pandora was wearing. Although she wore it because she disliked people's attention, he couldn't help but find it stifling.

"Do you feel suffocated?"

"Yes."

"Do you want to take it off then?"

"Mmm..."

Pandora, who hesitated for a moment, shook her head.

"No, it's fine."

"...Really?"

YuWon, who stared at her face for a moment, reached into his inventory. YuWon took out an identical mask and covered his face with it.

"This is fairer."

"But no one knows you anyway."

"I'm not doing it for other people."

"Then?"

"For your sake."

Pandora, glancing sideways at YuWon with the black mask, opened her mouth.

"You look like a villain."

Pandora's voice sounded as if it contained a smile.

Although she normally didn't smile much, she seemed to be in a good mood about going out.

YuWon and Pandora reached the city.

As they walked together, YuWon couldn't stop looking into Pandora's eyes.

What was so strange to him?

'They're shining.'

There was nothing particularly strange about what Pandora was looking at, gazing around like a child.

However, Pandora's eyes sparkled like those of a child seeing an amusement park for the first time.

"YuWon, YuWon!"

Pandora urgently called him.

"Look at that!"

Pandora raised her voice.

Looking in the direction she pointed, YuWon saw a resident buying cotton candy for his daughter.

"The clouds are stuck to a stick."

"Are you talking about cotton candy...?" YuWon asked in disbelief.

"...Is this your first time seeing cotton candy?"

"Is that cotton candy?"

To his surprise, she really didn't know.

Cotton candy. On Earth where YuWon lived, and even in the Tower, it was a common snack.

Pandora, like any child, showed great interest upon discovering the cotton candy, the size of her face, resembling a small cloud.

"Wait a moment."

YuWon bought the biggest cotton candy he could find on the street.

Pandora's eyes shone even more as YuWon approached.

"Try it."

YuWon stood in front of her so she could take off the mask.

Thanks to the height difference, with her face uncovered, she removed the mask and admired the colorful pink cotton candy.

"Wow..."

At first, she hesitated about how to eat it, but soon she pulled off a small piece with her fingers and brought it to her mouth.

She liked sweet things.

Although it was just spun sugar, Pandora was captivated by the sweet and fluffy taste of cotton candy, something she had never tasted before.

Only after eating several cotton candy balls did Pandora finally satisfy her appetite.

And after that...

"YuWon! Look! A talking monster...!"

"That's a costume."

"There, people are fighting, we have to help...!"

"It's a performance. Stop."

"All of this is free, YuWon!"

"It's a free buffet, but wait, you can't take it home!"

As they explored together, YuWon found himself explaining everything she didn't know.

Leaving her small house, she realized how much she was unfamiliar with.

It was the first time she interacted with so many people.

Until now, in Pandora's world, only YuWon, Hercules, and Son OhGong existed.

No, wait.

"Zeus was there too."

Zeus.

The one who gave Pandora the box containing Azathoth's memories and kept her imprisoned in the dungeons of Olympus for so long.

Due to Zeus's actions, Pandora had lived without experiencing things that any normal person would take for granted.

'The next time I see him, I'll give him a good beating.'

While YuWon contemplated the future encounter with Zeus...

"YuWon, YuWon!"

Suddenly!

Pandora tugged at YuWon's sleeve.

"Look at that."

"That?"

YuWon's gaze followed the direction Pandora's head indicated.

In the midst of the bustling crowd...

"It doesn't happen every day! Face off against a high-ranking Ranker visiting the first floor! Whether you're a Player or a resident, everyone, experience this thrill!"

A middle-aged man with a large hat and a cane was proclaiming.

And next to him, Players and residents were extending their hands, eager to participate in the game.

YuWon, observing the scene, asked:

"Do you find it amusing?"

"It's not that."

"Then what?"

"..."

Faced with Pandora's silence, YuWon tilted his head.

And then, in an instant...

"Ah."

YuWon realized what she truly desired, and he nodded.

"You said you're good at waiting?"

"Yes."

"Then stay still and wait for a moment."

Gently...

YuWon, patting Pandora's head, approached the man soliciting customers.

"I'll get it in a moment, so be patient."

In this world, players within the top 10% of the ranking are known as "Superior Rankers."

Among the Superior Rankers, some are particularly notable, standing out for their influence, skill, and recognized achievements.

In that sense, Cyric was on par with the Superior Rankers. His expertise lay in illusion, deception, conspiracies, and lies.

He specialized in misleading and disturbing opponents more than direct combat.

'I underestimated Asgard too much.'

Despite being a Superior Ranker, Cyric's fame wasn't that impressive.

Cyric, the swindler.

More than an honorable reputation, it was rather dishonorable. However, Cyric wasn't ashamed of his name. He only regretted the money he had lost while swindling Asgard.

'Still, I'm thankful everything worked out.'

Chak, chak...

Cyric quickly mixed ten upside-down cups while savoring the messages that came to his mind.

[You've gained 100 points.]

[You've gained 100 points.]

[You've gained...]

"Thanks to those fools, building a base is easy."

Each challenge granted him 100 points.

Watching the foolish customers who challenged out of greed for the prizes, Cyric smiled to himself.

The term "Ranker" sounded like honey to the players below.

For them, Rankers were objects of admiration and mentors.

However, among those Rankers, deceiving people and taking their money was as easy as breathing for Cyric, who was among the best.

'If I resist a bit more here and accumulate around a million points...'

At that moment...

"Do I just have to guess where the ball is?"

A black-haired man approached Cyric and asked.

'Again, huh?'

Although the man's tone was a bit annoying, Cyric didn't pay him much attention.

If he had shown his displeasure from the beginning, he wouldn't have gained the reputation of a swindler.

"Yes, that's right. I'll shuffle the cups, and you just have to find the ball."

Cyric covered his face with a mask and then, with a friendly smile directed at the challenger, raised his hands above the table.

"All right, let's begin."

The rules of the game were simple:

First: Find the ball among 10 randomly shuffled cups.

Second: If you find it, you win the first prize or can challenge the next game with 11 cups.

The more challenges you overcome, the greater the prize.

"To start, something light..."

Zzzap, shashap, shashazap.

Cyric moved his hands. People watching him quickly shuffle the translucent cups exclaimed.

"Oh..."

"I can't even see his hands?"

"I think I see them a bit..."

"Did you see them?"

"I think it's on that side."

"I saw it completely upside down."

"Idiots. It's in the center."

People's opinions were completely divided. Some were sure of the ball's location, while others had no idea and moved nervously.

Cyric deliberately moved his hands so that the ball's location would be visible from time to time, inducing the next challenger to come forward.

Moreover.

'Anyway, the probability is 1 in 10.'

Human psychology is simple.

At first glance, it might seem like a game where you follow the ball with your eyes to guess its location, but in reality, no one in this place could follow Cyric's hands with their eyes.

So, there was only one method:

Chance.

Simply choose one of the 10 cups.

Paf.

Cyric, who had been quickly shuffling the cups, stopped his hands.

"Do you understand the rules, right?"

Wiiing.

Cyric's red eyes stared at the man in front of him.

"You just have to choose a cup you think has the ball."

YuWon stared intently at the cups containing the ball.

Among the cups scattered on the table, YuWon's gaze shifted to Cyric's face.

"Cheater."

Cyric remained with a bewildered face.

YuWon, with a disgusted expression, said firmly:

"There's nothing like a ball here."

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Side Story 8

"There's nothing like a ball here."

YuWon's words made Cyric's expression stiffen for a moment.

The change in his face was fleeting.

So fast that even mid-ranked players, let alone regular players, could notice the shift.

The Swindler Cyric.

That name wasn't given to him for nothing.

"What do you mean?"

"To choose a ball, there has to be a ball. You can't choose one that doesn't exist."

YuWon picked up the nearest cup.

"Look."

An empty cup.

YuWon then moved his hand to the next cup.

"Here too."

And the third.

"And here too..."

The moment YuWon picked up the fifth cup after the fourth,

"What are you doing?!"

Cyric grabbed YuWon's hand. In his heart, he wanted to break his wrist immediately.

But he couldn't predict what kind of commotion would be caused in this place if he did.

Moreover...

"Is this bastard from the Administration Bureau?"

His opponent had uncovered his trick.

It was true. Just as YuWon said, there was no ball inside these cups.

"Isn't that right?"

Faced with YuWon's irritated question, Cyric's anger flared up.

"Oh, wow! It seems it fell over here!"

One of Cyric's companions, who was promoting nearby, shouted as he raised a red ball.

"Haha, making a mistake like this. It's unlike you, Cyric-nim."

He raised his voice so everyone could hear.

The red ball in that person's hand caused the watching audience to stir.

"What? Seriously, there was no ball?"

"When did it fall?"

"Even Rankers make mistakes."

"But this seems a bit suspicious to me..."

Cyric's eyes narrowed slightly.

A change of expression so small that only YuWon, who was close, could notice.

However, unlike his displeasure, Cyric had to apologize.

"It seems I made a mistake. How can I make it up...?"

"Let's move on to the next game quickly. Anyway, it's true he found out there's no ball here."

YuWon's gaze turned to the man calming the audience.

'A team of swindlers. That guy seems to have some skills... It's a shame for his ranking and abilities.'

It was only the first floor.



Although the 100 points required to participate in this game weren't a large sum of money, it wasn't an amount that could be ignored on the first floor.

Even working like this for another month, you could easily earn around 1 million points.

Of course, that was only if no one got the "prize" they offered.

'The Swindler Cyric. I've heard of him, but it's the first time I've seen him.'

He wasn't a very well-known Ranker.

As a Ranker handling illusion-type skills, he originally specialized in combat support.

However, at some point, he was blinded by money and started swindling various Guilds.

Of course...

It wasn't a very pleasant way to describe him.

'How did he sink this low?'

Cyric's goal was clear.

He probably wanted to take advantage of the Players and residents on the first floor and then rise again.

"Is that so? Then, do you want to challenge the next game?"

The next game.

Cyric perceived YuWon's challenge as a provocation. He took another cup and another ball from his inventory and placed them in front of his eyes.

"This time, there's one more cup and one more ball. Of course, the difficulty increases more than twofold."

Ssh-.

Cyric began shuffling the cups with a mocking smile.

The cups moved several times faster than before. Cyric was determined to deceive YuWon's eyes.

'It's not a normal bet.'

With his face covered by a mask, Cyric looked at YuWon with his bright red eyes.

The man in front of him had discovered his trick.

Of course, it was nothing more than a simple sleight of hand game, but it was a level hard to detect even for a decent Ranker.

'He must have some special ability that allows him to enhance his sight.'

An evident fact was that his opponent was not a Player from the first floor.

In that case, he also had to act accordingly.

Clang-.

In a short time, his hands stopped.

"All right, choose."

Cyric withdrew his hands from the cups with a friendly expression.

"If you guess the ball positions again, this time you'll take home the Immortality Elixir made by Deva as a prize."

"The Immortality Elixir?"

"Such a thing?"

"They said if you consume it, even if you're not a Ranker, you can live forever..."

People murmured.

The second prize Cyric had put on the table, the "Immortality Elixir," was not actually an elixir that granted real immortality.

To be precise, the elixir's effect was only "Immortality (不老)."

However, even with that effect, the elixir's value was tremendous.

'I'm sure this bastard is also one of them. But anyway, he'll never get it right...'

"1, 4."

"...!"

Cyric's eyes widened.

This time, the change in his expression was one that anyone could notice.

Paying no attention to Cyric's reaction, YuWon reached out and lifted the first cup.

"You got one right."

Immediately, he reached for cup number 4.

"The other one is..."

At that moment...

['Trickster's Trick' activated.]

[You can manipulate the memories of the designated target.]

[You can move the designated object.]

Trickster's Trick.

The B-grade skill that had turned Cyric into what he was.

The grade itself wasn't very high, but familiarity with the skill was close to 100%.

Using the skill was as easy as moving hands and feet.

So Cyric thought about turning the situation around with this skill.

'I didn't think I would have to use it here...'

He had already had to use the skill on the first floor.

'There's nothing else to be done.'

The Immortality Elixir was an item that cost more than 100,000 points.

He couldn't let it be taken away so easily.

[Unknown force detected.]

['Trickster's Trick' canceled.]

A question mark appeared in his mind. In the instant Cyric stopped, confused, YuWon lifted the second cup.

"You got it."

Two crimson-colored balls.

In the end, Cyric was left wide-eyed.

"T-This is a fra-"

The word "fraud" that he was about to shout choked in his throat.

That was his specialty.

If he started arguing about fraud here and now, the Administration Bureau would undoubtedly intervene.

And more importantly, right now, he couldn't use force.

On the first floor, if you used your strength against a Player or a resident, you would be sanctioned by the Tower immediately.

"Let's move on to the next one."

Faced with YuWon's words, Cyric, who had a dazed expression for a moment, hurriedly put on his mask.

With a friendly smile, Cyric opened his mouth.

"Do you really want to try it? If you fail, you'll also lose the prize for the second challenge."

"It doesn't matter."

"...Understood. Then this time."

Swoosh.

Cyric took out one more cup and one more ball from his inventory and started shuffling them again.

However.

"5, 7, 10."

[Unknown power interferes.]

['Trickster's Trick' canceled.]

And the next.

"1, 3, 4, 6."

[Unknown power interferes.]

['Trickster's Trick' canceled.]

And the next.

The skill kept failing.

Bang.

'This can't be.'

It was already the fourth time.

There was only one chance left.

If he could pass this last test, there would be no future for him.

'I don't know what skill he has, but that bastard has the ability to nullify my skills. His eyes are also following my hands...'

Clutching the fists he had behind his back, Cyric looked at YuWon.

'Do I have no choice but to run away?'

['Trickster's Illusion' created.]

[Environment within a designated space is copied.]

Woosh.

A translucent magical aura spread around Cyric.

Trickster's Illusion.

A skill that deceives the surroundings by creating a semi-realistic form.

Cyric, who activated the skill, immediately tried to grab the items and flee.

However...

"Wait a moment."

Suddenly, a hand reached out and grabbed Cyric's wrist, preventing the activation of the skill.

"Are you crossing the line?"

['Water Spirit' interferes with 'Trickster's Illusion'.]

['Trickster's Illusion' dissipates.]

Whoosh.

As the translucent magic faded away, the surrounding landscape distorted for a moment.

To the eyes of the audience, Cyric's figure calmly picking up the next cup disappeared, revealing his true form being held by a handsome man.

"What?"

"Did you just see that?"

"Who is that guy? Where did he suddenly come from...?"

"It's, it's Varuna!"

A shout from a spectator who recognized the man.

With his beautiful appearance that seemed to naturally make light shine from his face, it was strange not to know him.

"I heard he descended to the first floor..."

"Why did he appear here?"

"Maybe Varuna is also interested in that item?"

"It's an item that even a High-Ranker would covet, but... this situation is a bit..."

Varuna glared at Cyric.

As expected, Cyric, who couldn't ignore his face, felt uneasy.

His expression didn't change much, but inside, he was crying.

'Why is a Deva High-Ranker here?'

He couldn't understand why a High-Ranker of that level had descended to the first floor.

However, at the same time, the situation began to make sense.

'It was Varuna who was behind this.'

As good as Cyric was, there was a limit to the opponents he could deceive with illusions.

Although Varuna was known for his beautiful appearance and had a higher reputation than other High-Rankers, he was a Ranker with enough skill to be named an executive of Deva.

Therefore, it wouldn't be that difficult for him to nullify Cyric's skill.

'It's fine. It's still fine.'

His skill left no traces.

Even with Varuna behind him, the game was not over yet.

"It seems there's some misunderstanding."

"Misunderstanding? What misunderstanding?"

"Could we leave this for a moment and talk? Varuna-nim. It hurts a bit."

Cyric trembled violently and broke out in a cold sweat, truly distressed.

To the eyes of spectators who knew nothing, it just seemed like a Deva High-Ranker barging in and disrupting a game that was going well.

"...Your performance is truly impressive."

Varuna gritted his teeth and had no choice but to release Cyric's wrist.

His initial goal was to assist in the difficult situation and gain a bit more favor with YuWon.

'At this rate, I'm just going to make a fool of myself...'

Baruna, who glanced at YuWon beside him, frowned.

YuWon wasn't looking at the intruder but elsewhere.

"Wow, this game is quite fun."

And then...

"But the one who has been shuffling for a while is really bad. Wouldn't it be better if someone else shuffled this time?"

"Who else is going to shuffle this time-?"

The moment Cyric turned his head thinking about who the other intruder might be.

Thump-.

A tall man with long white hair hit Cyric's head.

"Don't you know me?"

A voice with a mocking laugh.

Whoosh-.

Son OhGong's eyes burned fiercely, reflecting Cyric's terrified face like a mirror.

"Really?"

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C9

Frrr-.

The moment they made eye contact.

"Ugh... ugh..."

For over a thousand years, Ciryrc, who had led a life as a High-Ranker, experienced a fear like never before.

No, it went beyond the emotion of fear.

Among those who became Rankers, there was no one who hadn't faced the threat of death.

However, despite that.

Cyric, in front of the crowd, found himself falling backward without realizing it.

The eyes still hidden behind his long white hair continued to stare at him.

"I, I, I... Heavens..."

Stop~

Son OhGong's hand covered his lips.

With a silent gesture for him to be quiet, Cyric tightly shut his mouth.

The poker face he had maintained until Varuna appeared had long since crumbled.

'Why is The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal here? Why is The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal... here with Varuna?'

He repeated the same thought countless times.

Despite trying to analyze it repeatedly, he couldn't understand.

What would be the probability of encountering The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal in this 100-Floor Tower?

And what would be the probability of The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal appearing precisely with Varuna?

『Hey.』

"Yes, huh?"

Ciryc, surprised, responded. He involuntarily shrank.

Son OhGong, though active as a mercenary of Olympus, technically wasn't affiliated with any Guild.

Most of all, he was known to be so temperamental that he could take down not only a Ranker but even a Celestial Realm.

『Tsk. Answer nonsense, and I'll hit you. Just nod your head.』

Cyric nodded vigorously.

A thin and long staff hanging from Son OhGong's waist.

The moment that moved, the first floor would once again face a great catastrophe.

『Good. Then, leave everything you have and go.』

"Wha...?"

He involuntarily opened his mouth.

Although he hurriedly closed it again, the words were simply unacceptable.

'What am I going to do if I leave this?'

The five products Cyric was promoting.

That was all Cyric had left.

By nature, a scam must have a foundation.

But Son OhGong was saying to leave all of that.

『What's wrong? Anyway, you had to leave everything.』

Cyric lifted his head.

It was unfair.

The final game hadn't been played yet.

Before starting the game, when he tried to escape, Varuna and Son OhGong stopped him.

『There's no reason to feel unfair. Anyway, you wouldn't have won properly.』

He wasn't wrong.

Indeed, Cyric had no confidence in winning the next game.

Moreover, the items he possessed weren't even originally his.

But people always feel unfair when they lose what they had in their hands.

And Cyric was also part of those people.

『If you feel bad, do it properly here again. Don't run away.』

Son OhGong disappeared into the crowd while waving his hands.

Although he disappeared immediately from his sight, he was sure Son OhGong was watching him from somewhere.

'Who the hell is this guy...?'

Cyric finally turned to YuWon, resigned to accept the situation.

"Is everyone messing with me?"

-----

Varuna was also perplexed.

'I-Is that really The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal?'

Long, white hair, a long staff hanging from his waist.

There was no doubt.

'...Yes, it is.'

As a High-Ranker of Deva, Varuna had participated in the last war against the Outers.

In that battle, Varuna had watched from afar as Son OhGong fought.

At that moment, Son OhGong, in his Yokai state, had terrified even his battle companions while massacring the Outers.

'Oh, no.'

Chisss-.

Unconsciously, Varuna took a step back, sweating cold.

'I think I've come to the wrong place.'



"Hey."

Varuna, surprised, turned to the side.

Son OhGong was now standing beside him, smiling widely.

"I thought I didn't like your face because it reminded me of a parasite, is it you?"

His expression was smiling, but his eyes were cold and ruthless.

Varuna, soaked in cold sweat, asked:

"Are you the main body?"

"Do I look like a clone?"

A question with another question.

He couldn't be sure.

At this moment, he couldn't feel the majesty of a great god from "The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal" or the "Traitor of the Celestial Realm" in the Son OhGong in front of him.

'A clone...?'

If it was a clone, then it made sense.

It was said that the way to differentiate between the main body and Son OhGong's clones was by the strength and majesty they exuded.

Of course...

Even if it was a clone, it was a formidable being for Varuna.

"But... why are you here?"

Floor 1.

The lowest place in the Tower.

Even normal Rankers rarely came here.

Varuna also wouldn't have paid attention to this place if it weren't for Pandora.

However, the fact that The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal appeared on Floor 1 was a situation hard to comprehend.

"Well, it's obvious."

Swoosh-.

Son OhGong's gaze turned to YuWon, who had just emerged victorious from his battle against Cyric.

That was enough as an answer.

Son OhGong also remembered YuWon.

"It's been a while..."

"Oh? Seems like you remember him too?"

Varuna nodded.

Son OhGong stared at her and shrugged.

He more or less knew how Varuna had come to remember YuWon.

"Well, it's obvious. He must have taken a hit from Pandora while bothering her."

Son OhGong grinned widely as he looked at Varuna.

Although the current Varuna didn't know, Son OhGong had fought alongside Varuna for quite some time before returning to the past with the Clock Movement.

Naturally, he also knew his personality quite well.

"...And since when do you remember him?"

"Probably much earlier than you."

"Is there anyone else?"

"Hercules. Now there are four."

"Four..."

Varuna clenched his fists.

Although he was annoyed that there were others who remembered YuWon besides him, the number wasn't that large.

'It's still okay. It's still okay.'

Son OhGong shook his head as he watched Varuna silently clenching his fists.

He could clearly see what Varuna was thinking.

The guy, who didn't have much prestige among the High-Rankers representing Deva, was probably trying to ascend through YuWon.

'But well...'

Son OhGong grinned maliciously as he watched Varuna dream of a bright future.

"Still, he might be useful."

The spectators dispersed.

Since all the prizes were taken away, the game no longer had any meaning.

YuWon whispered low to Cyric, who had a stunned expression:

"You were aiming for a floor without an Administrator, huh?"

Cyric raised his head in surprise.

A floor without an Administrator.

He descended to the first floor with that information.

He thought there wouldn't be much trouble here unless he caused a big commotion.

"Instead, consider it lucky. If you had gotten into this kind of trouble on the first floor and encountered Olympus, they would have cut off your head."

"...Yes."

There was no resentment.

Cyric was no longer displeased with YuWon.

Instead, he was only curious about YuWon and the people around him, like Son OhGong and Varuna.

YuWon, who had collected the items, approached Pandora first.

He didn't mind the gazes of Son OhGong and Varuna, who were watching from the other side.

"Took you a while, huh?"

Whoosh-.

Just as he had originally planned, YuWon handed over to Pandora the items he had won in the game.

"Will this be your size?"

A ring slid onto Pandora's finger.

A small, thin ring with a red gemstone.

Pandora looked at the ring in her hand with shining eyes.

"...Yes."

Pandora extended her fingers and examined the ring from side to side. Then, smiling pleased, she lovingly embraced the hand holding the ring.

"I like it."

"I'm glad you like it."

YuWon took Pandora's hand without reservation.

Although most of the spectators had left, there were still quite a few people around.

He had no intention of making a scene here.

"Let's go home."

"Are we leaving already?"

"Hey, I think we should."

YuWon's gaze turned to Son OhGong and Varuna, who were silently lurking in a corner.

"It's for the intruders."

YuWon snapped his fingers.

Varuna shuddered in the distance, and Son OhGong chuckled slyly and disappeared without a trace.

Varuna kept a considerable distance, following YuWon.

Shortly after, when YuWon returned home, Son OhGong suddenly peeked his head.

"Were you on a date?"

Son OhGong's movements were sometimes unpredictable even for YuWon. His expression seemed somewhat excited, as if he found it quite amusing to see YuWon playing with Pandora.

"Isn't it obvious?"

"What's wrong? Why are you so calm now? A moment ago, you were embarrassed."

It was like the children of old playing "hide and seek."

Yuwon sighed and looked at Varuna, who had followed.

"Hey."

"Yes!"

"Don't meddle in what doesn't concern you."

What he was trying to do on his own, Varuna intervened, and the situation became more serious.

If it was something related to him, he could simply ignore it.

Yuwon had known for a long time that people didn't care much about what concerned him.

However...

'If you guys get involved, it becomes annoying.'

Son OhGong seemed to have caught the hint and concealed his presence.

Although he had white hair, he had changed his face quite a bit with skill.

But that wasn't the case for Varuna.

"Come in."

Yuwon let Son OhGong and Varuna into the house.

Pandora was absorbed in contemplating her new ring.

Plop.

He served them two glasses of water without much ceremony.

"I don't think you came just to play. Speak."

"Eh? How do you know?"

"Does your look when you come to play match the one you have now? And if you had nothing to say, you wouldn't be here."

It wasn't just because he had known him for a long time. It was largely because Son OhGong was such an easy-to-read character.

"Really? I should learn to have a poker face or something."

"Stop talking nonsense. What happened on your journey? How are things?"

"A bit confusing."

Son OhGong scratched his head.

It was a habitual gesture indicating that he was trying to think but not very successfully.

"Just as you said, the Administrators have moved, but..."

"If they moved, how did they do it?"

"Just like that. An Administrator approached Zeus and told him not to trust them."

Zeus.

He was the player number 1 in the current ranking.

In other words, he was the Player representing the Tower.

An Administrator had warned the Player representative, despite the symbolic nature of the act, the content of the warning was disappointingly vague.

"I also thought something terrible was going to happen, like with Shub-Niggurath, but in the end, it was nothing."

Varuna, who had been listening to the conversation with tension, spoke with a trembling voice.

In contrast...

"It's a declaration of war."

YuWon's reaction was quite extreme.

## Chapter 534

### Side Story 10

Son OhGong and Varuna were left dumbfounded.

A total war?

Against whom?

"Fighting again?"

Pandora, who was admiring the ring, raised her head and asked.

Ten years.

It had been a rather short-lived peace.

Moreover, for Pandora, the current life was even more precious.

Having been locked in Olympus' prison for over a thousand years, the last 10 years she spent simply at home had been the happiest for her.

"It's still uncertain..."

"No need to be complacent. Especially because the enemy is the enemy."

YuWon quickly interrupted Varuna.

Now was a time when even superficial consolation should be avoided.

Varuna, only then, realized who the enemy was and cautiously asked.

"...Are we really going to fight against the Administrators?"

He could barely open his mouth.

Fighting them was such a ridiculous situation.

The power each of them possessed was god-like on each Floor.

Managing a world was something only a being with such power could do.

Of course, for Players who had lived as Rankers, the name Administrator was as elevated.

"I have to do it if they want it."

"Hmm..."

Varuna's expression hardened with seriousness.

On the other hand, Son OhGong grinned, showing his sharp teeth.

His eyes shone with a golden color as he spoke.

"Do you find it amusing?"

"And what if I don't?"

Gu gu gu gu.

As if the excitement wouldn't calm down, the Arcane Power emanating from Son OhGong's body began to shake the entire house.

Even though the thought of the house collapsing again crossed his mind, YuWon didn't stop Son OhGong.

Even with this, Son OhGong was restraining himself quite well.

"Is it true that we can fight against the Administrators?"

The bastard was excited. Hoping that the warning the Administrator gave Zeus was real. Hoping that this great war would begin.

"Fine. I thought I was going crazy from boredom."

"Yes, it's solid and reliable."

It wasn't empty words.

If the usual Son OhGong was a clumsy brute with an empty head, the Son OhGong who fought was literally a Battle God.

The only Ranker with a sense of battle superior to YuWon, acknowledged by himself, was Son OhGong.

"But why do you say it will be a total war? Is there any proof?"

Unlike Son OhGong, who absolutely trusted YuWon's words, Varuna had doubts.

A total war against the Gods of the World?

Based solely on the message not to trust them, it was a story on too large a scale.

"I know something."

"About the Administrators?"

"Yeah."

At YuWon's answer, this time Son OhGong also showed a doubtful expression.

"But how do you know that? It may be different in the case of the Outers, but we also knew almost nothing about the Administrators."

Son OhGong, who was absorbed in the idea that he could fight passionately, then had doubts.

Although he had information about the Outers from before returning with the Clock Movement, even future Odin didn't know much about the Administrators.

"It's not information I had."

"Then..."

"It's the memory of ■■■■."

"...?"

Despite YuWon's explanation, Son OhGong's expression didn't change.

YuWon's explanation didn't manage to change Son OhGong's expression. In fact, it seemed to have only increased the number of question marks over his head.

Azathoth.

It seemed that Son OhGong hadn't heard or understood that four-letter name.

"Anyway, you know it?"

"That seems to be the case."

The reactions were a bit unnatural. Son OhGong didn't pay much attention to YuWon's explanation and just nodded as if he understood anyway.

YuWon didn't have many expectations either. He had already seen similar reactions from Son OhGong and Hercules.

'It seems they don't remember.'

Unlike him, those two didn't remember the name Azathoth. Unlike YuWon, who regained his Name after returning, Azathoth's Name had completely disappeared for them.

'Probably the only ones who remember are...'

YuWon's gaze turned to Pandora.

Unlike the other two, Pandora responded to YuWon's gaze by nodding.

Only YuWon and Pandora remembered Azathoth.

And probably...

'Probably only the Administrators.'

He had been suspecting it.

The moment they realized Azathoth had disappeared, he thought they would surely move.

If they had forgotten the Name of Azathoth like Son OhGong or Varuna, they would have remained silent.

But now, they were moving.

They had sent a warning to Zeus, and if that warning was true, there would surely be friction.

'For now...'

YuWon raised his head.

He felt it was time to go back up.

'There shouldn't be anyone moving recklessly.'

-----

Floor 95.

The highest world ruled by Deva.

Vishnu entered the Administration Bureau of that world.

"It's been a long time since I was last here."

Vishnu murmured as he looked at the tall tower and the Envoy guarding the entrance.

Administration Bureau.

A fortress that only Administrators and Envoys could operate.

"It seems like ten thousand years have passed."

"It was when I first became a Ranker."

Yama was one of the companions who had climbed the Tower with Vishnu.

They arrived at this bureau a long time ago, when Rankers barely existed.

At that time, Administrators were untouchable beings for Vishnu.

Already in the early days of the Tower, their power was so absolute that they were even considered a kind of God.

Step~

Vishnu and Yama headed towards the entrance of the Administration Bureau.

As expected, an Envoy blocked their way.

"Vishnu-nim. And Yama-nim. Welcome."

"Why do you block our way if you welcome us?"

Yama, who was next to Vishnu, looked at the Envoy suspiciously.



It was a High-Ranker Envoy, with a height reaching up to the waist.

However, even so, it was not enough to dare to stand in Vishnu's way.

"Oh, it seems I made a mistake. I just wanted to guide you."

"The way..."

Yama looked at Vishnu. Vishnu nodded with his eyes, and Yama's expression hardened.

Taking a look around, Yama spoke to the Envoy.

"We've come to see the Administrator."

"Follow me."

The Envoy turned around and headed into the Administration Bureau.

Yama, who hesitated for a moment, sighed when Vishnu pushed his back and followed.

Step by step.

The inside of the Office, towering like a tower, was much more spacious than it seemed from the outside.

A black ceiling that seemed as high as the sky. A wide hallway stretching forward.

And on the walls extending left and right, there were countless bright points.

It was a space that gave the illusion that there was another tower inside the tower.

It was a slightly different landscape from the last time they visited the Administration Bureau.

"Hey, Envoy."

Yama asked as he followed silently.

"I'm Blue Hand."

"What?"

"That's my name. Don't call me 'hey' or 'Envoy,' call me by my name."

The messenger, Blue Hand, corrected his words. His tone was sad, but the look he turned was fierce.

Yama sighed, as if he had expected it.

"Alright, Blue Hand. Just one question."

"What is it?"

"Were there so many Envoys here originally?"

Blink~

The lights around moved at Yama's words.

It was a terrifying number.

Although they were hidden in the walls, their looks were clearly those of the Envoys.

'How many are there?'

They seemed to be more than a hundred thousand.

He knew there were many Envoys managing the Tower, but it was the first time he had seen their overwhelming number with his own eyes.

There were so many Envoys on one floor.

'It wasn't just the Administrators that were the problem.'

Yama clenched his fists.

Veins sprouted from the back of his hand to his forearm.

And when darkness began to swirl in Yama's eyes,

"Yama."

Vishnu's voice calmed him.

Thanks to that, Yama managed to avoid causing a disturbance.

It wasn't a good idea to show hostility towards so many Envoys, even if he was a High-Ranker.

In the end, Yama closed his mouth.

"It doesn't seem like a very welcoming atmosphere."

"...?"

Vishnu continued.

Crunch~

Trees sprouted everywhere.

Thorn-covered trees reflected Vishnu's mood.

"Did you say you're Blue Hand?"

"Yes, Vishnu-nim."

"Where is the Administrator now?"

The branches and roots of the sprouting trees began to spread throughout the Administration Bureau.

Trees with sharper thorns than blades.

As they spread, the Envoys shining like stars around them also began to reveal their forms one by one.

"If he's here, it would be better for him to come out soon."

"I don't understand why you're acting like this all of a sudden..."

"You've underestimated me."

The corner of Vishnu's mouth lifted.

"Are you saying you're asking me why I'm showing my power so openly?"

Crunch.

The trees spread.

"I had no intention of hiding it from the beginning, so don't insult me with nonsense."

Vishnu's eyes gleamed green.

In the face of that threatening aura, Envoy Blue Hand felt uncomfortable.

'He's faster than I expected. Have I been too aggressive?'

Vishnu's Arcane Power creates trees.

It is rumored that if he wishes, he can cover an entire world with thorny trees.

He didn't know what would happen if Yama, who was behind him, moved, but if Vishnu started acting directly...

'It's difficult.'

The number of Envoys didn't matter.

If Vishnu moved, half of the present Envoys would be swept away in an instant.

Should he stop now? While Blue Hand momentarily stopped in that doubt,

Rumble, rumble, rumble.

A vibration shook the entire Office.

Vishnu's head turned towards the vibration.

"You finally showed up."

The Envoys moved to the left and right.

The Administrator who appeared through the beam of light had the form of a tall, beautiful woman with ankle-length hair.

She was one of the largest existences in this Tower, which even Vishnu had seen only a few times.

She was the Administrator of the 95th floor.

"It seems our boys have been a little rude."

She scolded the other messengers.

With the appearance of the Administrator, Blue Hand crushed himself to the ground.

No matter what name an Envoy had, for a simple Envoy, the Administrator was like a God.

On the other hand,

Vishnu knew that the person who had created this situation was the Administrator in front of him.

"It seems the same goes for the Administrator."

"Really? I'm sorry."

The Administrator, covering her mouth with a faint smile, stared at Vishnu.

"So, can I continue to be rude?"

"So, you came to this?"

"You came knowing that, didn't you?"

Faced with the playful expression of the Administrator, Vishnu closed his eyes for a moment.

Although Vishnu had some hope.

'It seems that we have no choice but to fight.'

The warning from the Administrator he heard through Zeus materialized before his eyes.

Chapter 535

C11

"Fortunately, you didn't arrive late."

Kneeling and body bent, Blue Hand felt relieved inside.

The Administrator of the 95th Floor. His god had arrived at this place without delay.

In other words, the situation had been reversed.

Even someone like Vishnu wouldn't dare to confront the Administrator.

And besides...

'We have a great numerical advantage.'

Vishnu's companion was only Yama.

Although he was also a High-Ranker of Deva, on this side, there were tens of thousands of Envoys.

'It's a sure victory.'

Boooooom-.

At that moment...

The trees created by Vishnu that filled the Administration Bureau began to move in unison.

"...!"

Trees with hundreds of millions of thorns.

They swept through the Administration Bureau.

Fwhaaaaaak-!

The trees turned into a wave of voracious monsters that devoured the Envoys immediately.

The thorns of the trees, imbued with Vishnu's magic, were harder than any steel and sharper than the tip of a master-made spear.

Kakaakaak-.

Certainly, Blue Hand was one of the strongest Envoys.

He barely managed to block the tree's thorns with his whole body, bleeding.

"Kugh..."

Fwoosh-

A thorn pierced his outstretched palm to avoid a fatal blow, coming out the other side.

If he had reacted a bit later, his body would have been pierced like the other Envoys.

"And the others?"

Blue Hand, who had finally taken cover, looked around.

It was hard to imagine the magnitude of the damage that such massive thorn trees would cause.

Right away...

"This is madness..."

The terrible scene surrounding him filled his eyes.

Blue Hand was horrified at the corpses of the Envoys that filled his field of vision.

Most of the Envoys who were hit by the thorns died, bathed in blood.

Fortunately, the range didn't reach the entire Administration Bureau.

Thanks to the Administrator.

Kooooookoo-

The trees, crushed by gravity, fell back to the ground with broken thorns.

The confrontation between the Administrator and Vishnu.

The Administrator stared at Vishnu with fiery eyes.

"Is it necessary to be so brutal?"

"First, you have to get rid of the nuisances. I don't want them to get in my way."

"But the opponent is me."

"Isn't it thanks to you that it has come to this?"

Pshhht-

Vishnu's earlobe tore and bled.

In that brief moment, the Administrator had protected the Envoys from Vishnu's attack and simultaneously counterattacked.

"A very precise attack. You almost pierced my neck."

"Even so, you wouldn't have died, right? Just a scratch."

"You're a bit different from the other Administrators."

"In what way?"

"You're more..."

Uddddd-

Following Vishnu's gesture.

"Unfortunate."

Kwaaaak-!

The trees on the ground suddenly sprouted and began to devour the Administrator.

Kuuuuddddd-!

The Administrator's body was crushed inside with overwhelming force.

Vishnu extended his hand forward and released a bright green magic from the tips of his fingers.

Kuuuuddddd-

The thorn-covered trees pressed against the Administrator.

Crush, crush~

A drop of sweat ran down Vishnu's forehead.

As Arcane Power infused, the pressure of the tree enveloping the Administrator also increased proportionally.

And at that moment...

Crack, crack-

The Administrator wrapped in the tree began to open her arms, freeing herself from the pressure.

"It's quite an aggressive greeting for the first time in a long time."

Fizz, fizz-

The Administrator, bleeding all over her body and with her head pierced by thorns, emitted a red glow from her eyes.

"Can we start moving too?"

Crunch, crunch-

The pierced body quickly regenerated. The wounds on the Administrator's body absorbed the surrounding Arcane Power and instantly recovered their original form.

Right away, the Administrator's order came.

"Kill them both."

And at that moment...

[The Administrator of the 95th Floor recognizes you as enemies]

[All Envoys recognize you as enemies]

This world judged Vishnu and Yama as enemies.

"Vishnu-nim."

Yama turned his head at the message that echoed in his mind in the same way.

Igniting his aura, he stood in front of Vishnu.

"Yama."

And to him...

"Survive."

Vishnu gave the order.

"...Yes?"

"The Administrator's target is me. She knew I would come from the beginning."

Judging by the prior preparation of thousands of Envoys, she knew Vishnu would come from the beginning.

That means one thing.

"There's a mole among the Devas."

It meant that the information had been leaked in advance.

"Not just the Devas. Maybe Olympus or even other Guilds..."

As he muttered, Vishnu's shoulder exploded.

Blood splattered Yama's face.

Black pupils dilated, and Yama shouted.

"Vishnu-nim-!"

"Calm down, Yama."

It was a strangely calm voice in contrast to the situation. Surprisingly, his voice instantly calmed the anger that had surged.

"Calm down."

"But."

"I don't intend to die either, Yama."

Vishnu's smiling face didn't seem at all like that of someone facing a life-or-death crisis.

'I know I shouldn't be fooled by that smile.'

Yama realized that Vishnu was making that expression to reassure him.

However...

"...I understand."

He simply couldn't overcome that expression from Vishnu. He couldn't disobey the order. After all, Yama had never disobeyed an order from Vishnu even once.

He applied force to his legs and turned with difficulty.

Numerous Envoys and Blue Hand blocked Yama's path.

"Step aside."

Sssss-.

A black tattoo began to appear on Yama's face.

"If you don't move, I'll make you move."

Soon, the tattoo covered his entire face.

A completely black face, like a mask.

It seemed like he had used an ability to cover his face, but that was Yama's original face.

"Sorry, but..."

Crack, crack-.

Blue Hand, with palms pierced by Vishnu's attack, blocked Yama's path along with the Envoys.

"We're in a position where we can't avoid stopping you."

"...Yes. You're right."

Ssshhh-.

Yama's Arcane Power created a black scythe in his hand.

Yama's scythe, appearing in both hands, was considered a symbol of death alongside Hades' weapon.

And the moment that scythe moved...

[Death Sentence]

Zhuaaaack!

The scythes crossed, and the heads of the Envoys, filling Yama's sight, detached and rolled on the ground.

"So, let's clear the way."

Tuhwak!

Yama, with two scythes in his hands, lunged forward.

He didn't even look at the Arcane Power of the Administrator and Vishnu that he sensed behind him.

Although Yama was the one who cared the most about Vishnu, he now had other things to do. His sole goal was to follow Vishnu's order and get out of this place alive.

-----

A commotion erupted on the 95th Floor.

Gugugugu-.

At first, it was thought to be just a simple earthquake.



The range was not wide either, just enough to be felt by some Players and residents.

However.

Cheek, zhejejee-.

The magnitude of the disaster quickly grew.

"What, what is that?"

"A tree?"

Kuddddddd-.

A tree towering high into the sky.

The tree grew rapidly, as if to devour the 95th Floor's world.

"...Vishnu?"

Many Rankers resided on the 95th Floor.

Among them, some had fought alongside Vishnu on the battlefield, and others had indirectly experienced his power.

Vishnu's power encompassed the world.

That rumor, considered an exaggeration, was now unfolding on the 95th Floor.

"The Myth I wrote is 'Creator of Creation.'"

Juruuk-.

Blood spurted from the cross-sectional amputated arm.

But soon...

"Don't think you've won with this."

Uuuu-.

The arm, bathed in green light, quickly regenerated.

Creator of Creation.

The Myth that Vishnu had been writing for a long time in the Tower, and the name that was the source of his Divinity.

He possessed a regenerative ability faster than any other Ranker in the Tower.

"You're a resilient one."

"You always have to speak like a character from a novel."

The Administrator wiped the blood running from the corner of her mouth with her hand.

She had confirmed that they couldn't inflict serious wounds on each other with mediocre blows.

Judging by their appearances, neither the Administrator nor Vishnu had a single scratch.

"But you won't be completely unscathed on the inside, will you?"

"It's the same for both of us."

"Really. You only have a pretty face, no charm at all."

The Administrator's hands moved.

Following the movement of her hands, the Arcane Power of the air seeped towards the Administrator.

The wounds had regenerated, but Vishnu gradually felt he was approaching his limit.

More than anything...

'Does she have an infinite supply of magic?'

The more Vishnu fought, the larger he felt the Administrator in front of him became.

'This is an Administrator.'

Almost infinite magic (Arcane Power).

Beings who ruled this world as Gods even before the Players entered.

It was as if the Tower was on her side.

"Still..."

Hilkkum-.

Vishnu's gaze went to the ground. He saw Blue Hand's body, cut into pieces by the scythes.

'It seems he has at least escaped.'

Despite the pursuit of the Envoys, it was impossible to catch Yama unless the Administrator chased him personally.

Yama's nature was darkness. He had lived his entire life in Vishnu's shadow, and he was a master of stealth.

"Where are you looking?"

The voice echoed next to his ear. Suddenly, one side of Vishnu's head exploded.

His mind clouded for an instant, but when Vishnu passed his hand over his head, the damaged part quickly regenerated.

Shwip, kwakwakwak!

The thorns sprouting from the enormous tree headed towards the Administrator's body.

What followed was a fierce battle between the Administrator and Vishnu.

Vishnu's regeneration gradually slowed down.

And the Administrator, as if mocking him, constantly recovered and lunged at him.

'...It's difficult.'

Even for Vishnu, infinite regeneration was impossible.

Seeing the Administrator becoming more vigorous with each passing moment, Vishnu had no choice but to make a decision.

'Then.'

Kuddddddd-.

Kwadad-.

Trees sprouted everywhere, with Vishnu and the Administrator at the center.

In the blink of an eye, the trees grew so tall that they obscured the sky, creating a forest.

"Creator of Creation..."

The Administrator's eyes narrowed at the hostile forest.

Creator of Creation.

Vishnu's Myth, a long and grand story that had been written over time as Deva.

The moment her eyes confirmed the true nature of this...

"Now I'm certain."

Although she had been playing with him until now, the Administrator finally realized.

Thousands of years had passed since the creation of the Tower.

In that long time, how high had the beings known as Players reached?

"We can't give them any more time."

Shwip!

When the Administrator extended her hand, a clear handprint appeared on Vishnu's neck.

Vishnu's neck and arms bent under the crushing pressure.

Despite the pain as if his eyes were being gouged out, Vishnu continued his Myth unfazed.

"Let's go... together."

The moment his trembling hand, which had fallen to the ground, clenched into a fist.

"Administrator."

The enormous forest devoured both of them, Vishnu and the Administrator.

Chapter 536

C12

The 95th Floor had turned upside down.

Vishnu's inexplicable battle had shattered the previous peace.

Nearly half of the 95th Floor was covered in a forest. Trees rising like those from the land of Giants blocked the light over most of the 95th Floor space.

Residents wondered about Vishnu's sudden commotion.

Who was his opponent?

And right after the battle ended...

"Kuueeeek-!"

The Administrator of the 95th Floor, who had escaped to the 94th Floor Administration Bureau coughing blood, collapsed to the ground. The Administrator of the 94th Floor, seeing her condition, clicked his tongue and shook his head.

"How pathetic."

They had identical faces, only one's hair color was silver. They looked like twins.

"What are you saying now, uuuugh...?"

"What kind of figure is that?"

"Hmph... Try fighting yourself. You're just a 94th Floor Administrator, after all."

"What?"

The 94th Floor Administrator ignited his eyes with anger and glared at the identical Administrator. Administrators were ranked by floor.

From the Grand Administrator of the 100th Floor to the lowest of the 1st Floor. The number was the measure of their rank.

"Is it just a difference of one floor?"

"Whatever."

"Ugh, damn it."

Silently, the 94th Floor Administrator sat down in irritation.

"Was it that strong? Vishnu?"

"Incredibly."

"One of the three was annihilated fighting against Shub-Niggurath, right?"

"Exactly."

She bitterly laughed, as if she couldn't believe it.

"We were right."

"Yes."

"We can't waste any more time. They've become too strong."

"Anyway, those guys held back Nyarlathotep and Yog-Sothoth."

"At this rate..."

The Administrator murmured, stroking her wound that wouldn't heal.

"We might be devoured by the hunting dogs."

Tosagupeng. (Note: Boiling and eating the hunting dog after rabbit hunting is over, as it is no longer useful)

After the battle against the Outers.

Olympus, Deva, and other Great Guilds and rankers were dominating the Tower.

As expected, they should have lost most of their strength fighting the Outers, including Azathoth.

But it wasn't the case.

Apart from Odin's warriors, the damage to the Great Guilds was minimal.

All because of an unexpected variable.

"To think they could cross the axis of time..."

Rankers from other times suddenly appeared. Their existence, led by future Odin, was enough to completely change the situation.

"Why the hell did those guys come here?"

"We haven't found the reason they interfered here from the timeline where they lost against Yog-Sothoth."

"That's....! Damn!"

The Administrator's wound worsened from the excitement. The wounds inflicted by Vishnu didn't heal easily. No, not only did they not heal, but the affected part continued to tear and bleed as if it were poisoned.

A disaster.

She still didn't feel like the fight was over.

"Calm down and rest a bit. What are you going to do with that wound?"

"But don't you look a bit like your brother today?"

"Because you are my brother."

With that, the 94th Floor Administrator walked away.

The Office was spacious, and many Envoys gathered there.

They all began channeling their Arcane Power to heal the 95th Floor Administrator's body.

"Vishnu..."

A Deva God and a being who held the title "Creator of Creation."

The one who once surpassed Odin and Zeus to have the highest rank in this Tower.

"Still, not a bad first move."

Crack-.

-----

YuWon checked his Player Kit.

He hadn't felt well since morning.

Was it because he heard right after the Administrator warned Olympus?

The moment he checked the news on his kit, hoping he was wrong.

"...It's too late."

YuWon could confirm that his unease from yesterday was real.

[Deva Leader disappears from the ranking]

[Who is the opponent? The return of the Outers?]

[Some Rankers anticipate a battle against the Administrators]

[Is it the prelude to a war or a personal matter between Deva and the Administrators?]

[Is Vishnu really dead?]

Numerous articles flooded the screen.

The missing Deva Leader from the Ranking. The 95th Floor in ruins.

Through the battlefield photos, anyone could imagine Vishnu's battle.

'A world covered in giant trees. It seems he has caused quite a stir.'

Even if Vishnu had weakened from the battle against Shub-Niggurath, he was once the greatest being in this Tower.

Even for an Administrator, it wouldn't be easy to defeat such a Vishnu.

Moreover, Yama was always by Vishnu's side.

That means...

"Have they already prepared the Envoys?"

YuWon seemed to have a general idea of what had happened. However, fortunately, Yama seemed to have returned alive.

"Envoys? What are you talking about?"

Varuna asked while spreading jam on toast and putting it in his mouth.

It seemed he hadn't received the news on his Player Kit yet.

"They said Vishnu is dead."

"Ah, Vish... Ugh!"

Saliva came out along with the bread he was chewing.

YuWon quickly raised the plate to block Varuna's saliva.

"What, what are you saying? Who is dead?"

The saliva was disgusting, but his reaction was not incomprehensible.

Vishnu was someone important. He had been the Great High-Ranker who had ruled the Devas as their leader for over ten thousand years.

And Varuna was one of the main executives of Deva.

It was natural for him to be surprised by Vishnu's death.

"Vishnu."

"Why is he dead? Why?"

"They say he fought against the Administrators."

"Against the Administrators...?"

Varuna's face turned pale as he recalled yesterday's conversation.

The Administrator's warning to Zeus.

And YuWon's judgment that it would lead to a total war.

Immediately after, news of Vishnu's death arrived.

"It can't be-."

Varuna quickly took out his Player Kit and checked it.

Dozens of missed messages.

Without even having time to check the messages, Varuna searched for newspaper articles.

The news about Vishnu's death was no longer a secret.

Devas went into emergency mode, but the Administrators, Envoys, and the Devas were ready for a fight at any moment without being surprised.

Varuna, who checked the message late, stood up from his seat.

"I'm going to take a look."

"To where?"

Crunch-.

In this situation, Son OhGong asked while eating stacked toasts on the side.

"Toward Deva."

"Good luck."

As if he didn't care, Son OhGong waved his hand.

Looking at Son OhGong, whose attention was on the food, Varuna sighed deeply.

In this crucial situation, it seemed he had no concern.

'Well, there's no connection between The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, and our Deva...'

Varuna looked at YuWon, Son OhGong, and Pandora with melancholic eyes.

They couldn't claim they had formed a bond just because they shared some meals together.

In the first place, being in this place was a force on his part, and there was no reason for these people to help.

Of course, that didn't mean it was easy to leave the place.

"I'll be going back for now."

Thunk-.

Varuna stood up from his seat.

There was no one to bid him farewell as he left the house.

YuWon, Son OhGong, and Pandora continued eating in silence.

After Varuna's presence completely disappeared...

"Did he really die?"

Sun Wukong was the first to express doubt.

It was a difficult question to answer.

"Normally, we would think he died."

"Why?"

"Because he disappeared from the Ranking."

The standards of the Ranking were absolute.

The Administration Bureau was an organization run by a hundred Administrators and over ten million Envoys, and there was nothing that could deceive their eyes.

However...

"The problem is that it's an organization run by Administrators."

"Suspicious."

"Yes."

The Administrators turned against the Players.

After the fight with Vishnu, other Guilds would also distrust the Administrators.

The Ranking was now a number hard to trust, as it could be manipulated to increase or decrease a Ranker's ranking, or even erase it.

"So, what? Are you going to just stay like this?"

Crunch-.

With the sound of teeth grinding, Son OhGong's gaze changed.

Vishnu had been a longtime sparring partner with YuWon and Son OhGong in the future.

He even sacrificed himself in the final battle against Foolish Chaos, finally managing to defeat him.

Son OhGong, who used to challenge any strong opponent, had fought Vishnu several times.



"Hey, wait a moment. Will it end like this?"

"When you can't move, you lose. Accept defeat."

"You, shameless guy. Hey, next time, we'll do it again!"

"It's already the third time. How about accepting it now?"

At first, Son OhGong couldn't be Vishnu's opponent.

At that time, Vishnu was in a complete state with the souls of Shiva and Brahma, and Son OhGong was weaker than now.

100 battles and 100 defeats.

Son OhGong's record against Vishnu was extremely discouraging.

But...

"Look at that."

Son OhGong had finally won.

"Didn't I say this time would be different?"

The hundredth battle.

In that battle, Son OhGong finally managed to defeat Vishnu.

At that time, Vishnu was known as the greatest High-Ranker in the Tower.

Even Odin, the King of Asgard, had to yield to Vishnu.

Vishnu's defeat was an event worthy of being recorded in history.

Surrounded by the High-Rankers of Deva, Son OhGong was quite injured and tired to be a victor.

"So it is. This time was different."

"Do you think so?"

"So, what are you going to do now? Cut my throat?"

"No?"

That day, Son OhGong reached out his hand to Vishnu.

"Why would we do something like that between friends? Let's play again next time."

Puuk-.

He clenched his fists so tightly that his nails dug into his flesh.

Pandora, sensing Son OhGong's anger, observed the atmosphere and asked.

"Are you going to fight?"

"Probably."

"Then, you'll fight."

Pandora responded confidently to YuWon's uncertain answer.

She realized that the "probably" answer was just a way of reassuring himself.

Tak.

Pandora left her tea cup and went upstairs.

The aura of her steps as she climbed the stairs conveyed a sense of complete readiness.

She had also been preparing for the battle since she received the news of Vishnu's death.

"We should release the tension too."

YuWon was the one who spoke first.

And at those words, Son OhGong was surprised and asked.

"Do you want to fight?"

"I've been resting for too long."

It had been 10 years.

10 years of stubbornly rejecting Son OhGong's requests to play.

It was natural, as once he fought with him, whether for fun or not, he couldn't help but attract the attention of the Rankers and Administrators.

However...

"It's not time to worry about that anymore."

And besides, fortunately, he had found a suitable place.

"There shouldn't be an Administrator on the 95th Floor right now."

Vishnu was dead.

Even an Administrator wouldn't be completely unscathed.

"What do you think of that place?"

"What do I think?"

The corners of his lips curled upward. With eyes brighter than ever, Son OhGong stood up from his seat.

"It's perfect!"

Chapter 537

C13

There wasn't much to pack separately. Most of their luggage was in the inventory, and the points used as currency were assigned to each person anyway.

They rented a Sun Chariot, and the three of them began ascending immediately.

They didn't even need to hire a coach to supply mana.

"It's quite cozy," said Son OhGong, sitting on the edge of the Sun Chariot with his hair waving in the wind.

After enjoying the fresh breeze for a while, Son OhGong turned to YuWon and Pandora.

"I don't know what I'm doing here, getting in between a couple."

"Since when do you care about that?" YuWon replied.

"True, I just said it for the sake of saying it."

YuWon shook his head at Son OhGong's teasing words.

Couple or not, Son OhGong wasn't the type to worry about such things. If he were to feel jealous, it would be because YuWon and Hercules fought without him.

"That? It's a gift I gave her this time," YuWon said.

Son OhGong's gaze shifted to the ring on Pandora's hand. Although he knew nothing about items, Son OhGong's eyes could see the essence of things.

"It's strange," he commented.

"It's beautiful."

"It's just something shiny. Beautiful if you want," Son OhGong replied indifferently.

External beauty didn't interest Son OhGong. To him, an "item" was just a tool to get stronger, and it had no additional value beyond that.

Still.

"However, that Cyric guy must be suffering. He gave away something like his fortune before leaving."

Even leaving that aside, the ring on Pandora's hand was quite valuable.

"Is it a strength-based explosion skill? It's an item whose value changes depending on the user's skill... but I think it would suit Pandora quite well."

"Are you still thinking about fighting?" YuWon asked.

"Did you just realize?"

He still seemed quite excited.

"It's been a long time since the last time I fought with you."

For Son OhGong, fighting was the best entertainment. Knowing that, YuWon made no effort to calm down Son OhGong, who was getting more and more excited.

'It's time to start warming up.'

10 years.

Not even YuWon knew how much Son OhGong had changed during that time.

YuWon was excited too.

'I hope he hasn't rusted.'

The Sun Chariot continued ascending.

Fueled by Son OhGong's mana, the Sun Chariot spewed fire.

Whoosh, whoosh!

The flames burned fiercely. There was so much mana flowing that the heat even began to penetrate inside the Sun Chariot.

The speed increased.

At this rate, it could be compared to Apollo's true Sun Chariot.

'Anyway, that guy will never run out of mana...'

YuWon leaned back.

The carriage's heat was quite intense, but it wasn't so lethal for the three people.

'First, let's relax a bit.'

YuWon leaned on his hand and reclined.

-----

The Sun Chariot that had reached the 95th floor turned off the emitting light.

YuWon, who was lying down, opened his eyes and looked at the sky.

'It arrived quickly.'

Two days.

That was the time it took to climb from the 1st floor to the 95th floor. During that time, YuWon slept more than in the last 10 years.

With a sense of regret, YuWon got up from his seat.

Perhaps after this moment, he wouldn't be able to rest for quite a while.

"Don't you need to rest?"

YuWon asked while looking at Son OhGong's back, dangerously standing on the Sun Chariot's railing.

Judging by the speed they arrived, he had probably been using his Arcane Power without rest for two days.

Although he wasn't tired enough to exhaust himself, he would surely feel some fatigue.

"No problem."

Whoosh-.

Son OhGong tightly gripped the Ru Yi Bang.

He was already in full form.

YuWon sighed as he watched Son OhGong jump directly under the Sun Chariot without even asking.

"That impulsive nature of yours won't change even with age, huh?"

Whoosh-.

YuWon's eyes met Son OhGong's Golden Cinder Eyes.

YuWon's eyes, looking down from the Sun Chariot, began to perceive the surroundings several kilometers around.

A world covered in trees.

Due to the recent battle between Vishnu and the Administrator, not a single person or monster could be seen around.

'This place is perfect.'

A world without an Administrator. At the same time, not a single person lived in this vast place. It wasn't easy to find such conditions even after searching through the hundred Floors.

YuWon's gaze turned to Pandora for a moment.

"Don't worry."

Pandora, who now knew YuWon quite well, understood the meaning of that look and shook her head.

"I'm not so weak as to get carried away."

YuWon nodded at Pandora's confident words.

He knew. Unless she directly faced it, there was no danger of Pandora getting involved in a battle as a spectator.

Pandora was a two-digit High-Ranker. Her skill was such that she could withstand even Son OhGong for several minutes.

However...

'It's really hard to move my feet.'

YuWon, hesitating for a moment, finally jumped under the Sun Chariot.

At the same time, the Sun Chariot reignited its lights and ascended higher.

Bam-.

YuWon, landing on a tree branch, looked around.

The trees rising kilometers high had branches as thick as giant trees.

'Where is he?'

The surroundings were full of trees. His view was blocked, and he couldn't see Son OhGong's figure that had jumped first.

The battle didn't start with the word "start."

The moment they confirmed their auras, the battle had already started from the Sun Chariot.

That's how battles with Son OhGong were.

Whoosh-.

[Golden Cinder Eyes search for the target]

[Golden Cinder Eyes nullified by equal force]

[Target not found]

Golden Cinder Eyes were originally an ability wielded by Son OhGong. Although similar, YuWon's eyes were only created to mimic Son OhGong, so the original proficiency was higher on Son OhGong's side.

Of course, it was challenging to locate Son OhGong with the same ability.

But...

[Sensory Field activated]

[Eyes of Foreknowledge activated]

In addition to the Golden Cinder Eyes, YuWon still had other tricks up his sleeve.

Whoosh!

The Ru Yi Bang narrowly missed YuWon's head.

YuWon dodged the staff by tilting his head and looked at Son OhGong, who was at a distance.

Even at a distance, Son OhGong's presence was clear.

Moreover, with this single attack, YuWon understood Son OhGong's intention.

'Is he trying to keep a distance?'

People think that The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, is a master of close combat because he loves fighting and chaos.

But that was just a rumor for those who didn't know him well.

'That guy will do anything to win.'

He's a smarter fighter than anyone else.

The moment the battle begins, Son OhGong becomes an entirely different person.

He's a guy who dedicates all his intelligence to the fight.

'So...'

Kiiing!

One of YuWon's eyes glowed with a golden aura.

Eyes of Foreknowledge.

An ability that allows him to glimpse the immediate future and take control of that future.

If we talk only about the Golden Cinder Eyes, YuWon's vision was no match for Son OhGong's, but the Eyes of Foreknowledge were different.

Whoosh!

Yuwon narrowly evaded the Ru Yi Bang that swung again and started closing the distance.

Dodging the Ru Yi Bang flying from afar was not a problem.

It didn't matter from how far or at what angle it came.

"Grow, Ruyi!"

Piiing!

The Ru Yi Bang multiplied and flew from more than a hundred directions.

In that instant, time seemed to slow down for YuWon.

'This is...'

Paf!

Yuwon's body shot straight.

'I had already dodged this before.'

Bang! Bang! Bang!

More than a hundred Ru Yi Bangs knocked down the surrounding trees.

Yuwon watched as trees with dozens of meters in thickness fell, and his eyes shone.

'The real...'

Yuwon's head turned forward.

And at that moment...

Whoosh!

A massive Ru Yi Bang rushed toward him.

'It's this one.'

Kiiik, kiiik!

Yuwon's body, blocking the Ru Yi Bang with one arm, recoiled a bit.

However...

The fact that he had blocked it with his own hands was significant.

[The Giant's strength concentrates in your arms.]

Kuuk, guuuk.

Although it had been a while since he used it, it didn't feel uncomfortable.

Yuwon had been imagining this moment for a long time.

Even after getting back in motion, YuWon was still at his best.

'That's how it works.'

YuWon smiled as he blocked the Ru Yi Bang.

If the guy had decided to fight at medium and long range using the Ru Yi Bang and its clones,

'It seems that this time, you're the one who's mistaken.'

He had to be careful.

-----

The sensation at the tip of the Ru Yi Bang wasn't pleasant.

A solid feeling as if it collided with a wall ran through his hand.

Son OhGong's expression wrinkled at the unexpected sensation.

'Did he block it?'

Whoosh, click.

The Ru Yi Bang, which had returned to its normal size, adjusted to Son OhGong's hand.

However, the feeling the Ru Yi Bang conveyed was unsatisfactory.

In the distance, YuWon didn't seem fazed at all.

Several possibilities of how YuWon had blocked the Ru Yi Bang passed through Son OhGong's mind.

However, none of them mattered.

'He knew it beforehand.'

If he hadn't known, he wouldn't have been able to block it. Even if he had blocked it with ultra-fast reflexes, he would have received some kind of impact.

The Golden Cinder Eyes or the Sensory Field couldn't have foreseen this moment.

That could only mean one thing.

'Is it the Eyes of Foreknowledge?'

By using that ability, YuWon would always be one step ahead of him in any move.

"Eh?"

And then...

Son OhGong saw from a distance how YuWon moved his lips.

With his exceptional vision, even at that distance, he could read the shape of his lips.

And YuWon's lips said:

'Get on my level.'

A clear challenge.



And that challenge ignited Son OhGong's fury even more.

'Fine with me.'

His eyes squinted even more.

The golden hue of his pupils, shining with fire, intensified, and his grip on the Ru Yi Bang strengthened.

"Grow..."

Son OhGong extended the Ru Yi Bang and prepared his next move.

And in that instant...

Kuuk!

In the distance, he saw YuWon standing, staring at him while maintaining the distance.

"What... huh?"

Son OhGong, about to extend the Ru Yi Bang, stopped abruptly.

The reason was a black spear that YuWon held in his hand.

"Eh?"

Craaack, craack-le!

Arcane Power began to converge at the tip of the spear.

The flow of Arcane Power was so intense that a chill ran through his entire body.

Although it would undoubtedly take some time to activate, it was already emanating a power that could overwhelm the Ru Yi Bang.

Craaack, craack!

The spear, increasing in size every second, absorbed and released Arcane Power.

And YuWon, wielding it, assumed a spear stance.

Seeing it, Son OhGong could only think of one person.

'...Odin?'

The image of Odin just before throwing Gungnir.

Imitating him, YuWon's lips moved to say:

This distance doesn't belong to you.

Chapter 538

Side Story 14

The world turned black.

In an instant, a sensation of being swallowed by total darkness enveloped him.

Kwaang!

A flying spear pierced through Son OhGong's side.

At that very moment,

Son OhGong's eyes turned golden.

Swish!

Clang, clang, clang!

He blocked the spears flying towards him with both hands.

Blood gushed from his palms, and his forearms trembled from the brute force he had exerted.

"I... managed to block it..."

Just as he felt relieved,

Fwhaaa!

The spear he held in his hand disintegrated into dozens of fragments, speeding towards Son OhGong.

"Damn."

Kaboom!

The spears exploded.

In the midst of the storm of sharp Arcane Power, Son OhGong crossed his arms to protect his vital points.

Sizzle, sizzle.

Wounds appeared even despite the magical protection of his body.

Son OhGong squinted his eyes and looked at YuWon, who was moving away in the opposite direction.

"Is this how you want to play?"

Son OhGong felt quite confident in a long-distance battle.

After all, he had the ability to create clones and the Ru Yi Bang, an item that had no distance restrictions.

"Let's do it."

Son OhGong wasn't the type to run away after taking a hit.

Once he started, he finished it.

If he couldn't master this distance, he couldn't be the victor.

Bang!

The Ru Yi Bang flew and passed behind YuWon.

It wasn't just one.

The number kept increasing, soon surpassing hundreds.

'It's starting to be difficult to dodge them even knowing they're coming.'

With his nearly infinite Arcane Power, Son OhGong could control thousands of clones.

The power of the Ru Yi Bang wielded by the clones couldn't compare to the original, but each of them had a strength equivalent to an average Ranker's ability.

Personally, YuWon found this form of Son OhGong much more challenging.

If he approached, he wouldn't have to worry about the clones, but at this distance, the advantages of the Ru Yi Bang and the clone technique were maximized.

'If the number increases...'

Keee-ing.

Light emanated from YuWon's eyes.

'I'll have to increase my pace.'

[The function of "Eyes of Foreknowledge" increases.]

[The ability of "Eyes of Foreknowledge" increases.]

Shoulders back, assuming a throwing stance, he set into motion.

Seeking Son OhGong's real body.

Dodging the staves.

And at the same time, creating a path to throw his own spear.

And in the next instant,

[The power of "Tartarus" is infused into "Nir."]

["Nir" activates.]

Keee-eeeeee-ing.

The power of the same attribute, the Arcane Power of Tartarus, saturated the tip of Nir's spear.

Higher, even higher.

YuWon's eyes, who had jumped upward, scanned the ground.

Among the hundreds of Son OhGongs, YuWon's eyes located the only real body.

And he was...

'It seems you've given up on running away.'

Without trying to dodge the spear, he stood still with fixed legs, looking YuWon in the face.

It was a smart choice.

No matter how much he was Son OhGong, there was no way he could dodge YuWon's spear with Eyes of Foreknowledge at its maximum.

Regardless of the path he took to evade it, YuWon's spear would chase and hit him precisely.

It was better, as Son OhGong had done, to prepare to block the spear from the beginning.

Krrroooowww.

[The power of the Giant is infused into your right arm.]

The arm wielding the spear swelled.

The power of Gigantification was maximized, increasing the force with which he threw the spear.

Whoosh!

The spear with greater power headed straight.

Son OhGong's eyes, watching the spear, shone with a golden color.

At the same time, judging by his sharply sharpened fangs, it seemed he was also using Yokai Power.

Kuaauu!

A black spear attack cut through the woods.

The repercussions of that Arcane Power, absorbing the surrounding sound and light, even affected the place where YuWon stood.

Crack-.

The giant trees in the forest created by Vishnu lost their vitality and cracked.

The power that Dark Arcane Power possessed is corrosion.

Watching as the trees, losing water and vitality, gradually turned into dust was not very pleasant.

Kuaauu-.

The Arcane Power tsunami created by the spear attack began to gradually subside.

Faced with the desolate sight before his eyes, YuWon looked around.

'The opponent is Son OhGong.'

Yuwon now recognized who he was fighting.

'It can't end like this.'

If the opponent were someone else, he wouldn't have launched such an attack during a simple fight.

After all, this attack had the power to cut off the opponent's breath.

However, Son OhGong was different.

He was immortal and had a life force more resilient than anyone else.

Unlike Hercules, who had high endurance and defense, this guy rose after taking hit after hit thanks to his immortal characteristic.

"Ugh... pffft-."

Exactly, like now.

Son OhGong staggered as he stood up.

Judging by the blood covering his body, he didn't seem to be okay, but his expression was completely contrary to his state.

"I can't keep this up." He murmured with regret while smiling. His eyes shone with an even stronger fighting spirit than before.

Now that he had shed blood, it was the true beginning.

'I see.'

It couldn't be said that he had gained the advantage just by inflicting unilateral damage.

The opponent was Son OhGong. His greatest strength was not any ability but his tenacity to fight as if he were going to die, even when he couldn't die.

"Sometimes you seem to have the characteristic of a Berserker."

"Berserker? Why?"

"You get stronger when you bleed."

The real Son OhGong appeared after he bled.

A hot vapor erupted from Son OhGong's mouth as he focused his attention.

And in the next moment...

Bang!

With an explosive sound, Son OhGong's new form appeared before YuWon's eyes.

Kaboom!

Crash!

The tree behind YuWon broke and fell backward.

YuWon's eyes, who dodged the punch, caught the trajectory of the Ru Yi Bang.

Whoosh, whoosh!

Swoosh!

The area and length of the Ru Yi Bang swinging faster than the wind changed freely.

One change followed by another change.

And Son OhGong's technique to freely control the heavy Ru Yi Bang with one hand mixed with the Golden Cinder Eyes, quickly clouding his vision.

Bam-.

Son OhGong's fist struck YuWon's stomach.

Just for a brief moment.

At that instant, the impact was transmitted.

[Hundred Steps Divine Fist]

Zzzap!

YuWon's body was thrown backward.

Fortunately, the impact wasn't too strong.

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

[The 'Blessing of the Sea protects you from the 'Hundred Steps Divine Fist']

Kaggg-

He thrust his sword into the wooden pillar and focused.

Although the Blessing of the Sea protected him, a small part of the impact reached him.

Hundred Steps Divine Fist was quite a powerful technique. It wasn't a technique of Son OhGong, but it wasn't the first time he had seen it.

'Hundred Steps Divine Fist. Is it a technique he learned on the Celestial Floor?'

Could he have even mastered Tathagata's techniques?

Son OhGong's skills had increased more than he thought.

The guy who was terrible at Martial Arts despite his perfect handling of Ru Yi Bang now also had Tathagata's techniques.

Not in vain did he shorten the distance.

'Is this a close-quarters combat this time?'

Swoosh-

YuWon retrieved Nir, which had returned to his hand, and unsheathed his sword.

This was, so to speak, the second round.

[The power of the giant is infused into your whole body]

['Heavenly Demon Spirit' controls the 'Giant's Flame']

Fwooooosh-!

The figure of a giant appeared behind YuWon.

YuWon, with the fire sword held high and armed with the power of fire and the giant, challenged Son OhGong.

-----

Although he seemed excited, Son OhGong was rational.

No, the more excited Son OhGong became, the more rational he became.

There was nothing more foolish and stupid than getting carried away in a fight.

Perhaps that's why.

The more rationally Son OhGong thought, the more trapped he felt.

'What is this?'

Boom!

Fwooooosh!

The fire giant's sword cut through the trees.

Dodging the fire sword reminiscent of Surt, Son OhGong felt a chill down his spine.

It would be useless to just step back a little.

Sizzle, sizzle-.

Golden Rays filled the sky.

When they all fell at once, Son OhGong had no choice but to escape using the Flying Nimbus.

Kwaaaang, boom!

The rays fell incessantly.

The moment he approached to dodge them, the fire giant swung its sword again.

Kwaaah!

Fwooooosh, fwoooosh!

The burning trees fiercely ignited.

Although he trusted his resistance to fire, this was a different case.

'That bastard. They said he ate Surt's Heart...'

The power of fire was extraordinary.

Even with the power of the Golden Cinder Eyes, if he enveloped himself in those flames, he couldn't avoid getting burned.

And besides...

'If I try to keep the distance...'

Kwaaaang!

Son OhGong moved the Flying Nimbus quickly to dodge the Rays.

It was a very small difference.

If he let his guard down for a moment, he would be hit by a Ray.

One or two wouldn't be a problem, but receiving Rays of this power one after another would be fatal.

In that case...

'What do you want me to do?'

If he approached, YuWon's sword would attack him along with the giant enveloped in Surt's flames. If he maintained medium distance, he would throw Rays, and if he moved away completely, he would throw a spear similar to Gungnir.

YuWon's abilities were superior at all distances.

'It's the first time in a long time that I've had such a frustrating battle.'

It was a strange feeling.

It was as if he were fighting against several people, not just one.

And those people were even Surt, Zeus, and Odin.

Even for Son OhGong, fighting them all at once was impossible.

While Son OhGong reflected, seeking a solution...

Flash!

A bright flash appeared before his eyes.

"Uwah!"

Kwaaaang!

A spear made of condensed Arcane Power narrowly missed Son OhGong's head.

Thanks to quickly lowering his head, he managed to dodge it, but the difference was so small that it gave him goosebumps.

Veins bulged on Son OhGong's forehead, who had been relieved.

Escaping like this was not to his liking.

"Win or lose, this annoys me!"

Son OhGong turned his body, and his Flying Nimbus began to fly toward YuWon.

It was an impulsive choice, but it was the best option for Son OhGong.

After all, the longer he wasted time running away, the more cornered he would appear.

Kyaaaaaaaa!

Riding the Flying Nimbus and aiming with the Ru Yi Bang, Son OhGong lunged forward.

He combined the speed of the Flying Nimbus with the strength of his hand wielding the Ru Yi Bang.

His best weapon was, after all, the frontal charge.

And just at the moment when he was about to throw himself into YuWon's arms and make his final move...

Kiiik-.

The Flying Nimbus, advancing rapidly, suddenly slowed down and stopped.

The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, had stopped in the midst of the battle.

"Hey...."

It couldn't be otherwise.

"This is a trap...."



Beeeeeeeh-.

The view that spread before his eyes was a situation that even Son OhGong couldn't avoid weakening.

Beeh-.

Beeeeeh-.

Beeeeeeeh-.

A loud and annoying bleating resonated in his ears.

The power of "them," boring and terrifying, that he thought he could already forget.

[The Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young]

Shub-Niggurath. Her offspring had appeared again in this forest.

Chapter 539

C15

The name Azathoth has completely disappeared.

The power that the Name held has faded away, leaving no trace of it.

However, that doesn't mean all the "Names" have disappeared.

Suuk-.

YuWon caressed the sheep's head.

It was the first time he had used a Name again since the last war. It felt quite uncomfortable, as it had been a long time.

'I wish I hadn't had to do it.'

Beeeh-.

Beeeh-.

Maybe because he had called them after a long time.

The sheep seemed quite content.

It could also be because the air was fresh, and the forest created by Vishnu was similar to where they used to live.

"Let's stop here."

YuWon said as he stroked the sheep's fur.

"Go back in."

Beeeh-.

The sheep bleated sadly, and their bodies began to gradually fade away.

Son OhGong, running towards them with the Ru Yi Bang in hand, lowered his arms and nodded.

"Yes. Alright."

There was nothing less fun than continuing to fight against an opponent who didn't seem to have any intention of fighting.

Normally, he would get angry at not being able to decide a winner in this situation, but this time, strangely, he didn't feel that way.

Son OhGong watched YuWon stretching his stiff body due to lack of movement and smiled in disbelief.

'Maybe it was to be expected.'

Perhaps the result was already decided before YuWon arrived at this place with the Clock Movement.

He obtained the Monkey's Eye and Gigantification from the Tutorial.

He had gathered all the items that formed the core of the Three Gods of Olympus and had snatched Surt's 'Flame,' which was the core of Ragnarok.

They had been thinking about this for a long time.

Son OhGong, Hercules, Zeus, Odin, Surt...

If there were a definitive Ranker that fused the strengths of the great Rankers who dominated the Tower.

They wondered if such a being would be able to defeat even enemies like Foolish Chaos, Shub-Niggurath, and Yog-Sothoth.

And now...

'I thought he hadn't done anything for 10 years...'

With the previous battle, Son OhGong was able to confirm with his own eyes that great result.

'But he has completed himself during that time.'

-----

Varuna, who had just returned to Deva, couldn't say anything.

Although known to be talkative, it was the first time he was left speechless.

'It's suffocating.'

It really felt suffocating.

In front of him was a long line.

The Rankers who had received Vishnu's favor in the past.

And the Tower residents who enjoyed peace thanks to Deva.

All of them were bowing before Vishnu's tomb, offering their prayers, and showing their own grief.

And Varuna was one of them too.

Chirp, chirp-.

A sunny day.

As expected from the place where Vishnu slept, the burial ground was a beautiful field covered with vegetation.

Birdsong echoed on an unusually sunny day.

Varuna couldn't fully believe Vishnu's death.

Jeok-.

Shortly after, Varuna stood in front of Vishnu's tomb with a flower in hand.

He closed his eyes for a moment to mourn Vishnu's death and then turned around.

There were still many people waiting to pay their respects, and he couldn't continue monopolizing time out of sheer selfishness.

Swish.

And so, Varuna, who had distanced himself from the place, headed towards...

"...Yama."

Yama was leaning against a tree, with a distant look in his eyes.

His face seemed to be half out of it.

Varuna could see that something was not right, but he didn't care about Yama's expression.

"I heard you ran away with your tail between your legs."

"...Varuna."

"Do you have the right to say my name now?"

Whoosh.

Arrows of Arcane Power of water formed around him.

Varuna's sharp and confusing Arcane Power aimed at Yama's throat. The Arcane Power around him swirled, and everyone's eyes focused on them.

"If you have any honor, kill yourself immediately. That's the only thing you can do for Deva and for Vishnu-nim."

"Varuna-nim!"

"Calm down!"

Not only Varuna was furious with Yama.

Many other Rankers also expressed their anger towards Yama for returning alone, but it was rarely so open.

Most of them didn't dare to show their teeth to Yama.

"Shut up, all of you!"

Fwoosh!

At the same time as Varuna's shout, a water barrier extended from him, pushing the surrounding Rankers away.

The Deva Rankers trying to intervene in the fight forcefully couldn't overcome Varuna's barrier and were pushed away from Yama and Varuna.

"Speak if you have a mouth, Yama. How do you come here alone with what face?"

Varuna's expression was complex.

He was angry, but at the same time, he begged to be convinced.

Only then could he avoid shooting Yama at this moment.

Normally, Varuna couldn't threaten Yama, no matter what he did.

The difference in rank and ability between them was clear.

However...

At this moment, Yama wasn't offering any resistance or refutation.

"...I'm sorry."

He didn't make excuses.

He knew that saying it was because of Vishnu's last order wouldn't appease Varuna's anger.

Even he felt that way.

If right now, he himself went back to that moment, could he make the same decision?

Could he run away and leave Vishnu?

Crack.

Yama clenched his fists.

He did it because he was angry with himself.

"Why? Do you want to kill me now too?"

Varuna misinterpreted his anger and lunged forward.

"Go ahead. Let's do it. Let's see how far you can go."

Woosh.

A bow and arrow made of water formed in Varuna's hands.

The bowstring tightened.

Unlike Yama, who seemed to have no intention of counterattacking, Varuna began to release his true Arcane Power.

And just as the tensioned arrow was about to be released towards Yama...

"Are you insane?!"

Bam!

A cold blow to the back of the head caused Varuna's bow and arrow to dissolve into water droplets. Varuna, with a soaked and cold body, sharply turned his head and looked at the white-robed Ranker who had hit him on the head.

"Vayu-!"

"Don't shout. You hurt my ears."

"Are you defending this bastard now? Out of everyone present?"

Vayu.

With a rank of 310, he was the Ranker who, along with Yama, had served Vishnu for a longer time in Deva.

Known by the nickname "Fengshen" (Wind God), he mastered wind magic so skillfully that it was like an art. His fighting style relied on wind-infused fist techniques, allowing him to reach his current position.

"So, do you want us to fight here and die together?"

"But this bastard-!"

"Look at Asgard."

Among the procession gathered to honor Vishnu's memory, there were also Rankers from Asgard.

"They lost their King, but they are still standing. Don't you feel anything?"

"...What do you want me to do?"

"Stop taking it out on Yama and look closely. Who we have to avenge."

Swoosh.

A sharp wind rose.

Vayu was furious too.

He had also received Vishnu's grace.

However...

He didn't take revenge on Yama like Varuna, nor did he do anything rash.

Although he was equally angry with Yama, it wasn't the time to fight amongst themselves.

And those words made Varuna reconsider.

He remembered who they had to face.

"The Administrators..."

The absolute beings in this Tower who had killed Vishnu.

Varuna's body shivered at the thought of them.

Any Player who had ascended the Tower feared the Administrators.

"We don't know if there is one or more enemies."

Varuna nodded at Vayu's words.

"It could be the unilateral action of the 95th Floor Administrator. Or maybe it's a move by the entire group."

"We should prepare for the worst. After all, Zeus warned us."

An Administrator had visited Zeus and given him a warning.

And right after that warning, Vishnu had lost his life at the hands of the Administrators.

Judging by the series of events, it was very likely that they wouldn't be facing just one Administrator.

"Do we have to face up to a hundred Administrators...?"

It would be a desperate situation.

A hundred Administrators with the power of the top High-Rankers, along with their millions of Envoys.

The enemy was powerful.

On the other hand, they had lost Vishnu and Odin in the war ten years ago.

If they faced a total war, it would be a tough battle.

"Among the current Rankers, there aren't even ten who can face an Administrator."

Undoubtedly, there were Rankers capable of fighting Administrators, like Zeus and Hercules from Olympus, The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, and Asura.

However, they weren't many, and their cohesion wasn't very strong.

Of course.

'We are forgetting someone.'

Varuna knew that everyone, including Vayu, was forgetting a person. Of course, the only ones who remembered were Varuna, Son OhGong, Hercules, and Pandora.

However...

"There might be another."

Up to that moment, Yama, who had remained silent, suddenly spoke.

"It's not certain, but..."

"What do you mean?"

"There's a person Vishnu-nim was looking for."

"Vishnu-nim? Who was he looking for?"

Vishnu's words echoed in Yama's mind.

The name that had contributed the most in the fight against Shub-Niggurath.

A Ranker that everyone had forgotten, and that now he couldn't even remember himself.

"Kim YuWon."

"Kim YuWon?"

In the instant Vayu frowned at the unfamiliar name, Varuna opened his eyes in surprise.

Never in his dreams would Varuna have imagined that he would hear that name from Yama's lips.

Yama watched Baruna's reaction. Meanwhile, Vayu still had a puzzled expression.

"He's an unknown name. Is he a Ranker from a minor Guild?"

"I don't know either."

"You don't know?"

"I only know that he's the guy Vishnu-nim was looking for."

In the midst of mourning for Vishnu, Yama struggled to remember Kim YuWon's name.

However, no matter how he scrutinized his memories, he not only couldn't remember Kim YuWon's name, but he couldn't even recall a clue about him.

It was frustrating because he felt that if only he saw his face, he would remember.

"You guys don't know anything either?"

"Not at all."

"...I see."

Swoosh.

Yama's gaze turned to Varuna.

The moment he received that look, Varuna shivered and asked, "W-what? What's going on?"

"Varuna, you..."

"Me?"

Varuna averted his gaze and fell into thought.

Vishnu looking for Kim YuWon.

If he thought about the reason he started looking for him, the answer was obvious.

'It's because of me.'

At first, when he didn't remember YuWon, Varuna had asked Vishnu about that name.

Who Kim YuWon was.

That must have been the first step.

"So, please, keep pretending you don't know anything."

"Eh?"

"Don't go around telling everyone. For now."

YuWon had warned him not to talk about him without reason. And he couldn't ignore the warning of a Hero from the war of ten years ago, no less than YuWon.

However...

'But for Vishnu-nim to have been looking for him...'

Until that moment, Varuna had never considered that possibility.

'What should I do?'

Chapter 540

C16

After the battle, YuWon and Son OhGong returned to the Sun Chariot.

The wounded one was Son OhGong.

The injuries on his side, pierced by Nir, and those opened by the magic explosion would take some time to heal.

Pandora placed a jar of ointment in front of Son OhGong.

It was a signal for him to apply it himself.

"It's fine. It will heal on its own if I leave it alone."

"Doesn't it hurt?"

"I'm fine. It's fun."

"It would hurt for me."

"Don't you like to fight?"

"Yes."

"That's strange."

"Really?"

A simple conversation.

Normally, one would dislike fighting, but Pandora, faced with that indifferent response, seemed to consider herself strange.

"Don't talk nonsense. Your tastes are like those of a pervert."

At YuWon's reprimand, Son OhGong made a displeased expression.

His complaint was always the same.

"Both you and Hercules have strength but don't use it."

"You need a reason to use it."

"I've been so bored because of you two."

"If possible, be bored for the rest of your life. I think that's better for world peace."

Son OhGong, seeing YuWon sigh, picked up the medicine Pandora had given him.



"So, what are we going to do now? It doesn't seem like there's any Administrator here."

"Anyway, there won't be a battle soon."

"So?"

Son OhGong inquired about YuWon's thoughts.

The recent battle had shown him that he was strong enough.

With YuWon by his side, it seemed they could win even if Shub-Niggurath reappeared immediately.

The problem was the plan from now on.

"...First, we have to go back."

"Go back? Where?"

Until now, YuWon had been forgotten.

Even the Ranking Management Office had forgotten him, so he had disappeared from the Ranking, and in the normal course of things, no one would look for him in this urgent situation.

In the end, YuWon had no choice but to act on his own.

And the place YuWon was heading to now was...

"To the battlefield."

It was the place where the longest battle in the history of the Great Tower had taken place.

-----

Grrrrrrr-.

A beast the size of a house with four horns growled. It had thick and tough skin that not even the swords and spears of the Rankers could penetrate, and horns that shot electricity.

It was the leader of the monsters that appeared on the 50th floor, a monster known as Noerang (雷浪= Thunder Sea)l.

"Push him to the west!"

"Don't get too close! It will electrocute you!"

"Hold onto it until the general arrives!"

"If we let it escape this time, it will take another few years!"

Urgent voices echoed in the chaotic battlefield.

Noerang was a monster of the Yokai Race that had existed for over a thousand years and had massacred countless inhabitants.

The Rankers of the Celestial Realm had gathered a great force to capture the beast that not even several Rankers had been able to catch.

Kaboom-!

A howl like that of a wolf echoed mixed with electricity.

Crackle, crackle!

The ground around cracked with claw marks under the blue electricity.

Rankers attacking Noerang were blown away.

Some, as if electrocuted, fell into the void with their eyes rolled back.

Krrrrrrr-.

Noerang, who had stopped for a moment, turned and looked at the Celestial Realm soldiers chasing him. His eyes narrowed, as if holding a smile. The fact that he hadn't escaped immediately and had stopped was because he was confident they wouldn't catch him.

"Curse it!"

"That damn bastard...!"

The speed and strength with which he deceived the Celestial Realm Rankers. It wasn't in vain that this guy had managed to survive for over a thousand years.

He was at the top of the food chain for a reason: he had the ability for it.

Of course.

It didn't make him any less despicable.

"Curse it. If we continue like this, we'll lose him again."

The Ranker Brothers, Golden Horn King and Silver Horn King, muttered under their breath.

To obtain the position of General in the Celestial Realm, they had been assigned the mission to hunt down this bastard.

They had started the pursuit five years ago.

However, the Yokai taunted them with his speed, enjoying the game.

It was as if he knew they couldn't catch him no matter what they did.

"The Celestial Net has been pierced!"

It was then that the news came like thunder.

"What?"

"Curse it!"

The Celestial Net: a net that linked sky and earth. The Golden Horn King and Silver Horn King Brothers had deployed this net with the help of the Celestial Realm forces to capture Noerang.

But Noerang tore it with sharp claws and lightning.

'Have we lost him again?'

'With this, our position in the Celestial Realm...'

At that moment, just before the two brothers lost Noerang...

"You did well."

A flash.

A broad cloak waved over the heads of the two brothers, while a silver line moved swiftly.

They couldn't see who it was.

So fast was it that Noerang's agile speed seemed ridiculous.

All the two brothers could see was a gigantic moon sword longer than any other treasure.

"No way..."

Shuaaack!

The moon sword soared toward Noerang's neck.

Clang, clang.

Blow after blow.

Feeling threatened, Noerang's body turned into blue electricity and began to disperse.

Before this sight, the green-haired man holding the moon sword watched Noerang vanish and left a final message.

"In your next life, be born as a benevolent creature."

Splash!

The sword mercilessly split Noerang's body in two.

It was such a clean strike that not a drop of blood splattered.

The Golden Horn King and Silver Horn King Brothers looked in amazement at the person who had killed Noerang almost as soon as he appeared.

"We salute the General Chief of Celestial Realm!"

General Lee Rangjin looked at the two saluting him with exaggerated reverence. Judging by their manners, they seemed to be Generals of Celestial Realm, but he didn't recognize them.

Suddenly, Lee Rangjin remembered the report he had received about external Rankers participating in the hunt for Noerang.

"Are you... the Rankers known as Golden Horn King and Silver Horn King?"

"Yes! We have long aspired to become Generals of Celestial Realm, but our skills were insufficient, so we have devoted ourselves to improving them."

"Really? You've worked hard."

Palm, palm~

Lee Rangjin congratulated the two men by patting them on the shoulders.

Smiling broadly, the two men stayed behind as Lee Rangjin turned around.

Next, General Buk Cheon, standing beside Lee Rangjin, asked:

"What do you think?"

"Their skills are usable."

"Then..."

"Let's accept their request, but let's suspend the appointment as General."

"Is there something you don't like?"

"Their eyes reveal a corrupt mind. More than the spirit of a General, I see in them the desire to covet something."

Looking at his own face reflected in the Unbreakable Sword, Lee RangJin continued speaking calmly:

"If they want to become Generals, they must first reform their mentality."

Having heard Lee RangJin's words, Golden Horn King and Silver Horn King would have shivered.

However, General Buk Cheon, as if he had anticipated this reaction from Lee Rangjin, nodded and replied:

"Understood. And..."

"Is it almost time?"

"Yes. It starts tomorrow."

Upon General Buk Cheon's response, Lee RangJin sighed and looked up.

Fortunately, the annoying hunt for Noerang had been a success.

However, that was just one of the preparations for the success of the upcoming event.

For Celestial Realm to regain its former glory, it was crucial that the event starting tomorrow be a success.

'Please...'

As he remembered Golden Horn King and Silver Horn King, whom he had recently met, his sigh deepened.

'I hope those useful guys participate.'

-----

The Great Celestial War.

That was the term used to refer to the great battle that took place long ago when Son OhGong and the Bull Demon King invaded Celestial Realm.

However, that was a long time ago.

This tournament, inspired by the Great Martial Arts Tournament, was held for the first time on the 50th floor, located in the center of the Tower.

And today was that day.

"Can we really use this name?"

"What's wrong?"

"I mean Great Celestial War. I'm sure it was a taboo topic until a few years ago... "

"What do you know? It's been over ten years since the Jade Emperor passed away, and our relationship with The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, and The Great Sage, Who Pacifies Heaven is not bad."

Conversation among the Generals watching the gathered crowd in Celestial Realm from the sky.

Great Celestial War was a word that had long been taboo in Celestial Realm.

It was not convenient to keep talking about the fact that a giant like Celestial Realm had struggled with just two people.

But now the situation was completely different.

"Moreover, is The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal the same as before? Now, the story that we fought against The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal is not a shame for us."

The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal.

Even at the beginning of the Great Celestial War, his ranking was outside the Top 20.

However, as the Great Celestial War progressed, and finally as a result of the even battle with Celestial Realm, the ranking of The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, and The Great Sage, Who Pacifies Heaven rose several levels compared to the beginning.

And now...

"That guy is now in third place."

Son OhGong, The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal.

Originally, he was in the fourth place after Zeus, Vishnu, and Hercules.

But due to Vishnu's death, his ranking rose one position, and now he was in third place.

"It really gives me a bad feeling. At a time like this, with Vishnu dead according to the Administrators' report, to celebrate a festival like this?"

"Here, they only talk about distant worlds. However, probably the Guilds near Deva will not participate in this tournament."

"There should be useful participants."

Apart from the name, the essence of the Great Celestial War was not very different from the Great Martial Arts Tournament.

A place to find talented Players and recruit them for each Guild.

And a place to increase their value before joining a Guild.

Celestial Realm sought to attract new Rankers through this tournament.

"Excuse us."

While the two Generals of Celestial Realm exchanged words like this.

"I am here to participate in the Great Celestial War, where should I go?"

A man approached the two and asked for directions.

He was wearing strange clothes.

He definitely did not seem to be a Ranker or Player residing on the 50th floor ruled by Celestial Realm.

He seemed to have come after hearing about the Great Celestial War.

"Go down there and look for the red flag."

"Thank you."

"I wish you a good result."

After exchanging greetings, the man walked away without hesitation.

It was nothing special.

It was something they had already experienced dozens of times just today.

However, for some inexplicable reason, the two looked at the place where the man had passed for a moment.

"That man..."

And then.

"Don't you feel like we've seen him somewhere before?"

The General who was lost in his thoughts asked about the identity of the unease.