

With The Gods 91

Chapter 91

Ant. It was a degrading nickname used by Giants to refer to humans.

It was a word that anyone would find unpleasant being called, even if they didn't know the meaning, but one would have to be an idiot to not comprehend that it meant something negative.

"Kwant," Buar glared at the Giant standing in front of him. "Watch your tongue. He's Elder Urpha's guest."

"Elder Urpha's?" He acted shocked for a second before scoffing. "His age must be getting to him, doing something so meaningless."

"Kwant!"

"You know it just as well I do. The Elder's become a pacifist from growing old. You should watch yourself. Have more dignity than hanging out with a critter like this..."

"Kwant." Nwiar, who had been staying quiet, spoke up. "You should watch what you say."

"Alright, alright. Sorry, sorry," Kwant spoke with a joking tone as he walked past Buar.

As Kwant walked by, he locked eyes with YuWon. Towering more than a meter over him, Kwant looked down at YuWon with distaste but left without doing anything.

Buar glared at Kwant's back, grumbling with a frustrated tone, "You fucking bastard..."

"Big brother, calm down. Fighting amongst ourselves will only cause trouble for the Elder."

"Then when can I fight?"

"During the next test."

"Damn it."

Surprisingly, Buar was an obedient big brother.

Frustrated with anger, Buar scratched his head. He then looked over at YuWon, who was laughing, and asked irritably, "Why are you laughing?"

"Because it's funny."

"Aren't you scared? No one here likes that you're here."

"So? It's not like you guys like me either," YuWon said nonchalantly.

"I guess you have a point," Buar nodded his head as he started walking again.

"Whatever. Just follow me. Also, you're frustratingly slow, so pick up the pace."

Buar had been walking slower to match YuWon's walking speed.

YuWon followed Buar while being in the spotlight of the Giants' gazes.

'I guess I'm not very welcome,' YuWon thought.

Currently, the Giants were in a crisis, like a candle facing a gust of wind. That's why everyone was so on edge.

'It'll be annoying if a lot of them are like the guy just now.'

The Giant named Kwant openly picked a fight against YuWon. If it weren't for Buar and Nwiar, and if not for the fact that he was a guest of the Elder, a fight would have broken out.

"Here," Buar pointed to the giant wooden door they had arrived at.

The door was about ten meters in height, and they felt like the doors of a dungeon boss room.

Of course, in reality, it was just a normal door.

A reply came after a moment, "... Come on in."

Creak—

The door opened on its own, pushed by the wind that flowed out from inside.

Buar stepped aside for a moment because, regardless of the circumstances, YuWon was Urpha's guest.

Step, step—

It was a tall, wide room. In fact, from YuWon's perspective, it felt more like a large cave rather than a room.

YuWon's footsteps sounded tiny inside this space.

It had finally sunk in that he was in the land of the Giants.

There was a bed, rocking chair, table, nightstand, and other furniture that were multiple times bigger than YuWon's height... Some objects were dozens of times larger than their human-sized counterparts.

These objects made Nwiar and Buar not even seem like Giants, but just slightly tall humans.

Creak—

"Nice to meet you."

YuWon looked over at the Giant sitting on a rocking chair with a baby Big Wolf on his lap.

He spoke in a soft voice, but his voice still echoed around the room, "What was your name again? I'm getting up there in age, so my memory isn't what it used to be."

The Giant had wrinkles all over his face. He was a very old-looking Giant.

It was said that when you became a Ranker, you no longer aged. Despite that, this Giant appeared ancient.

The reason for this was because Urpha entered the tower at an already old age. He was the living, breathing history of the Giants.

“My name is Kim YuWon,” YuWon greeted politely, a rare action for him.

All things aside, Urpha was a being that deserved respect, considering his achievements while leading the Giants.

“Alright, YuWon. I’ve heard a lot about you.”

“Where did you hear about me?”

“From Hephaestus. That brat can’t stop talking about you.”

Yuwon nodded his head at Urpha’s answer.

He’d had an inkling from the moment Nwiar said that Urpha was looking for him. Hephaestus was the only route through which Urpha, the Elder of the Giants, would know about him.

“So, you’re fighting against Olympus?” Urpha asked.

“Yes, sir.”

“For a kid that’s not even a Ranker yet and who’s just arrived on the 20th Floor to do so. That’s quite amazing.”

“Thank you.”

“But that’s not bravery. It’s recklessness and nothing more.”

Yuwon, who had his head lowered, looked up at Urpha.

“If you value your life, give up. Even a light sneeze from them can send you flying away.”

Urpha was right. YuWon wasn’t that strong yet. YuWon was a single drop of water, but Olympus was a forest fire. He was no match for them... at least for now.

“I had heard that you were a pacifist...” YuWon said in disappointment, “But is it that you’re actually just a coward?”

“What?”

Rumble, rumble—

The room shook.

The mana in the air trembled, pressing down on YuWon’s shoulders.

It was a considerable weight. The density and pressure of the mana was abnormal.

Even at his age, he was still a High Ranker.

“You’re yapping without thinking things through,” said Urpha.

“I’m sure you’ve already heard, but Olympus is once again preparing for the Gigantomachy,” YuWon spoke, disregarding Urpha’s anger. “Are you just going to sit by and wait for the annihilation of your race?”

Thud—!

The weight of the mana increased manyfold. YuWon's feet dug more than ten centimeters into the ground.

Come and read on our website [wuxia worldsite](#). Thanks

Urpha silently looked down at YuWon. He was in awe. Despite using a tremendous amount of that mana, YuWon was still resisting.

And that wasn't the only thing happening.

'The mana is rejecting my command,' Urpha noticed.

The mana that should have been moving according to his will was trying to resist harming YuWon.

It was unknown to Urpha if YuWon was aware of this or not, but YuWon continued to stare up at him, looking him in the eyes.

There was no fear or wavering.

Fwooo—

Fss, fss—

The threatening flow of mana that was filling the room slowly calmed.

YuWon dusted off his shoulders. Because of the effect of the heavy gravity, a lot of dust had fallen down.

"It's as I heard. You're fearless," Urpha spoke in a different tone.

The oppressive tone from before was gone, and there was a warm look now in his clear eyes.

This was Urpha's face without any masks.

"You're right. At this rate, we'll be annihilated."

Urpha had already received the news from Hephaestus.

Hephaestus had long maintained a secret relationship with the Giants, so of course Urpha was notified of Olympus's actions.

It was already fairly well-known that Olympus was preparing the next Gigantomachy.

He had chosen peace to protect his people, but he was also aware that peace didn't always lead to talks.

"I really have heard a lot about you. Not just from Hephaestus, but also from the children climbing up."

"Is that so?"

"Also, Hephaestus, that kid, strongly recommended you."

YuWon's eyes lit up. He thought maybe this would go easier than he expected.

In fact, Urpha ended up bringing it up first. "So you're searching for the Stone of the Sea?"

“Yes.”

“It does indeed exist, but unlike the rumors, we do not possess it.”

This was a surprise for YuWon. He had expected that he was called here because Urpha had heard he was searching for it, but to think Urpha would so easily share their secrets.

“But we do know where it is.”

“Why are you telling me this?”

Yuwon didn't doubt the credibility of Urpha's words. He came here knowing that Urpha knew about the 「Stone of the Sea」.

He was curious why Urpha was so willingly telling him everything.

“I have two reasons.”

Urpha wasn't sharing this information just for the hell of it.

“First, it's because you are without a doubt not affiliated with Olympus.”

Hephaestus vouching for YuWon played a big role here. Hephaestus told Urpha that YuWon fought and rescued him from Olympus, severely delaying the second Gigantomachy.

There was no better way to prove that YuWon was not a part of Olympus.

“As for the second reason...” Urpha looked over at 「Kyneē」 in YuWon's hand. “It's because you're the strongest player of this era.”

* * *

Yuwon was provided a room that was way too big for his size.

He might have been a human, but Urpha was an Elder of the Giants. Under his orders, Yuwon was able to at least receive treatment as a guest.

Creak, creak—

Urpha continued rocking on his chair with the Big Wolf on his lap.

Darkness set in the forest as the night grew deeper, and Urpha's eyes slowly closed.

He had a hazy dream. A nightmare.

“Run!”

“This way. Hurry!”

“Damn Olympus bastards!”

“Ahhhhhh!”

Angry roars and screams echoed into the sky.

The sharp scent of blood filled the air, and the ground became tainted red.

Urpha stood at the center of all this, staring at the dead corpses of Giants.

Whoosh—

The sea rose up into the sky.

Giants screamed watching the sea rise like it was alive.

“It’s a tsunami!”

“The God of the Sea is here!”

The God of the Sea. He was one of the Big Three gods of Olympus and a top High Ranker.

A massive tsunami swept up the Giants.

The force of the tsunami crushed their bodies and dragged their corpses deep into the sea.

On top of the tsunami that had consumed countless Giants, a man with blue hair appeared.

‘Poseidon.’ Urpha thought, locking eyes with the god far in the distance.

Urpha remembered this moment vividly.

He was afraid.

It was shameful, but he wasn’t able to do anything because of his fear.

Ssk—

Urpha opened his eyes.

He couldn’t remember how many times he’d had that dream now.

The nightmare of the past would make him jolt awake in cold sweat.

Arf, arf—

The Big Wolf whimpered, worried about its owner’s condition.

“I’m alright. I’m alright...” Urpha said while petting the Big Wolf’s back. He then turned his head to the window.

He remembered the events of that day more than usual.

The Giants that died to the huge monster called the sea. The eternal enemy of Giants, capable of wiping out an entire battlefield alone.

“Things won’t go the way you want...” Urpha said, standing up in the early morning while recalling the events of that day, “... Poseidon.”

Chapter 92

The 20th Floor’s Bureau was quiet.

This was a peaceful world with few incidents.

The employees of the Bureau would clock in, take care of complaints, have a meal, and play chess or card games to kill time.

“I thought I’d get to do lots of fun stuff if I became a Ranker.”

Creak—

Howl, a newly appointed Ranker at the Bureau, mumbled while leaning back in his chair, “Boring work for a slave’s wage doesn’t change anywhere, does it.”

“It’s not completely a slave’s wage. Besides, we should be thankful that it’s a permanent, full-time position,” the coworker sitting opposite him said while moving a chess piece.

Tak—

If they didn’t have at least this, time felt like it would never move.

Howl scanned over the chessboard.

“Hmm... Let’s see...” he thought out loud for a brief moment. “I’ll—”

Bang, bang—!

Right before he was about to move a piece, someone started banging on the door.

“Who is it?”

Creak—

“Excuse me,” the guest that banged on the door barged in.

It was a mean-looking man with red hair.

Howl squinted while looking over at the man. “Horang?” he said.

It was one of the faces he saw a lot after being appointed on the 20th Floor.

The regulars fell into one of two groups. They were either serious criminals, or they had such a reliable sponsor that they could walk in and out of the Bureau like it was their house.

Horang was someone that fell within both groups.

“Why are you here? Did you cause trouble again?” asked Howl.

“No, that’s not it.”

“Then why did you come here? Everyone’s acting carefully because things are serious right now.”

Horang walked over to the sofa set the two were sitting at, and he sat down without asking before answering, “I found two rabbits.”

“Rabbits? Which ones are we talking about?”

“Giants and Kim YuWon.”

“What?” Howl’s eyes widened.

He had been observing the Giants’ movements. And now YuWon was with them.

“Well, actually there are two Giants, so I guess I should say there are three rabbits. Anyway, some pretty dangerous guys have met up,” Horang said.

He then said with a creepy smile, “And we at Olympus happened to discover them.”

Horang was technically not part of Olympus. Instead, he was an executive of the Crimson Wolf Guild, a somewhat famous guild on the middle floors. But there were rumors that a bigshot in Olympus was backing him.

“Because of that, I’ll need some assistance,” Horang said.

This wasn’t a request one would normally ask the Bureau, asking for support to get some players.

“But he only just arrived on the 20th Floor.”

“No. You shouldn’t judge YuWon by what floor he’s on. I saw him fight in the Grand Martial Arts Tournament, and he was no joke.”

“You think?”

“I think Hargaan did lower his guard at the end, but the guy still knocked him out with a single punch.”

“I guess you have a point.”

“Also, it’ll be hard with two Giants accompanying him. Not to mention, he might have the backing of the Heavenly Demonic Cult...”

They two had a short debate about combat strength, calculating the variables that were YuWon and the Heavenly Demonic Cult.

“Hmm...”

“I guess as long as we can get him...”

“We’d be promoted at least one rank.”

The Rankers spoke with smiles on their faces.

And thus, a secret talk started in the tiny room at the Bureau.

* * *

* * *

Adam was basically a small city.

The trunk and branches that rose into the sky were the homes of Giants.

An indestructible tree.

With the exception of High Rankers on the level of the “Big Three” gods of Olympus or the Ruyi Jingu of Son OhGong, one couldn’t even scratch Adam.

Naturally, that meant YuWon couldn’t harm the tree with his current abilities.

‘I can go buck wild.’

Step—

YWon got on top of a branch of Adam.

The floor was hard, and there was far more than sufficient space for him to go wild.

Fwoosh—

Flicker, flicker—

Above YuWon’s head, hundreds of fist-sized flames of [Holy Fire] appeared.

Whoosh—!

The [Holy Fire] burned violently, having now escaped YuWon’s control. They’d soon start falling randomly towards the ground.

Phew—

YuWon let out a deep breath as his eyes changed.

[Cinder Eyes reads the path.]

Among the many abilities of [Cinder Eyes,] one of the main ones was reading ‘paths.’

‘This is making me dizzy.’

It had been quite some time since he had started using [Cinder Eyes,] but whenever he used it, he still felt the overload. Especially at times like this when he was reading an especially difficult path to evade.

Beeeeep—

His brain started to overload, but this still wasn’t enough for him to read the paths of a hundred flames.

[Activating Sensory Field.]

[Checking the data of all objects and life forms within a 50m radius.]

[Perception increases by 50%.]

[Sensory Field.] Among the new skills YuWon obtained, it was the skill he was most familiar with. It was similar to [Cinder Eyes,] but it was much more effective. This wasn’t because [Sensory Field] was a better skill, it was simply because he was much more familiar with it.

YuWon closed his eyes.

Fwoosh—

YuWon could feel the fires that had escaped his control burning ferociously. The sensation of which direction they were going to fall towards and how powerful they were tingled over his skin.

That was the power of [Sensory Field.]

Within the field, YuWon's senses multiplied manyfold.

He opened his eyes, and his vision through [Cinder Eyes] became imbued with the power of [Sensory Field.]

Come and read on our website wuxia worldsite. Thanks

Fwoosh—!

YuWon's red eyes opened wide.

There was only a single thought running through YuWon's mind.

'So, the world can look this clear.'

He saw where each flame was going to move and how he should move himself. Everything was visibly clear.

Whoosh—

The balls of fire finally started to fall.

One by one, the flames of [Holy Fire] began to rain down. In just a few seconds, they all started descending together.

Boom, kaboom—!

Fwoosh—!

The fires fell on a branch of Adam, and the flames rose up. That branch became tinged in the purple light of the flames.

But among that inferno, a small space no bigger than one meter wide opened up.

In the sole space where there was no fire, YuWon landed.

Phew—

He managed to evade everything he saw. In fact, YuWon thought it might have been possible to dodge everything even with his eyes closed.

He had started practicing with [Sensory Field] consistently as soon as he got it, and he observed that the proficiency was growing faster than normal.

'The two skills synergize well like I thought they would.'

The combined effects of the two skills were multiple times greater than their sole effects, but the downside was that, as effective as it was, it was also that much more taxing.

'My brain can't keep up with the sensory information.'

He had a lot of experience using [Sensory Field,] but [Cinder Eyes] was a relatively newer skill for him, even though in this life, he had been substituting [Sensory Field] with [Cinder Eyes.]

Now he had both skills and the ability to use them in tandem, but that meant an even greater load on his brain.

‘I’ll need some practice.’

He decided he’d likely be busy with this for a while.

“Whoa. What’s this? You were here?” an exaggerated voice suddenly cut in.

YuWon turned his head and noticed a familiar face.

“Huh? It’s a human?”

“What’s a human doing here?”

“Didn’t you hear? Elder Urpha gave him permission to stay.”

“The Elder did that?”

“Still, to let a human...”

Kwant and four other Giants spoke to each other.

They were around the size of Buar and Nwiar, meaning they were young Giants.

“Is Kim YuWon really that amazing?”

“I don’t know. I only ever heard the humors.”

“So what? It’s not like he’s a Ranker. He’s only a guy that just got to the 20th Floor.”

“He was still very impressive in the latest Grand Martial Arts Tournament.”

The Giants whispered amongst themselves as they followed Kwant and approached Yuwon.

Stomp, stomp—

They might have been young, but they were still Giants. And five of them at that.

It was an intimidating sight, seeing them all approach someone at once.

Kwant led the pack.

“So we meet again,” he said with a sinister smile. “And would you look at that? That son of a bitch Buar isn’t here,”

With an intimidating face and stature, Kwant was seriously picking a fight against YuWon.

It might have been because he had met Urpha yesterday, but Kwant now looked cute to YuWon by comparison.

Kwant’s gang tried to stop him.

“Hey. I think you’re going too far with the Elder’s guest...”

“I’m sure he had a reason for calling him here...”

“So what?” Kwant growled. “All humans are enemies. Every single one of them.”

YuWon let out a laugh. It was like seeing kids that wouldn’t listen to their teacher. Though Urpha was more like a principle in this metaphor.

“He’s laughing?”

“What’s up with him?”

“Is he trying to hurt our pride?”

YuWon realized that they really were just big kids, seeing how easily they were provoked by some simple laughter.

The size of Kwant’s palm was bigger than YuWon’s head.

YuWon also reached his hand out to Kwant.

Clench—

The two grabbed each others’ hands.

Squeeze—

‘No way. Is this guy...’ Kwant couldn’t believe that YuWon had grabbed his hand. ‘... Trying to challenge a Giant in strength when he’s only a human?’

Kwant had heard plenty about YuWon’s skills. He was also well aware that he had been going around topping all the test rankings and that he was the winner of the Grand Martial Arts Tournament, which proved that he was the strongest among the players in the lower floors.

But setting all that aside, Giants were the greatest when it came to physical strength. That was the power of genetics.

‘I’m going to crush you,’ Kwant thought as he squeezed YuWon’s hand.

But...

“Kgh...”

The one that ended up feeling pain was Kwant.

Crack, crack—

“Kugh!”

His fingers started to twist, and bones started to break.

‘What’s going on...?’ He wondered.

Kwant tried to strengthen his grip through the pain, but nothing changed.

Crack, crack—

“Kuaaaagh!!”

Thud—

With his hand crushed and broken, Kwant fell to his knees in pain. He tried to pull back his hand, but it wouldn’t budge.

“M-My hand! My hand!”

Kwant tried to smack YuWon with his other hand while screaming in pain. It was unsightly compared to how prideful he was acting just a moment ago.

“W-What the...?”

“Did Kwant just lose in strength?”

“Against a human?”

In terms of strength, there was no race that could beat the Giants in the Tower.

Of course, there were plenty of humans that were as strong as Giants with enough stats and levels, but most of them were Rankers.

Kwant was a player that had reached a much higher floor than YuWon.

“There’s more than just five of you guys, right?” YuWon asked.

Adam was one of the central residences of the Giants. There were likely tens of thousands of Giants living inside this tree.

With more than enough time left until the start of the test, YuWon smirked, having come up with a good idea.

“Go call all your friends,” he said. “I’ll play as much as you guys want.”

Chapter 93

An incident broke out on Adam’s 21st branch.

“They’re fighting!”

“Who’s fighting?”

“Kim YuWon! The guest that got here yesterday!”

“The human?”

“Yeah, so who is Kim YuWon fighting?”

“Everyone!”

A large group of adult Giants passed by.

Buar, who had overslept, looked around in confusion at the commotion.

“What’s going on? A fight?” Buar asked with interest.

He didn’t know what was going on, but he decided he needed to act quickly. He was a guy that sought out fights, even if meant jumping into a fire.

“Big brother.”

But there was someone that always tried to stop him.

“You’re not thinking of joining in, are you?” Nwiar asked.

“H-Huh? O-Of course not...”

Nwiar let out a sigh, watching her older brother laugh awkwardly. She couldn’t believe that he would mindlessly rush into a fight.

“He’s the Elder’s guest. Why are you trying to fight him?” Nwiar asked.

“No, I was, uh, going to stop them. He might be able to handle one or two, but look how many people are flocking to him. It’s dangerous.”

Buar pulled the excuse out of his ass, but he wasn’t wrong. Nwiar was able to count at least ten Giants running towards the commotion.

“... You’re not wrong,” Nwiar said in defeat.

“See? Now let’s go. Hurry up.”

Buar pressured Nwiar to move faster, running through the trunk of the tree and up twenty branches.

Bam—!

He heard a loud noise in the distance.

As someone who had spent his entire life fighting daily, Buar recognized this sound. It was the sound of fists colliding with each other.

“Wow—!” Buar gasped while finding the group of Giants gathered on one of the branches of Adam.

They were all young Giants like him.

“What a nice sight. Now this is youth,” he remarked.

They were gathered in a circle, creating a stage of sorts.

Buar broke through the group and made his way through.

Once the other young Giants noticed Buar, they moved aside for him.

As he made his way in...

“Kgh... Ugh...”

Buar found a Giant laying on the floor cradling his fist and YuWon standing in front of the Giant moaning in pain.

“So that’s it for Tulkar.”

“I’ll go next!”

As one Giant fell, another opponent stepped up to the plate.

Stomp, stomp—

It was one of the bigger Giants that were gathered there.

His name was Vulkan, and he was about ten years older than Buar.

“It’s Vulkan.”

“Oh. Finally...”

“This fight should be more fun to watch.”

“But is he actually a human?”

There were about a hundred Giants gathered around YuWon.

They were all young Giants like Buar, and they were multiple times bigger than YuWon.

But the main character that had set this stage was YuWon. More than a dozen Giants had already lost to him.

YuWon let out a sigh while looking at the Giant named Vulkan who had stepped forward. “Could you guys just gang up on me instead of coming one at a time?”

“What?” Vulkan, who held a giant hammer, said with a red face, “Are you underestimating me?”

“It’s not that, but...” YuWon said while scratching his head. “Actually, you’re right.”

YuWon grabbed Vulkan’s shoulder.

“Huh?”

Vulkan was confused. He wondered what YuWon, a guy much skinnier and shorter than him, was trying to do by reaching his hand up and grabbing his shoulder...

Whoosh—

Thud—

But in an instant, Vulkan was brought to his knees.

His eyes widened in shock from having suddenly lost his balance.

“Huh...?”

And it didn’t end at him being brought to his knees.

Push—

Wobble—

As YuWon pressed down on his shoulder, Vulkan’s upper body was smashed to the ground.

He couldn’t move an inch. There was far too great of a difference in strength.

[Your arm has been imbued with the power of a Giant.]

[Partial Gigantification will occur.]

Power was overflowing in YuWon’s arm.

Vulkan tried his best to push away YuWon's hand, but he failed.

After bringing Vulkan down in a flash with pure strength, YuWon looked around.

A hundred Giants had gathered before he realized it.

"Still no change of heart?" YuWon asked.

He was taunting them, telling them to stop trickling in because he was more than strong enough.

"... I knew it," Buar said.

He felt electrified. YuWon was strong, as he expected. In fact, he seemed stronger than his original estimation.

Buar's blood boiled intensely.

As he was about to step up, Nwiar joined him.

"You want to go as well?" he asked his little sister.

"This is what he wants. Might as well consider it as a bit of unique guest treatment."

YuWon watched the siblings, having spotted them.

Buar and Nwiar locked eyes.

"Besides, he warned us not to come at him one at a time," Nwiar continued.

"He did indeed."

Buar and Nwiar stepped into the circle.

The Giants started to whisper.

"It's Buar and his little sister."

"Hot damn..."

"We're going to get to watch the descendents of the Giant Gods fight?"

The Giant Gods. They were the leaders of the Giants, and each of them possessed the strength of a High Ranker.

Only a few of them were still alive, and it appeared that Buar and Nwiar were descendants of one of those gods.

'So they're more important than I originally thought,' YuWon thought.

That explained why he thought most of the other Giants here seemed weaker in comparison to the sibling duo.

Kwant's hand strength, for example, was not even close to Buar's.

'But I've never heard of either of them.'

Buar and Nwiar were names he was not familiar with.

There was also that red-haired player, Horang. There were quite a few skilled people he had never heard of on this floor.

YuWon grinned a little. It seemed that they might be a bit helpful, unlike the others.

“My body’s been itching since yesterday,” Buar said while his body expanded. “Now let’s see how amazing your skills really are.”

“You can see as much as you want,” YuWon bantered.

Fwoosh—

YuWon’s eyes became flaming red.

[Cinder Eyes reads the path.]

“If you can last that is,” he taunted.

* * *

* * *

Through the use of [Cinder Eyes,] he could clearly see the muscle movements of Buar and Nwiar. He could see how their bodies were moving and where they were headed.

YuWon’s mind started to work faster using said visual information, and his senses started to twitch.

[Activating Sensory Field.]

Fwoosh—!

YuWon’s ability to perceive everything expanded, and the space around him felt like it was all in the palm of his hand.

Thinking that YuWon had finished preparing, Buar made the first move.

Boom—!

Shortening the long distance between them, Buar’s fist created a sonic boom as it just grazed over the top of YuWon’s head.

YuWon tried to get up close to Buar, but his move was greeted by Buar’s knee flying at his chin.

The knee strike was stopped by YuWon’s non-dominant hand.

Bang—!

Wince—

YuWon felt numbing pain in the hand he blocked the attack with.

He decided to give up on getting up close and personal as he noticed Nwiar’s punch coming from behind him.

‘I’ll strike back,’ YuWon decided.

Fwoop—

Klang—!

Nwiar's fist and YuWon's sword clashed.

Nwiar's fist was unscathed. In fact, YuWon's sword was the one that got pushed back.

'Her strength's no joke,' YuWon thought, his eyes wavering.

They were much stronger than expected, meaning that it wasn't going to be possible for YuWon to take the sibling duo with no mana and only physical strength.

YuWon heard Buar's voice behind him.

"Do you know why I can't talk back to my little sister?"

Clench—

Buar tightened his fist, getting into position to swing as hard as he could.

"It's because she's stronger than me," Buar explained.

Whoosh—!

YuWon was cornered front and back with nowhere to escape.

Buar became sure of their victory, thinking, 'It's over.'

Klang—!

He felt a satisfying thud under his punch, but he quickly came to a realization.

"Huh?"

"Huh?"

Buar and Nwiar locked eyes with each other in confusion.

YuWon had disappeared.

Bump—

A noise came from above them.

"What the...?"

"What's up there?"

YuWon had jumped up into the sky by leaping off air.

This wasn't just him jumping high.

Bump—

His feet were pushing off of thin air. It was like there was something invisible under his feet.

[Hermes's Treads]

▷ Shoes that Hermes lost long ago. They are imbued with his powers.

▷ +50% jumping ability.

▷ Able to double-jump midair.

▷ Able to use Skill – Sky Step once a day.

This was the item YuWon bought using the CP he had earned on the 11th Floor.

If he couldn't go forwards or backwards, then going up was the natural answer.

'He jumped higher than our height at such a fast speed?' Nwiar was taken aback.

Swish—!

YuWon swung his sword down, adding to it the power of gravity.

Slit—

Splatter—

A long cut was inflicted on Nwiar's arm.

Buar became enraged at the sight of blood spurting out of his sister's arm.

"How dare you!" He shouted.

Whoosh—

Buar's punch once again split the air.

His punch missed again, but Buar wasn't alone.

"Now! Corner him!" Buar instructed.

"Got it!"

Fwoosh—!

Disregarding the wound on her arm, Nwiar moved in harmony with her brother.

Fwoop, crash—!

Whoosh—

Buar glared at YuWon, who was dodging all his punches like a slippery eel. Even with the duo fighting together, they couldn't land a single hit.

'This is tricky,' Buar thought.

YuWon wasn't just fast. Not only could he duck or slide to either side, but he could jump up to dodge their attacks.

Buar didn't know what kind of skill it was, but it was clear that YuWon could jump again in midair.

At first it might not have seemed that impressive of a skill, but facing it was incredibly tricky.

Normally, one would have no additional escape route if they jumped up, but this guy could double-jump and change directions. 'He essentially has another layer of movement,' Buar analyzed.

With additional possible directions for evasion, attacking YuWon was a dizzying task.

And more than that...

'I don't think we'll ever be able to catch him,' Buar thought.

Despite the two trying to corner him, YuWon wasn't even attacking them back. He simply dodged all attacks.

At first they thought it might have been because he had no room to attack, but that wasn't the case.

'I'm only punching dead air.' Buar felt defeated.

No matter how much he swung his fists, he swung at nothing, and he didn't think his punches would reach YuWon anytime soon.

Yuwon watched Buar and Nwiar with eyes that made him seem like he knew everything.

Buar grit his teeth, "You think I can't catch you?!"

Vwoom, vwoooooom—

Mana gathered around Buar's fist. The condensed mana vibrated as if it was ready to explode any second.

"Big brother!" Nwiar shouted in surprise, seeing her brother enraged.

Buar's flow of mana wasn't normal.

Vzzt—

It was to the point that Buar's body started showing signs of penalty, demonstrating how much power Buar was exerting.

Unfortunately, it was too late to stop him.

"Eat this!" Buar shouted while swinging his fist.

It didn't matter to him if YuWon could or couldn't dodge this because this attack was about to wipe out everything in front of him.

Yuwon watched the fist flying at him.

The punch moved ever so slowly, and he could clearly see the flow of mana contained within.

'This attack...' YuWon decided that instead of dodging, he had to strike it away.

Chapter 94

Vwoom, vwoom—

A massive mana ripple was coming at him with the swing of Buar's fist.

Yuwon thought about it for a moment but decided not to use his mana.

In order to practice with [Cinder Eyes,] [Sensory Field,] and 「Hermes's Treads,」 he decided not to use his other abilities during this fight. Because the moment he broke that rule, this would devolve from training into just a children's fight.

Fwoosh—!

With Buar's fist, the mana ripple became a huge wave, ready to crash into him.

YuWon had to read a path to break through it before getting caught up in it.

[Cinder Eyes reads the path.]

With the expanded senses, time felt like it was flowing slower.

It came with an additional overload on the brain, but YuWon had that much more time to make decisions, and everything he saw felt clearer.

The flow of mana could be felt clearly on the skin, and he could precisely see the point where he could break through in the mana wave that was heading towards him.

‘There,’ YuWon thought while raising his sword.

The point was miniscule, and it moved with the flow of the wave. But he still had to do it in order to pierce through.

And so YuWon didn’t dodge the wave, but instead thrust with all he had.

* * *

Whoosh—

Buar saw the tip of the sword coming at him.

At that moment, he wondered, ‘He’s going to counterattack?’

He sensed nothing from YuWon. YuWon wasn’t using even the slightest bit of mana. He was using purely physical strength to counter his punch.

‘He’s even more reckless than a Giant.’

That was the only thought in Buar’s mind. It was already proven that he was ahead of YuWon in terms of strength. Buar was overexerting power in order to try to stop YuWon from dodging around. And now, instead of evading, YuWon was coming in for a direct confrontation.

It was obvious who would be the winner before they even clashed.

“Big brother!” Nwiar shouted in surprise.

This was a situation where YuWon could get seriously hurt, and if that were to happen, they’d feel ashamed in front of Urpha.

‘Sorry, but...’ Buar thought while swinging his fist, ‘It’s too late.’

In that moment...

Slice—

Through the mana wave, a thin line pierced through.

Fwooo—

The massive collection of mana that looked like it was going to wipe out the entire vicinity split apart. And the thin line that pierced the wave quickly approached Buar.

“What the...?” Buar was shocked by what had just happened.

He realized it was too late for him to pull back his fist while the line was coming at his face.

He wondered how in the world YuWon managed to break through the humongous flow of mana.

Fss—

The ‘line’ that Buar saw was YuWon’s sword.

YuWon dodged Buar’s fist and broke through the huge mana wave, and now the tip of his sword was pointed close to Buar’s neck.

“...”

“...”

“Wow...”

The surrounding Giants reacted with silence or muted awe.

That included Nwiar, who was worried that YuWon was going to get injured. In fact, she was the one who was the most shocked because she had been engaged in combat with him.

‘What just happened...?’ She wondered.

Buar had made an attack while taking on the penalty, and YuWon had thrust his sword in response.

It was certainly a much weaker attack, akin to throwing an egg against a boulder. But in the end, the egg had smashed the boulder into pieces.

Shing—

With Buar remaining still, YuWon pulled back the sword that was against his throat.

The fight was now over.

“Hmm...”

YuWon’s eyes returned to their original color.

He felt a headache, and his vision was a bit shaky, but the results weren’t half bad.

“It worked,” YuWon said to himself.

He won against Buar, a Giant, without using any mana. It was a victory against a player of a significantly higher floor.

He did acknowledge that a bit of luck played a part in his win, but defeating Buar without using mana or other skills was monumental.

“I-I lost,” Buar declared his defeat, albeit a little late.

Since he had been unable to respond to a sword at his neck, it was his complete defeat.

“You guys were at least better than the rest,” YuWon said.

Thanks to the siblings, he was able to use [Cinder Eyes] and [Sensory Field] until he felt a bit worn out. And he had gotten a bit used to using 「Hermes’s Treads,」 but this was the first time he had used them this much in one day.

The Giant siblings were the perfect opponents for YuWon to hone his dulled senses against.

“I hope we can do more of this,” YuWon said, extending his hand.

There was a limit to training alone, so having someone to help him train was good news. If possible, he wanted to continue getting Buar and Nwiar’s help.

Buar looked intensely at YuWon’s hand before reaching for it.

“It’ll be my pleasure.”

Squeeze—

YuWon could sense Buar’s fighting spirit from his strong handshake.

“I look forward to it.”

* * *

* * *

Ten days had gone by.

In the last ten days, YuWon’s daily routine was the same everyday.

Fighting, more fighting, and today as well, he was fighting.

Fwoop—

Swoosh, fwoosh—

“Nwiar!”

“Okay!”

Nwiar leaped into the air and crashed down.

Thump—!

Her size and weight shook the branch of Adam upon impact. The force was much greater than what should have been possible for Nwiar’s size.

“Is it a Weight Amplification Technique?” YuWon wondered.

Every player in the Tower learned martial arts on the 10th Floor, and the technique Nwiar just displayed looked like a practical application of martial arts from the Martial Realm.

“So you guys haven’t shown me all your cards yet,” YuWon said.

YuWon’s sword grazed past Nwiar’s torso.

“I got you!” Kwant shouted while swinging his mace down.

Whoosh—

Slam—!

The mace missed, but it was obvious in which direction YuWon would dodge.

“Vulcan! Dariwul!”

“Got it!”

Vulkan and Dariwul, who had been anticipating YuWon’s evasion, moved together.

Their timing was perfectly matched to YuWon’s moves. Vulkan headed in the direction that YuWon jumped in, and Dariwul waited while watching where YuWon would double jump towards.

And of course, Buar didn’t stay still while this was happening. He leaped in the direction that YuWon had jumped towards.

Even though YuWon was capable of jumping again while in the air, there were far too many Giants heading for him.

“Got ya!” Vulkan shouted while reaching his hands out for YuWon.

Vulkan, who was the biggest among the five, tried to grab YuWon around the waist.

However...

Fss, fss—

YuWon disappeared from his spot.

“Huh?”

“What the—?”

“Where did he go?”

The five began to look around to find the now missing YuWon.

That was when Vulkan, who was still midair after jumping after YuWon, was caught by the ankle.

Grasp—

Fwoosh—

Vulkan’s body was swung higher up into the air.

In an instant, YuWon had jumped below Vulkan and had flung him by the ankle.

“Ahhhhh!”

Vulkan’s massive body became a deadly blunt weapon.

Wham, blam—!

“Kgh!”

“Kugh!”

Vulkan was forced to collide with Buar and Dariwul.

Nwiar just barely managed to dodge this attack.

Tak—

YuWon finally landed back down on the ground.

Nwiar and Kwant, who had been waiting for him from below, made their move.

Mana started wrapping around Nwiar's fist.

The fist, imbued with a ridiculous amount of power, flew at YuWon, causing the air to shake.

Rumble, rumble—

It was the same technique that Buar had used before. The mana that formed the wave was densely packed together. There was no point of evasion nor a nullification point visible to YuWon.

Behind him, Kwant was coming at him swinging his mace.

YuWon turned around and headed for Kwant.

Ssk—

With the tip of his sword, YuWon slightly changed the trajectory of Kwant's mace.

Crash—!

YuWon's sword and Kwant's mace blocked Nwiar's punch together.

'He used my strength to his advantage...?' Kwant was shocked.

He found himself standing beside YuWon, but he was too late to notice.

Crack—

"Ahhhhhh!"

YuWon struck Kwant's wrist with his elbow, making him crumple in pain.

He then started charging Nwiar.

Fwoosh, fwoosh—

Nwiar was the most skilled among the five.

She swung her fists at YuWon, who was coming at her head on.

YuWon dodged a myriad of punches in a matter of seconds, but in the end, he got grabbed by the collar of this shirt.

"Hiyah!" Nwiar shouted, trying to lift YuWon up to slam him into the ground.

However, strangely enough, she could not lift him.

He was heavy.

YuWon, who looked like a child next to her, should have been as light as a feather, but she couldn't even budge him.

"I decided to use it too," YuWon said, bringing the edge of his blade to Nwiar's neck.

"The Weight Amplification Technique."

The [Weight Amplification Technique] was not a special skill. It was a simple technique of the Martial Realm where you increased your weight by shifting your power in a single direction.

He had decided to try it after seeing Nwiar do it, but it turned out to be more effective than he anticipated.

“...”

Feeling dejected, Nwiar eased up and lowered her fist.

The fight was over.

The others also felt dejected. They were either sighing in frustration or moaning in pain, like Kwant.

Nwiar said with disbelief, “You can now defeat five of us like it’s nothing.”

She didn’t think they were going to win, but she also didn’t think the fight would end up being settled so soon.

However, the reality was that in a matter of minutes they had all been thrown to the ground, and she even ended up with a sword to her neck.

“You’re completely different from just ten days ago.”

It was the damndest thing. At first, it felt like the two of them could almost take him on. Like there was just a slight difference between the sibling duo and YuWon and that she could reach him. But as time went on, the gap only widened.

And then, YuWon made a proposal.

“Let’s add one more person to the mix.”

The first volunteer was Kwant.

Knowing that he himself wasn’t good enough, he decided to fight YuWon by helping the siblings.

But the results were the same.

The only difference was how long the fight took. In the end, YuWon was always the victor.

And, of course, this time was no different.

“He doesn’t particularly feel like he’s gotten stronger...” one of them commented.

YuWon was always like this.

It felt like he was just barely too short of their grasp, that they could also almost get him.

At first, they thought two would suffice against him, but the results of the fight demonstrated otherwise. And it was the same with three and four.

“Are you getting adapted to something?” Nwiar asked.

“Yeah. There’s a skill I have to get used to using,” YuWon didn’t deny it.

His answer only made Nwiar feel more dejected. She knew for a fact that YuWon was barely using any mana. She knew he should have other skills, but Yuwon was purposely not using them.

Nwiar wanted to make him use his skills by any means necessary, but she wasn’t able to make that happen.

‘How much stronger would he be if he fought seriously?’ Nwiar thought.

It was something she had wondered multiple times now, and she wanted desperately to force him to do it, no matter what.

“Let’s rest a little bit before we continue. Actually, should we add another person to our side? Make it six,” Nwiar asked, thinking once again that they were only falling slightly short of him.

But the answer she got was unexpected.

“No,” Yuwon turned around, having sweated enough. “Let’s stop here.”

“What? Why?”

“It’s almost time for the test.”

“Oh...”

It was an acceptable answer for Nwiar. YuWon was a player who had only recently arrived on the 20th Floor. It was just that his skills made her forget that fact.

“Get some good rest, guys,” YuWon said while looking at Kwant, who got majorly injured. “A big fight’s coming.”

Chapter 95

Dawn broke.

YuWon chowed down on the meat of a big wild animal while eating with others.

“It’s tomorrow, right? The test,” Buar asked in disappointment.

Not only was he disappointed that he couldn’t beat Yuwon once, it seemed that he had grown close to YuWon.

“Yeah.”

“Are you going to come back after the test?”

YuWon thought for a moment before nodding. “I will if I remember.”

YuWon wasn’t the type to make empty promises. He was being serious about possibly visiting if he ever came back to the 20th Floor.

“So you’re not totally heartless, even if you do talk like a jackass.”

“Eat your food.”

Bonk—

Nwiar hit Buar in the head with a slab of meat.

Buar was an obedient big brother, so he did as she said.

Nwiar let out a sigh while looking over to YuWon.

“I’m sorry that my big brother is still so childish...”

“It’s okay. I know he didn’t mean anything bad.”

“I’m glad you think so.”

Munch, munch—

As always, Buar chowed down on a mountain of meat.

YuWon was no small eater, but he couldn’t match how much food a Giant ate. For example, Vulkan was tearing apart meat off the bone from a chunk that was bigger than YuWon’s entire body.

Around the time the meal was ending, Buar asked a question as it popped into his head, “Didn’t you say you were searching for the Stone of the Sea?”

It was something he had forgotten about because he had been so focused on fighting YuWon.

The 「Stone of the Sea」 It was an item that was passed down as part of a legend in the world of the 20th Floor.

YuWon had approached the Giants in search of an item that people weren’t even certain actually existed or not.

“Yeah,” YuWon said.

“What happened to that? Are you going to come back down after passing the test and moving onto the next floor?”

YuWon shook his head.

Buar squinted because it didn’t add up. He asked, “Then what?”

“I’m going to find the Stone of the Sea before I go to the next floor.”

“But didn’t you say earlier that you were taking the test...” Buar’s eyes widened while talking.

One would have to be really stupid to not understand the meaning behind what YuWon just said.

“Is it at the test site?”

YuWon didn’t answer since they would know the truth soon enough.

“Does the Elder know?”

“More or less.”

“Hahh...” Buar exhaled. “So that thing really was connected to us...”

The Giants possessing the 「Stone of the Sea」 was a rumor that had been floating around for a long time, and due to that rumor, Giants had suffered at the hands of countless players and Rankers. They would demand the stone, asking where it was, to tell them everything they knew.

"If your father is one of the Giant Gods, then it's highly likely he knew. He just didn't tell you guys," YuWon said.

"Is that item really that important?"

"It's very important."

"Then why can't we just take possession of it? Why—" Buar's question got cut short.

"Are you dumb?" Nwiar asked while letting out a sigh of disappointment. "Why do you think he's taking the test tomorrow? It obviously means the Stone and taking the test are connected."

"Is that what that means?" Buar asked.

YuWon nodded his head.

The 「Stone of the Sea」 Its other name was the 「Divine Sea Crystal」 and it was also known as the 「Trident's Fragment」

And that item was connected to the test of the 20th Floor.

"So why did the Elder ask for you?"

"Because I'm the strongest."

YuWon's blunt answer made Buar, Kwant, and Vulkan make a sour face. But none of them could say anything in response.

If you only looked at the 20th Floor, then YuWon was without a doubt the strongest player. On top of that...

'There's a chance he might be close to having the power of a Ranker...' Buar thought while looking at YuWon.

The legend of the 「Stone of the Sea」 has been tormenting the Giants for a thousand years now, since the end of the Gigantomachy.

And now, the guy standing in front of Buar might be the person to bring an end to that legend.

"How could the Elder do this?" Kwant said while throwing the meat he was eating back onto his plate. "He knew the truth, yet he purposely stayed silent all along? He knows how much we've been tormented because of this stupid legend."

"Kwant."

"Am I wrong? Do you know how many times people have picked a fight with me because of it? I almost died a few of those times, damn it." Kwant progressively raised his voice, "Why couldn't we have just given them that stupid stone?! Is that treasure more valuable than the safety of our children?! Huh?!"

Giants ended up in altercations large and small as they climbed the Tower. While some were intimidated by their size and stayed away, others intentionally picked fights with them, knowing the Giants' situation.

And more than half of those fights were with people who were after the 「Stone of the Sea.」

Buar and Nwiar couldn't say anything to rebut Kwant. Normally, they would be stoutly defending Urpha, but this was a situation where they had nothing they could say because Kwant was right. Even their meeting with YuWon was because of a gang of players picking a fight with them.

“What could a stupid stone be worth that the Elder—”

“He made the smart decision,” YuWon interrupted Kwant.

He had finished his meal and was getting up. Kwant's sitting height was taller than YuWon's standing height.

He stared at YuWon with eyes bloodshot from rage.

“He made the smart decision?” Kwant asked.

“That's right.”

“You're not even a part of our race. Don't talk like you know everything...”

“If that stone fell into the wrong hands, you guys would all be dead by now,” YuWon said while turning around. “Anything's better than complete genocide.”

“I said, don't talk like you know everything!” Kwant shouted, jumping into the air and swinging his fist.

Unfortunately, his opponent was someone that they couldn't beat even while ganging up five on one.

Grab—

Yank, slam—!

“Kugh!”

YuWon grabbed Kwant by the collar and drove him into the ground.

He then asked Kwant, who was lying limp on the floor, “What about you? What do you know about Elder Urpha?”

YuWon looked at Kwant and the other young Giants with disappointment before turning around and saying, “Being ignorant isn't a crime, but if you don't know anything, you should at least keep your mouth shut.”

Step, step—

YuWon then walked away from the commotion.

Buar watched YuWon walk away for a moment before turning his focus to Kwant, who was lying on the ground.

“You okay?” Buar asked.

“Jeez... What’s up with that stupid amount of strength...?”

“It’s not just strength. If we only looked at strength, I’m stronger than him.”

“Whatever. Help me up already. I feel like I pulled my back or something. I can’t get up.”

“You idiot,” Buar remarked while he helped Kwant get up.

Kwant groaned as he got up with Buar’s help. He then looked in the direction YuWon disappeared, saying, “That guy knows something, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t get up to your weird ideas again. No matter what you try, it’s not going to work.” Buar warned him.

“Do I look like a kid?”

“No, you’re even worse than a kid.”

“Ngh...” Kwant couldn’t say anything.

“But I do agree that he knows something. I can tell by how he sought out Elder Urpha and what he just said.”

Buar was talking about how if the 「Stone of the Sea」 fell into the wrong hands, the Giants would be annihilated.

What YuWon told them stuck in their minds, and Elder Urpha would have been the type of person who probably would have kept the Stone a secret, knowing such a thing.

“I don’t know what exactly it is that the Elder hid from us...” Buar said, his words cutting through the thick atmosphere, “but I guess we’ll find out tomorrow.”

* * *

* * *

YuWon returned back to his room.

The only things inside the room were a 10-meter-long bed, a pole to use as a clothes rack, and a nightstand.

This was the place that YuWon had been staying in for the last ten days.

Flop—

YuWon jumped up onto the bed and laid down.

The bed was so big, it was taller than YuWon’s height.

Wince—

His head still hurt.

It was the side effect of using [Cinder Eyes] and [Sensory Field] nonstop for the last ten days.

‘I should restrain myself until the start of the test.’

Maintaining your condition before a test was a must, so he decided to ban himself from using [Cinder Eyes] and [Sensory Field] together until the start of the test.

Vwoom—

His right hand, which was equipped with 「Kyneē,」 vibrated.

YuWon stretched out his hand towards the ceiling.

Kyneē was letting out a sound.

Vzzt, vzzt—

It then started to release mana on its own.

This was a phenomenon that happened when YuWon let down his guard even the slightest bit.

“... It’s going crazy again.”

YuWon made mana flow into his right hand to forcefully suppress the mana coming out of 「Kyneē.」

Spark, crackle—

There wasn’t much of a resistance.

Fortunately, 「Kyneē」 could be suppressed quickly. But it still felt like holding onto a bomb that could explode at any moment.

‘Is it because of the Trident’s Fragment?’

The Trident was a weapon that symbolized Posiedon, the God of the Sea.

The 「Trident’s Fragment」 was an item similar to Kyneē’s crafting material, the 「Divine Dark Crystal.」 And it was potentially a different part of the ‘eye’ that YuWon saw not too long ago.

‘Kyneē’s been responding to it since I got to the 20th Floor.’

At first, it only reacted once every few days, but that time frame had begun to progressively get shorter and shorter.

YuWon had a few hypotheses, but there was one more likely than all the others.

“... Are they really reacting to each other?”

There was no way to be certain, but he started to think it was very plausible.

When he first thought they might be reacting to each other, YuWon had a silly thought: ‘Can I maybe use Kyneē like a Dragon Ball radar?’

It was a silly thought, but it wasn’t impossible either. If the three fragments were originally one, then it wouldn’t be so strange if the fragments responded to each other.

Because of this hypothesis, YuWon started practicing handling 「Kyneē」 after coming back to his room.

The room was so large, it was more than sufficient to use as a training space.

Yuwon extended his arm and clenched his hand.

Thinking back on it, YuWon didn’t have a chance to properly use 「Kyneē」 after it was completed. But that was because he didn’t have a worthy opponent for it yet.

He did try and practice using it little by little, but he had yet to use it to its maximum effect yet.

‘If this is the key to this floor’s test...’

For YuWon, the test on the 20th Floor was a test to obtain the 「Trident’s Fragment.」 So if 「Kyneē」 could be a clue for it, he needed a way to know for certain.

Yuwon closed his eyes and focused on 「Kyneē.」

‘Open your eyes.’

Fss, fssss—

A black-tinted mana started to flow out of 「Kyneē.」

This time, it wasn’t 「Kyneē」 acting independently. It was acting in response to YuWon’s will.

‘Open... your eyes.’

Yuwon thought back to the black wall that surrounded him and the mysterious yellow eye.

That thing was 「Kyneē」 itself and a part of something. A being that wanted to recover a part of itself, the 「Trident’s Fragment.」

Yuwon continued to search for it, but the problem was that it was now the day before the test, and there was still no response.

Yuwon’s patience started to wear thin.

Fwoosh—

Yuwon showered [Holy Fire] down on 「Kyneē.」

“Stop sleeping...”

That was when...

Fssss—

... A black wall started to surround YuWon, just like when he first got ahold of 「Kyneē.」

YuWon continued, speaking to the yellow eye that appeared in front of him, "... And wake up."

Chapter 96

The test examiner of the 20th Floor's test was Theseus, an Olympian Ranker.

He was pretty highly ranked, and he had quite a bit of influence in Olympus thanks to being the son of a certain person.

"Kim YuWon..."

Theseus raised his head and frowned, reading the order he got from Olympus.

"The conditions are troublesome."

They gave him a job to do, but there were a lot of conditions attached to it.

"Don't directly involve myself in the test. Don't be spotted by other players. Be careful of the penalty."

They were all troublesome conditions.

"Olympus has gotten quite timid. They must have quite a number of skeletons in the closet," Theseus commented.

"There were incidents on the 1st and 11th Floors, so it can't be helped, sir."

Theseus looked over at Sipholiose, a fellow Olympian Ranker who had brought him the order.

Theseus was aware of the situation. "A lot sure has happened. After failing to capture Hephaestus on the 1st Floor, Hypnos got caught interfering with a test on the 11th Floor by the Administrator."

Thanks to all that, Olympus was currently under special watch by the Administrators.

"For me to be tasked with cleaning up after the mess created by those idiots..."

"Lady Hera believes you'll do an excellent job."

Theseus let out a deep sigh.

It wasn't that difficult of a task, but the problem was that it was something that violated the rules of the Tower, and if the Administrator were to find out, this could be the final nail in the coffin.

Something that shouldn't be done had already happened twice.

"It isn't all that difficult of a task, but..." Theseus stopped and shook his head after a thought came to him. "No, if it wasn't difficult, people wouldn't have failed twice now."

This was a guy who had started fighting a Ranker on the 1st Floor. He then won against a Ranker test examiner on the 11th Floor, and it was unknown how much stronger he might have become by now.

Theseus decided that he would no longer view Kim YuWon as a 'player.'

"So, who are the players that will be helping me? I don't think we should be using Rankers for this."

"The Crimson Wolf Guild offered to cooperate with us."

"Crimson Wolf?" Theseus nodded his head while trying to remember who they were.

"Oh, those psychos."

"They're infamous for being bad guys in the lower floors, even though they're just a small guild with only two Rankers."

"I heard that Horang is quite the guy."

"He's currently on this floor, sir."

"Oh really?"

"He was the first one to bring us news that YuWon is on this floor. I believe he'll be a great help."

This was good news.

The Crimson Wolf Guild was a relatively useful guild, and Horang was a player who had started to prove his worth lately, enough that even Olympus offered to recruit him.

"Let's leave that to the Crimson Wolf Guild then. Tell them to make a move before or after the test. As for the test itself..."

"We'll be planting players from our side, but I think it'll be best if you don't have any expectations, sir."

"Go figure."

"Will you personally make a move, sir?"

"There's a chance that the Crimson Wolf Guild might fail, so I'm thinking of bringing along a few guys from the Bureau."

Anyone with the Bureau was going to be at least a Ranker. Theseus alone was worth at least three or four average Rankers, but now there were going to be a few more Rankers added to the mix.

'For certain this time.'

Sipholiose bowed down, "I shall leave this in your care, sir."

"Scram already."

"Yes, sir."

Sipholiose disappeared like melting snow. But Theseus was not surprised as he knew it was just an illusion all along.

Flop—

Theseus dug himself deep into his sofa.

He was given such a headache-inducing problem to take care of.

“Kim YuWon...”

He had heard a lot about him. From how he was the strongest player ever to how he has been nothing but a sore spot for Olympus recently.

There was no mistake that he would become even more of a headache in the future. He was a pest they had to crush before he got a chance to grow bigger.

But at least for now, or even quite a bit into the future, there was no way he could actually rival Olympus, so Theseus didn't really care about YuWon that much.

There was only one thing he really cared about.

“So he disappeared with the Giants, huh.”

The thing that his father, Poseidon, was desperately searching for. The 「Stone of the Sea.」

* * *

* * *

The test of the 20th Floor was held on a tiny island.

The island named Triton was about 10km wide, and it was covered in seagrass.

Atop the island, various sea monsters resided.

“This place always gives me the heebie-jeebies,” Buar commented.

“Yeah, you almost died to a chimera back then,” Nwiar responded.

“I never saw something that creepy before.”

“This place is really similar to the Tutorial island. I wonder if maybe they modeled it after this place?”

Buar and Nwiar chatted as they arrived on Triton.

As ordered by Urpha, the two acted as a guide for YuWon. Their job was to show YuWon to the test site and shield YuWon from anyone who might try and pick a fight with him.

“The Elder's worried about nothing. Like, what could possibly be a threat to this guy?” Buar said in disbelief.

The 20th Floor's test was much harder in comparison to previous floors, but it was a test that Buar and Nwiar had managed to pass. He saw no reason why YuWon wouldn't pass it.

“Maybe it's not a normal test,” Nwiar hypothesized.

“Maybe.”

“Rankers from our side are keeping an eye on this test, but only a few have managed to come so that it doesn’t break out into a war.”

“So it really is a big deal,” Buar said while turning his head back to YuWon.

YuWon hadn’t said a word since they arrived on Triton. He wasn’t much of a chatter, but it was also strange for him to be completely silent.

Buar tried to demand, “Hey, tell us if you know something—”

But Nwiar cut him off short by pulling on his arm, “Big brother.”

YuWon didn’t say anything even though he should have heard Buar. He looked incredibly focused on something.

[The test will commence in 10 minutes.]

The test start message popped up.

The lower part of Triton was the entrance to the testing site, and Buar and Nwiar were not allowed to walk up higher than this.

“I’ll be back,” YuWon told them.

“Ah, okay,” Buar said while waving his hand, “See ya later.”

“And don’t worry about things over here too much,” Nwiar told YuWon.

Their faces were full of confidence.

They were the most skilled among the young Giants. They weren’t the children of the Giant Gods just for show. As long as they weren’t up against Rankers, there was no need to worry about them.

Step, step—

YuWon started to climb up the island, and Buar and Nwiar watched him walk away into the distance.

When YuWon was no longer visible, Buar said out loud, “Why don’t you guys come out?”

“Please stop hiding like rats and let me see your faces.”

Buar and Nwiar looked around and spotted the people hiding in the seagrass.

One by one, they revealed themselves. There were quite a few of them.

‘The Elder was right,’ Buar thought, thinking back to how Urpha told them that Olympus would be aiming for YuWon.

“Would you look at this,” one of the guys that was hiding said to the siblings.

“Look at them standing proud and mighty.”

“Did they just call us rats?”

There were about forty people, and mixed among them were familiar faces.

“It’s been a while,” Buar said to Horang, the red-haired fellow.

“You’re acting very different from the last time we met. What happened to the guy that was cowering in fear?”

“Things have changed,” Buar said, smashing his two fists together.

A hard sound rang throughout the air, as if he just hit two pieces of metal together.

“This time, I plan on fighting,” Buar declared.

Until now, Buar had lived by keeping himself out of fights because he didn’t want to ruin the poor reputation of the Giants even more.

That was also the will of Urpha, the Grand Elder of the Giants.

However...

Smirk—

That was the best news Buar had ever received in his life.

“You sound like you think you can win as long as you get to fight,” Horang spoke.

“You heard me right.”

Stomp—

A loud step rumbled the ground.

Horang and his gang looked to the side and spotted three Giants approaching them.

“Are you the one that’s been bullying our friend?” Kwant said, walking up with two other Giants.

A total of five Giants, including Buar and Nwiar, had gathered together. They were greatly outnumbered, but their presence rivaled the 40 players.

“Well, ain’t this a big haul.” Horang smiled at the arrival of three more Giants.

Because Olympus was greatly interested in the capture of Giants, to Horang, the five in front of him seemed like some big catch.

“Keep at least one or two of them alive. We might be able to use them as hostages later,” Horang ordered his men.

There were many ways to use the Giants, but the primary objective of this mission was eliminating Kim YuWon. Since Horang had confirmed that he and the Giants were together, the Giants could serve as potential hostages against them.

“Group 2,” Horang said.

“Yes, sir!”

“Follow YuWon up. Take him out before he reaches the test site.”

“Yes, si—”

Whoosh—

Grip—!

“Kgh!”

In a flash, Buar had grabbed one of them by the neck. He was now standing in front of the hill that YuWon had climbed.

“Where do you guys think you’re going?” Buar asked.

Squeeze—

“K-Kgh...”

Buar smiled while crushing the breath out of the man in his grasp and lifting him up. “You guys need to play with me.”

* * *

Slam—!

A loud noise occurred at the base of the island.

It was the sound of something heavy falling.

“What’s going on? Is there a fight somewhere?”

“I think it’s coming from down there.”

“Outside the test site?”

“Just leave it. It’s better for us if other competitors fight amongst themselves.”

“I guess.”

Fights between players were nothing special. And once you reached around the 20th Floor, fights on a big scale were pretty common occurrences, especially right before a test.

The participants of the test ignored the fight below, not really caring about it.

‘They’re being loud,’ Theseus thought, his face twitching ever so slightly.

He had specifically ordered them to take care of it quietly.

‘Luckily, none of them seem to care.’

It was now time to start the test.

Seeing as how YuWon was not here yet, it meant that the Crimson Wolf Guild had successfully managed to hold back Kim YuWon.

They had successfully achieved their first objective.

‘At least they’re somewhat useful.’

Theseus didn’t think that the Crimson Wolf Guild was capable of taking out YuWon. It would have been great if they could, but it was hard to expect them to win against someone who had managed to win against a Ranker on the 11th Floor.

Their job was merely to buy time. If they could just stop YuWon from participating in this test, they would have served their purpose.

‘Turn the Lackeys’ focus towards the test site and take out YuWon.’

Theseus checked the time with his player kit.

There were less than three minutes left until midnight, the start time for the test.

Tik-tok—

And so, it was almost time for the test to start.

That was when...

[We’re sorry, sir.]

A message came to Theseus’s player kit.

It was from Horang, an executive of the Crimson Wolf Guild that should have been fighting below.

[Yuwon managed to escape from us.]

‘They let him escape...?’

Theseus quickly looked through the faces of the participants.

He tried to find YuWon’s face among the hundred or so of them. It was a large number, but not too large for him to quickly look through them. But...

‘He’s not here.’

Yuwon, who should have arrived, was nowhere to be seen.

‘Where did he go?’

Chapter 97

Shwaaa—

Small waves crashed into the cliff, scattering into countless water drops.

Yuwon was sitting atop the cliff at the edge of the island, looking down.

‘It’s almost time.’

Yuwon got up after checking the time.

It wasn’t the official starting location of the test, but it didn’t matter since YuWon was still technically within the range of the test site.

He wouldn't be able to listen to the explanation of the test, but it was fine since he remembered the contents of the 20th Floor's test.

[Commencing the 20th Floor's test.]

[There are various sea monsters living on the small island of Triton.]

[For the next 12 hours, kill the monsters and obtain 'Hearts of the Sea.']

[Depending on the number of 'Hearts of the Sea' you collect, you will be awarded additional contribution points.]

The basic premise of the 20th Floor's test was similar to the 11th Floor's test, just that instead of flags, you had to get 「Hearts of the Sea.」

The major differences were that the stage was an island, the difficulty of the monsters was greater, and you were evaluated as an individual.

But with those small differences, the test was like something entirely different.

The 20th Floor was one of the major crossroads for players.

‘This is where tests start becoming team-oriented,’ YuWon thought.

The monsters on the island were far too strong for players on the 20th Floors to kill alone. You needed at least a group of four or five people to defeat a single one, which meant that players had to team up, whether they liked it or not.

In addition, unlike the 11th Floor's test, there was no restriction on how many people could pass. On the 20th Floor's test, there was no reason for people to divide into opposing factions.

And thus players, realizing that it was more convenient to be a part of a group, started forming proper teams.

That was why the 20th Floor was known as a crossroad for players.

The team formation was also why players gathered up at the same location for the beginning of the test.

However...

“I feel a bit bad for them,” YuWon said.

He had no intention of just peacefully participating in the test.

He slowly tilted his body downwards.

Crash—

Turbulent waves were colliding against the cliff.

Yuwon closed his eyes as his body plunged into the water and slowly sank.

‘Because everyone except me is going to fail.’

* * *

“You over there!”

“Fall back! Send in the next group!”

“Last just a little bit longer!”

“No, we’re ready! You guys, fall back!”

The hunting had started all across the island. Players were grouped up into teams of eight to fifteen people.

Theseus watched them hunt Sea Serpents through the screen on his player kit.

“What about Kim YuWon? Have you found him yet?” Theseus asked.

“We’re still searching for him.”

“So that’s a no.”

“... I’m sorry, sir.”

“If you have time to be sorry, you have time to search. Assign more men to the task.”

“Yes, sir.”

The test assistants moved according to Theseus’s orders.

Even the mighty Olympus didn’t have the authority to let random Rankers come in and out of the testing site. Fortunately for Theseus, among the Rankers he managed, there were quite a few people with search skills.

There was one thing that bothered him.

‘How are they unable to find one person on this tiny island?’ Theseus wondered.

It had been hours since the start of the test, yet they still hadn’t found YuWon.

There was nothing he could do during the test, but it still bothered him that his plans were crumbling to pieces.

“Did he run away?”

Theseus couldn’t rule that possibility out.

YuWon should have been aware that he was an enemy of Olympus. It wouldn’t have been the strangest thing if he’d decided to bolt after he was threatened by the Crimson Wolf Guild before the test event started.

‘But is he the type to do that?’

There wasn’t much Theseus knew about YuWon, but there were a few things that made him hesitant to think that YuWon might have run away.

‘He joined hands with the Giants.’

He had heard from the Crimson Wolf Guild that YuWon and the Giants met up, which allowed Olympus to prepare a trap, knowing ahead of time that YuWon was planning on participating in this test.

But Theseus was greatly puzzled. Things didn't add up, even if he did help a few Giant kids.

‘Why? No, more like how?’

Giants had a deep-seated hatred against humans thanks to what humans did during the Gigantomachy. Due to the war, more than half of the Giants were killed, making them still hostile to humans after all this time. But, worried about a second Gigantomachy breaking out, Giants typically kept that hatred to themselves...

So it was definitely strange that YuWon had managed to join forces with the Giants because the relationship between humans and Giants should have been irreparable after the Gigantomachy.

‘Could it be?’

A thought came to him.

Poseidon had a great obsession for the Stone of the Sea. It was to a point that he was willing to go against the orders from Zeus, the King of Olympus.

Being an illegitimate son, that was an offer Theseus could not resist.

Poseidon was one of the “Big Three” gods of Olympus, and being acknowledged as his son meant that he would become the official successor of the Sea God.

‘There’s no way Father would have false information. I’m certain that the Giants do have the Stone.’

That was why Theseus cared more about capturing the Giants alive than about Yuwon. He honestly didn't care about YuWon as long as he could find the 「Stone of the Sea.」

Or at least that's what he had originally thought...

A thought crept up on Theseus. ‘Is Kim YuWon related somehow?’

A human had managed to move with Giants, and Giants had started to come out of the forest.

The picture he had first had in mind was wiped away, and a new picture started to come into place. But as of yet, he couldn't see the full picture.

That was when...

Rumble, rumble—

The ground below him started to shake, as if an earthquake was happening.

In that moment, Theseus recollected countless pieces of information.

“... Was that what it was?” Theseus said while smirking.

It was an enigma as to why after so much searching, they couldn’t find the stone.

He wondered where it could be and if the Giants even really possessed the Stone. And if the Giants did have the Stone, why didn’t they use it during the Gigantomachy?

The answer to all of it lied here.

Beep—

Theseus pulled out his player kit and made a call.

As an old habit, he politely put his hands together as he waited for the call to go through.

After a moment, Theseus bowed in the direction of the player kit.

He spoke, “Greetings. I know it’s been a while, but...”

Vwoom—

A screen popped up.

Theseus’s voice trembled as it was a face he hadn’t seen in a long time.

“I think I’ve finally found it,” Theseus said while raising his head, “Father.”

* * *

* * *

The 20th Floor test was progressing smoothly.

Like every test before, players diligently hunted the sea monsters, collecting 「Hearts of the Sea.」 Almost half the players had managed to obtain a 「Heart of the Sea」 for themselves.

Thud—

Another Sea Serpent fell.

One of the teammates who was rummaging through the corpse of the Sea Serpent shouted, “I found it!”

He raised a clear blue crystal up in the air. It was a 「Heart of the Sea,」 which was required to pass the test.

“That’s one more for the books.”

“This is pretty easy.”

“How many is that?”

“15.”

“That’s all we need. What do we do now?”

Their team had 15 people, and they had managed to get a 「Heart of the Sea」 for each person.

Akail, the leader of the team, checked the remaining time.

[06 : 18 : 21]

There was still more than half the amount of time left. At this rate, it might even be possible to get an extra heart for each person.

‘Not bad,’ Akail thought to himself.

They were teammates that he had been working with since the 10th Floor. Their synergy was good, and each person had solid skills. But that wasn’t really all that much of a surprise since they were all players being sponsored by Olympus.

‘Passing the test is now confirmed, so...’

Akail looked around.

Vwoom—

From the beginning of the test, he had placed a floating ‘eye’ above the island, looking with his search skill for a single person—Kim YuWon.

‘Where did he go?’ he wondered.

Olympus had given a direct order to find and take out YuWon.

This was, of course, an impossible task.

They might have been players that were fairly well-known on the 20th Floor, but it was ridiculous to ask them to try and defeat YuWon with just a team of 15 people.

‘It’ll be better for us if he doesn’t appear.’

They’d still be scolded afterwards, but as long as they made an attempt to find YuWon, it was better for them if YuWon didn’t appear.

Taking a breather after defeating a Sea Serpent, the teammates started chatting, feeling bored.

Akail got up from his spot while watching them.

“Did you guys all get enough rest?” he asked his team.

“Yes!”

“We’re all rested and ready!”

“Should we get going?”

With no one injured and their passing being basically confirmed, they were all feeling strongly motivated.

Akail nodded his head, and his teammates started getting up.

“We’ll now split up into two groups, and—”

That was when...

Boom—!

Shwaaaaa—

... Water burst up from below the cliffs.

The team responded nimbly.

“Something’s coming!”

“Get ready!”

“What is it now?”

“Another Sea Serpent?”

“No, it’s too small for that!”

The ‘something’ that shot up with the seawater was too small to be any monster that appeared on the island. Even the smallest monsters were at least three to four meters in size, and Sea Serpents were dozens of meters long.

It looked like it might have been a man at best.

“Wait... It’s a person!”

The person landed safely on the ground.

The man had wet black hair that looked similar to seaweed, and he wore red clothes.

‘Who is this guy?’ Akail wondered.

It was hard to recognize the man because he looked like a wet dog with his wet hair partially obscuring his face.

‘He looks like a player and not a monster. So why did he come up from the sea...?’ Akail wondered.

Then it hit him.

It was odd. The water under the island was a danger zone crawling with monsters like the Sea Serpents which took his team of 15 people to take down. And because it was underwater, it was extra difficult for players to hunt there.

So naturally, Akail’s mind went to a single person.

“Could it be...?” Akail blurted.

The face hidden by the hair started to slowly reveal itself.

The man looked a bit different due to his hair being wet, but the face was the same.

“Kim YuWon?” Akail said in disbelief.

“Is that really YuWon?”

“Why did he pop out from the sea...?”

Akail’s teammates were all stunned by YuWon’s sudden appearance.

YuWon said, “Are you guys from Olympus?”

Akail shivered as a chill went down his spine. How did YuWon know their affiliation?

YuWon was right, but neither Akail nor his teammates could say yes. They instead all remained silent, worried that the moment they said yes, they might all lose their heads.

The Olympian players were all frozen stiff.

YuWon turned around and spoke with his back to the players, “I don’t want to fight you guys, so you don’t have to be so scared.”

“...?” Akail was confused.

He wondered if YuWon was going to just let them go.

He had heard that YuWon and Olympus were not on good terms. But seeing as how YuWon was facing away from them, he must really have no intention of fighting them.

He was a bit relieved that YuWon was going to let them go, but that wasn’t all good news for Akail.

‘If we run from here...’ Akail weighed his options, ‘we’ll probably be punished by Theseus.’

There was also a chance that they might lose all support from Olympus.

YuWon interrupted his thinking, saying, “Because even if you don’t want to fight, you’ll have to fight soon.”

“What?” Akail exclaimed.

“What do you mean by tha—?” one of his teammates tried to ask before being interrupted by the ground trembling.

Akail sensed that something was off.

That was when...

Shwaaaaa—

Something burst up from the sea near the island.

It was a creature he was familiar with.

‘A Sea Serpent?’ Akail scrutinized.

It was a monster that lived in the sea with a body length of over ten meters and the most common monster one could encounter on the 20th Floor.

But then...

“How many...” Akail slowly spoke.

Whoosh, whoosh—

His voice trembled seeing what was unfolding in front of his very eyes, "... Are there?"

Chapter 98

Akail started to count the number of Sea Serpents that appeared in front of him.

Ten, eleven, twelve...

After twenty, he stopped counting, seeing no point because there were at least a couple hundred in front of him.

'No, there might be even more,' Akail thought.

And there weren't just Sea Serpents. There were also Sea Grizzlies, Ichthyosaurs, and other monsters headed towards the island.

How many was that? Hundreds? Thousands? Tens of thousands?

'Kim YuWon is no longer the problem,' Akail thought.

This test was doomed.

Even YuWon wouldn't be able to handle all these monsters. It shouldn't even be possible for a Ranker. It may have been possible for a High Ranker, but for now, running was the best option.

"E-Everyone, run away from the island!" Akail ordered.

If you left the testing site before the time limit, you were automatically disqualified from the test, but that was the least of their problems right now. Surviving was the utmost priority, and other players on the island agreed.

"Get off the island!"

"Where's the examiner?"

"Shouldn't he appear at moments like this?!"

"There's something wrong with this test!"

The test was broken, and the participants no longer saw a meaning in taking it.

Players on the island started running for their lives while looking for the examiner. They thought that the Rankers in charge of overseeing the test might have been able to protect them somehow. However...

"No," YuWon said in a bold tone, "There's nothing wrong here."

Akail, after making sure his teammates had gotten out first, was also about to take his leave when he heard YuWon.

"... What?" Akail said in confusion.

"Things are just finally going the way it was meant to be," YuWon continued.

Rumble, rumble—

The whole island shook again.

YuWon looked down at the island, continuing his monologue, “Going back to its original form.”

Akail didn’t know what YuWon was saying, but he could instinctively feel that YuWon was at the center of this commotion.

And after hearing YuWon, Akail noticed the system’s message.

[The test is being reorganized.]

Reorganized?

Akail had never heard of such a thing before.

‘It’s not that the test is broken...’ Akail realized.

Instead, the test itself was changing, which was why the test examiner wasn’t interfering.

Unless there was a special error or there was interference by someone who was not a player in the test, a test examiner would not butt in.

‘What about this...?’ Akail wondered while pulling out the blue gem in his pocket.

The gem that glowed blue was the token necessary to pass this test, but there was a chance that if the test changed, the gem would be no better than just a pretty rock.

‘No, that’s not what’s important right now,’ Akail changed his line of thought.

Thinking could come later. What mattered right now was surviving.

Akail turned around and quickly got out of there.

YuWon mumbled while looking at Akail run down to the bottom of the island, “There’s no need to do that though.”

The test had been completely flipped, meaning he’d completed step one.

“Now then...” YuWon said.

Vzzzzt—

A black light started flowing out of 「Kyneē.」

“Now the problem is how long I can last against these guys.”

* * *

Translator – Yu x Yu

Proofreader – BringTheRayn

* * *

“Ow, ow, ow, ow...” Kwant winced while having medicine applied to his shoulder.

Annoyed by Kwant’s reaction, Buar stopped rubbing the ointment and smacked Kwant’s arm instead.

“Then why did you come here? Your arm’s not even fully healed!” Buar berated Kwant.

“That’s rich coming from a guy that would have died if not for us,” Kwant retorted.

Buar defended himself, “We would have won even without you guys.”

“Big brother,” Nwiar said while shaking her head, having overheard their conversation. “That’s a lie.”

“...” Buar, who was trying to be prideful, looked the other way in silence.

They were surrounded by corpses of players from the Crimson Wolf Guild.

Horang, who was leading them, had run away, and Vulkan and Kwant ended up wounded.

“I don’t know what his name is, but that red-haired guy was pretty strong.”

“If Nwiar hadn’t been the one going up against him, it would have been bad.”

“It was hard for me as well. I’m just glad that you guys took care of the other enemies quickly and came to support me. I wouldn’t have lasted much longer by myself.”

Within the Crimson Wolf Guild, Horang’s skills were outstanding. If the Crimson Wolf Guild had brought just a few more players and if Horang was just slightly more skilled, the Giants might have been the ones who lost.

Rumble, rumble—

The island started shaking.

All the Giants were players that had previously passed the 20th Floor’s test, and none of them recalled something like this happening.

“This test is strange...” Nwiar said.

The other Giants nodded in agreement. Something was definitely off.

To begin with, it was abnormal for a guild to send people to hunt a single player.

Urpha must have anticipated this, having sent them to help Yuwon.

And now, while YuWon was taking the test, the island had started to change.

“Could it be...?” Nwiar said while watching the thousands of Sea Serpents rear their heads out of the water. “He might have actually found it.”

The sea monsters all roared in unison. But the roars didn’t sound like they were filled with rage or hunger. Instead, it sounded as if they were longing for something and cheering something on.

“That’s right.” a voice came from behind the group.

Step—

Nwiar turned her head after hearing the familiar voice.

Horang, who had run away after losing in the fight, had returned.

“He must have actually found it,” he said.

His face was filled with lustful greed, and he looked much more confident.

“He who holds the Stone of the Sea will gain the power of a god.” Horang continued.

Behind Horang, dozens of players gathered around him.

“Olympus is searching for the Stone of the Sea. We have nothing to be afraid of here,” Horang said.

“So you’re doing all this just to be Olympus’s dog?”

“So what if I am?”

“There is a test currently going on. Nothing good will come to you by creating too big of a commotion.”

“I can worry about that later.”

Seeing an opportunity, Horang was now hyper-fixated on his chance. This also applied to the other players of the Crimson Wolf Guild he brought with him.

Nwiar stood in the front and asked, “Did you come back so you can finally die?”

Horang had already had a bout with her, and he realized that five Giants were hard to handle even with the larger number of players he had on his side.

But things were different this time.

“Sorry, but I’m not your opponent this time,” Horang said while taking a step back.

He then bowed to the man standing next to him, “Please, sir.”

A man hiding half of his face with a mask stepped in front. He was emitting such an ominous presence, Nwiar could instinctively feel that this man was dangerous.

“They even brought a Ranker?” Nwiar wondered.

His presence was not that of an ordinary player. Not to mention, Horang, a pretty highly skilled player, was showing this man respect.

“That motherfucker was right,” Kwant laughed while holding onto his injured arm.

“This fight is going to be a big one.”

Thud—

One side of the island shook. It was different from the earlier shaking.

There was a sound of something heavy falling.

Thud, thud, thud—

There was a succession of the same noise.

Horang and the other players from his guild froze while looking around.

“G-Giants?”

“How are they so big...?”

“Is that a... Ranker?”

Giants towering over four meters tall stood with a glare.

Giant Rankers had arrived at the island.

“We came as ordered by the Elder.”

Thud—

A Ranker of the Giants and the 21st son of Surtr, Suhtahr led the Giants, “We will now commence with the support of player Kim YuWon.”

* * *

‘So it’s begun,’ YuWon thought while watching the fight break out at the bottom of the island using his [Cinder Eyes.]

He was quite far away, but because the Giants were so big, it wasn’t hard to see what was going on.

‘Seeing how Suhtahr is here, they must be betting on this big time.’

Urpha was the only one who knew where the 「Stone of the Sea」 was hidden.

He was also the one who had experienced Poseidon’s strength firsthand more than anyone else during the Gigantomachy, which is why he had no intention of handing over the 「Stone of the Sea」 to Olympus.

‘Olympus should have noticed by now.’

Olympus had been in search of the 「Stone of the Sea」 for a really long time.

Zeus had ordered them to avoid confrontation with the Giants, but Poseidon had continued to exert his influence on the 20th Floor in search of the Stone.

That was how they ended up figuring out that the Stone was hidden on the tiny island of Triton, but the reason why they hadn’t managed to get their hands on it yet was because the island was the stage for the Administrator’s test.

‘There’s no way Olympus would miss that the test changed.’

YuWon guessed that Theseus was currently revving up.

From a trap set to catch a single player, they were about to capture the treasure they were after for so long. And with the Giants here, they should have been fairly certain of what was going on.

“They’re really good at catching wind of things.”

Hissss—!

YuWon asked the Sea Serpents that were right in front of him, “Don’t you agree?”

Gnaw—

A Sea Serpent opened its mouth. The fishy scent of the sea reeked from its mouth.

YuWon swung his sword in response.

Slice—

The Sea Serpent's head was cut off.

Splurt—!

From its neck, blood gushed out.

YuWon mumbled while wiping the blood off his sword, "I don't know why I asked when you can't answer."

Sea Serpents and countless other sea monsters climbed onto the island. A few of them rushed towards YuWon, while most didn't.

Grrrr—

Hiss—

Most of the monsters wandered the island, sniffing and looking around.

They were looking for something.

Whoosh—

Slash—

YuWon cut down the monsters flooding in. He cut them down one after another, but the influx of monsters persisted.

'When will they make their move?'

YuWon couldn't leave the island. The moment he left, there would no longer be any more players on the test site, and the test would automatically be considered 'invalid.' The moment that happened, this would no longer be his stage.

So he continued to endure it, and a few minutes passed like that.

Twitch—

YuWon felt a bit of movement from the ground.

It had been moving for a bit now, but it seemed that it was taking a while for it to really wake up from its 'slumber.'

"This sleepyhead..." YuWon said with a smile on his face.

It was finally the moment he was waiting for.

The monsters that were going on a rampage stopped, all looked in the same direction, and howled as if they were in a trance.

Rumble, rumble—

The tip of the island started to move.

YuWon saw the 'head' that revealed itself.

Rumble, rumble—

Crack, crack—

The ground shook and split, revealing a hard, black shell underneath.

The head opened its mouth which had been shut for a long time.

“Awoooo—!”

[The Sea Turtle has appeared.]

[The body of the Sea Turtle has been designated as the test site.]

[Defeat the Sea Turtle and obtain the Stone of the Sea.]

Chapter 99

“In order to wake up the Sea Turtle, you have to aim for its belly instead of its back,” Urpha explained to Yuwon how to obtain the 「Divine Sea Crystal」 “On its back... So on top of the island, there’s not much you can do. The shell of a Sea Turtle is so hard, even most High Rankers would have a hard time breaking it.”

“So in order to aim for its stomach, I have to jump into the sea,” YuWon noted.

“That’s right, which is a suicidal act.”

The sea of the 20th Floor was the biggest dungeon in the Tower. Countless monsters lived in its waters. The ‘sea’ of this world had more monsters than fish.

Yet here he was telling a player, not even a Ranker, to enter those kinds of waters.

“Think you can do it?” Urpha asked.

“Yes, I can,” YuWon answered without even a hint of hesitation.

Urpha smiled after hearing that, his faith in YuWon boosted by his brazen confidence.

Urpha continued to explain, “The stomach of the Sea Turtle has an emblem that looks like a cross between a sun and a star. That’s the seal of the Sea Turtle and the reason the turtle allows itself to act as an island.”

“So will the test start if I erase the seal?”

“That’s right,” Urpha answered with a serious look on his face, “and the moment the Sea Turtle fully reveals itself, the test’s difficulty will change greatly.”

Yuwon nodded his head. It was an obvious statement.

“Because the reward will be the Stone of the Sea, right?”

“That’s right. The difficulty will be no breeze in the park. It might even ask you to defeat the Sea Turtle.”

As ridiculous as that sounded, it was within the realm of possibilities.

The tests in the Tower were based around 'rewards' that corresponded to 'difficulty.' And the higher the difficulty, the more valuable the rewards were. This meant that if you knew how good a reward was, you could somewhat gauge the difficulty. And the 「Stone of the Sea」 was a precious item indeed.

“And that’s when Olympus will no longer be able to interfere with the test. Because the test will no longer be administered by them but by the Administrator.”

“Won’t they just try and steal it from me after the test?”

“We won’t be standing around just watching that happen,” Urpha said.

That was something Yuwon wanted to hear.

Urpha was clenching his fist. He was called a pacifist by his own people, but it was all for the survival of the Giants. For his people, Urpha was more than capable of fighting through fire if necessary.

“That’s good to hear,” YuWon said, nodding his head, satisfied with the promise of the Giants keeping him safe.

And this was a promise YuWon knew Urpha would keep as he didn’t want the Stone to fall into Poseidon’s hands.

“But...” YuWon still had a lingering question. “How do you know all this?”

Yuwon only knew that Urpha had the key to the test, but he didn’t know how Urpha came to know this information.

“That’s because the one who raised that turtle...” Urpha said while reminiscing on the past, “fed it the stone, and put it to sleep was me.”

* * *

[You’ve been forcibly kicked out the test for not meeting the requirements.]

That was the message everyone on the island got at the same time.

Suhtahr, the Giant Ranker, looked around the suddenly changed scenery.

The island of Triton, the test location, was now far off in the distance.

Except it was no longer an island.

“Woooo~ Awooooo—!!”

The loud cry was powerful enough to blow a hole in the clouds.

It was a creature that was almost 10km long.

The presence the creature exuded even pressured Suhtahr.

Suhtahr only knew of a single turtle this big.

‘A Sea Turtle,’ he thought to himself.

These monsters were one of the greatest beings in this sea, nicknamed “Turtles that failed to become a Black Tortoise*,” and they were also known as the rulers of the 20th Floor.

‘But are they normally this big?’ Suhtahr wondered.

Sea Turtles were normally pretty big, with some being as large as one kilometer long. And their shells were so sturdy, they could even withstand attacks from Rankers.

They were monsters that people thought shouldn’t exist on the 20th Floor because of how strong they were.

Still, this one was much too large in size.

“It’s probably thanks to the Stone of the Sea,” a voice spoke behind Suhtahr.

He turned around to see a blue-haired man descending while riding a bird. He was someone that Suhtahr was very familiar with.

“Long time no see, Suhtahr.”

“I didn’t think we were on such good terms to casually greet each other, Theseus.”

Suhtahr and Theseus had a history of having fought against each other long ago during the Gigantomachy.

“I heard you were living the good life after becoming a test examiner, so why are you here? Shouldn’t you be looking over the testing site?”

“It’s because it’s so noisy out here. What about you guys? Why are the Giants causing a ruckus near the testing site?”

“My guys were having a bit of a hard time against that Ranker, so I decided to give a helping hand. Why? Do you have a problem with that?”

Suhtahr’s response made Theseus look over at the Crimson Wolf Guild.

Standing amidst the Crimson Wolf Guild was their vice-guildmaster, Mukrang. He was someone that had recently joined the Crimson Wolf Guild after becoming a Ranker, and it was his participation that gave Giants justification.

“... There is no problem,” Theseus answered.

The only things the Giants did were in self-defense, so Theseus had no grounds to attack them.

After thinking hard for a minute, all Theseus could say was, “However, I will prohibit causing any more commotion. Don’t forget, we are in the middle of a test, Suhtahr.”

Suhtahr smirked. “I don’t want to hear that from people who will throw that rule out the window at the first sign of inconvenience.”

“I won’t back down if you want a fight, but heed my words...” Theseus spoke.

The waves crashed onto the shore, following Theseus’s will.

“No one is allowed to interfere with the test, no matter who they might be,” Theseus warned.

Multiple Rankers arrived. They were the other examiners that oversaw the test.

Suhtahr looked back and forth between the Giant Rankers and the test examiners.

The test was not over yet, and as a test examiner, Theseus was unlikely to try and pull something while the test was still in progress.

Olympus was already walking on eggshells, so trying something here would be too great of a risk for them.

But that didn’t mean the Giants had free reign to do whatever. Messing with a test examiner mid-test would be a direct challenge of an Administrator’s authority.

‘Neither side can interfere with the test or make the first move right now,’ Suhtahr thought while looking at the Sea Turtle that was wailing from being woken from its slumber. ‘Now all that’s left is for him to safely pass the test.’

* * *

Translator – Yu x Yu

Proofreader – BringTheRayn

* * *

[Defeat the Sea Turtle and obtain the Stone of the Sea.]

YuWoon double-checked the contents of the test.

It was an unbelievable test.

Sea Turtles were monsters that even Rankers had difficulty defeating, and this one was many times bigger than normal Sea Turtles. It was to a point that it had been mistaken for a small island all this time.

‘Did it become this big because of the Divine Sea Crystal? It doesn’t look like a normal mutant,’ YuWon thought.

After making his way inside the Sea Turtle’s mouth, YuWon started slowly finding his way through.

It was impossible to defeat the Sea Turtle the way the message was asking him to.

No matter how much YuWon racked his brain, he couldn’t think of a way. Piercing the shell of a Sea Turtle this big was improbable, and cutting through its tough skin was going to be no small feat either.

That meant there was only one option. To get inside the Sea Turtle and find the
「Divine Sea Crystal.」

The objective of the test was to take down the Sea Turtle and obtain the Stone, but YuWon decided to interpret it a little differently.

‘If I obtain the Divine Sea Crystal, I might be able to defeat the Sea Turtle.’

That made Yuwon think the test wasn’t going to be that hard. The place was large, but all he had to do was find the Sea Crystal, and he had a pretty good treasure map for this treasure hunt.

Unfortunately, there was a problem.

Hiss—!

A small dragon with blue scales charged at YuWon.

It was an Aqua Dragon. Being one of the more powerful creatures in the sea, it was both strong and large in size.

Klang—!

Scrape—

While standing on the Sea Turtle’s tongue, YuWon managed to block the Aqua Dragon’s teeth with his sword.

Turned out, YuWon wasn’t the only one that had managed to find their way inside.

Fwoosh—

The [Holy Fire] enveloped YuWon’s sword.

Yuwon decided to no longer conserve mana since he was now inside the Sea Turtle’s body.

[Under the influence of darkness, your Stamina regeneration speed increases.]

[Stamina Regeneration Speed : +112%]

[Under the influence of darkness, your mana regeneration speed increases.]

[Health Regeneration Speed : +56%]

[Under the influence of darkness, your mana amplification increases.]

[Mana amplification: +56%]

The inside of the Sea Turtle was pitch black, which meant that YuWon’s sword increased his mana regeneration and amplification.

On top of that...

Vzzzzzt—!

Black mana started flowing out of 「Kyneē.」

Whoosh—!

It tore apart the Aqua Dragon that attacked him.

As the Aqua Dragon was reduced to pieces, YuWon jumped up in the air to avoid getting splattered in blood.

He then used [Cinder Eyes] to widen his field of vision in the dark.

‘Quite a few managed to get in.’

There was more than just a single Aqua Dragon. Among the horde of monsters, there were a handful of Aqua Dragons mixed in, but only a few of them were hostile to YuWon. The majority of them were entering the Sea Turtle's mouth and allowing themselves to get swallowed up.

‘Are they willingly becoming food for the Sea Turtle?’

The dominance of the 「Divine Sea Crystal」 was stronger than YuWon expected. It was to the point that sea monsters were offering their own lives.

Then YuWon remembered the legend passed down on the 20th Floor.

“He who finds the Stone of the Sea will become the god of the sea.”

It was no mere legend. Right now, the Sea Turtle was like an actual god of the sea.

“Awoooo—!”

The Sea Turtle's cry echoed inside its mouth.

Yuwon felt like his eardrums were going to burst.

‘It's too loud. I can't stay here anymore.’

Yuwon started walking deeper inside.

The inside of the Sea Turtle felt like the dark ocean floor. It reeked of that salty, fishy smell, and there were myriad sea monsters swimming around as if this was their new home.

But not all the monsters there were new.

‘Some of these guys must have been in here for a while.’

It appeared that the inside of the Sea Turtle had been a dungeon for a long time. There were a lot of monsters that had come in from the outside, but there were also a number of monsters that looked like they'd settled down long ago.

Rush—

Salt water flowed in through the Sea Turtle's mouth, and the floor became wet.

A horde of black creatures stopped Yuwon in his tracks.

“Grrrrr—”

“Growl—”

The monsters inside the Sea Turtle weren't only volunteering to be its food, but they also seemed to serve as its minions.

“Are you telling me I can't go any further?”

Vwoom—

「Kyneē」 let out a soft cry. The 「Divine Dark Crystal」 equipped on it was responding to the 「Divine Sea Crystal」.

Inside the Sea Turtle's large body, Yuwon could approximate the location of the Sea Crystal.

And now, while on his way to the crystal, monsters were blocking his path.

“Do you guys think I’m a virus or something?”

YuWon was the only creature present not under the 「Divine Sea Crystal's」 influence, which was why the Sea Turtle registered YuWon as a virus.

Tmp, tmp—

Despite that, YuWon did not stop his march forward.

There was only one path here, and there was no point running when his destination was already decided.

‘There will be no retreating.’

YuWon didn’t have to conserve his stamina or mana.

Vzzzt—

The glove on his right hand, 「Kyneē,」 glowed black.

‘I’m going to blitz through.’

Boom—!

Chapter 100

Theseus was the test examiner of the 20th Floor, so he had various authorities relevant to the test. He could even interfere with the test to some extent, as long as it didn’t break any rules, and he had the power to observe every minute detail of the test.

Even though right now he had lost the majority of his authority, there was still one thing he knew.

[The body of the Sea Turtle has been designated as the testing site.]

[Defeat the Sea Turtle and obtain the Stone of the Sea.]

The contents of the test.

He might not have been a player directly participating in the test, but as long as he was a test examiner granted authority by the Administrators, he could at least know the contents of the test.

“Do you trust that brat?”

In the stalemate that had gone on for a while, Theseus was the first to speak.

Suhtahr didn’t say a single word. However, Theseus pretty much knew what the Giant was thinking without having to hear a word from him.

“You’re wishing for that guy to pass the test and return with the Stone. Am I wrong?”

“Shut up.”

“This was pretty much a gamble, so what will you do if it fails?”

The Giants who had stayed silent for a while began to move.

Since Olympus knew about this, the era would change in one way or another. There was even a chance the second Gigantomachy would happen sooner.

Of course, the Giants knew this as well.

“...He'll succeed.”

Suhtahr raised his head to look at the stretching Sea Turtle.

“Because the Elder decided it will be so.”

The unconditional faith of Urpha.

Suhtahr was standing here on that faith alone.

The other Giants were the same. The ten Giant Rankers who had followed Suhtahr were all thinking the same thing.

Waiting for the test to finish, Theseus smiled.

‘You dumb Giants.’

He had heard that YuWon had won against a Ranker before. However, even someone like YuWon wouldn't ever be able to pass this test. There was no way he could defeat the tens of thousands of monsters inside the Sea Turtle and the Sea Turtle itself.

‘He'll definitely fail the test.’

Theseus trusted that without a doubt.

Since the test was already out of his grasp, he could only wait here for it to end.

‘When that happens...’

Theseus slowly but tightly grasped the trident in his hand.

‘I'll wipe out the Giants, and acquire the Stone of the Sea.’

* * *

Translator – Yu x Yu, Jreaming

Proofreader – BringTheRayn

* * *

Crash—!

Thump—!

The bodies of the Sea Snakes were torn to pieces and flung in all directions.

After clearing the path in an instant, YuWon increased his speed. He didn't have enough energy to spare to kill all the monsters that were chasing him.

“Kyao—!”

The cries of the Aqua Dragon were heard from directly behind him.

The salty smell of the sea became more intense.

YuWon put strength into the hand equipped with 「Kyneē.」

[Activating Stealth.]

Shwoo—

YuWon's image disappeared from his position instantly. It was 「Kyneē's」 ability to erase his sounds and presence.

Even though the difference in 「Kyneē's」 creation method and YuWon's power didn't allow him to use [Perfect Stealth] like Hades, he could at least conceal his body for a moment.

“Kyargh—?”

The Aqua Dragon that had charged at YuWon hesitated momentarily.

It had definitely aimed to grab YuWon and eat him in an instant, but its target had suddenly disappeared.

“Kngh—”

The Aqua Dragon sniffed. Its sense of smell had been trained in the salty and fishy waters of the sea, and as it focused on the noise, it could quickly find YuWon's position.

However...

Crack—!

That short moment where the Aqua Dragon hesitated in confusion was enough for its life to be taken.

YuWon's knee axed the Aqua Dragon's neck. The dragon limply fell on the ground with its broken neck, and YuWon stepped on its corpse to jump upward.

Woosh—

“Gyaaaaaah—!”

An uncountable number of Sea Snakes slithered.

YuWon looked at the Sea Snakes under him and pulled mana into his sword.

Fwoooosh—

[Holy Fire x Kyneē]

Bzzzzt—!

「Kyneē」 exploded with the [Holy Fire] and burnt the bodies of the gaping-mouthed Sea Snakes that were below him into crisp.

[Heaven-Slaying Star's completion rate has increased by 0.001%.]

[Heaven-Slaying Star's completion rate did not increase.]

[Heaven-Slaying Star's completion rate has increased by...]

The completion rate of the [Heaven-Slaying Star] was soon reaching completion, but it did not increase as much as before.

It was a shame.

[Completion Rate: 99.041%.]

YuWon thought that if he got lucky, he might be able to see the completed form of [Heaven-Slaying Star] through this test...

‘But that’ll probably be a bit hard.’

Woop—

YuWon stepped on thin air again. Using the effects of 「Hermes's Treads,」 he easily jumped over one Sea Snake and swung his sword at the next.

Shick—

‘I’ll ignore the ones I can.’

There wasn't a need to hunt every single one of them because the goal of the test wasn't hunting to begin with.

Wooshh—

YuWon focused on the energy flowing out of 「Kyneē.」 The sword resonated with the 「Divine Sea Crystal」 that was located pretty far away. It was so faint that you would miss it if you lost focus, but it wasn't hard to gauge the approximate direction.

Badump—

The beating of a heart could be felt through 「Kyneē.」

‘Is it stuck inside the mana heart?’

Rather than a normal heart, Sea Turtles, like Dragons, used a ‘mana heart’ to move. Using its mana heart, mana is distributed all over its body, and that would circulate its blood. For them, their mana heart wasn't much different from a human heart. It was smooth and sturdy like a rock, but like a human heart, it was the core of the Sea Turtle.

Based on the size of the Sea Turtle, its mana heart would be enormous as well. YuWon guessed the mana heart was probably bigger than a house.

“Kyaaaagh—!”

Wooo, waaah—

The path that was created by the [Holy Fire] had closed quite rapidly.

The number of monsters that resided in the ocean was close to infinity, and the inside of this Sea Turtle was no different from a small ocean.

He needed to open the closed path again. There was no other way than to break through.

Shink, fwooosh—

Bzzzzt—!

YuWon didn't spare any mana as he swung his sword.

The inside of the Sea Turtle that was infested from floor to ceiling with monsters was pitch black, which clouded his eyes, and so YuWon could only rely on his other senses.

Shlik—

Fwick—

A squirt of blood stained YuWon's cheek. A small wound had formed. He ended up with a hair-thin slice.

Shwaak—!

Chik—

Soon after, YuWon's sword slashed a monster that had approached him. The monster was cut in two without even being able to scream, and YuWon checked its body with [Cinder Eyes.]

Its body was like a mermaid, but it was a monster with sharp claws like a praying mantis on its hands. It was a Rake Mermaid.

'Their numbers are slowly increasing.'

The deeper he went inside, the more the number of monsters increased.

There were limits to just illuminating his vision with [Cinder Eyes] and trudging forward. If his small wounds kept piling up, he would inevitably collapse.

'I'll change my approach.'

YuWon's eyes dimmed down.

Thanks to his enhanced senses, it wasn't completely dark, but it became as dark as night for him. In the pitch black surroundings, only the cries of monsters could be heard.

In the next moment...

[Sensory Field]

Woosh—!

YuWon felt his surroundings coming into view centered around him.

And just after that, YuWon remembered that Rake Mermaids lived in groups.

Flip—

Shsh, shshshsh—

Many Rake Mermaids lunged at YuWon, and their blades were thrust through his body. But...

Crack—

Only the sound of the mermaids colliding could be heard, but they didn't cut anything.

On the contrary, the ones who were cut were the mermaids.

Shwaa—!

The Rake Mermaids were bisected between their upper and lower bodies. YuWon, who had dodged the Rake Mermaids' attacks and counterattacked, still had his eyes closed.

‘This is much better.’

He had been thinking about this wrong. When the environment became dark, his first thought was to use the [Cinder Eyes,] which he had been using for quite a while after his return because he thought it to be the perfect skill to regain his lost sight. However, in a situation like this, [Sensory Field] was much better than [Cinder Eyes.]

‘While I’m focusing solely on my sight, it’s natural that the [Cinder Eyes] battle prediction would become weaker. In a situation like this, it’s better to give up sight entirely.’

Sight was the sense that humans relied on the most out of the five major senses. However, after a decent increase in Perception and familiarizing oneself with battles, the number of senses that one could use in battle also increased.

[Sensory Field] was such a skill that increased these senses.

In this moment, having closed his eyes, YuWon was able to pour the focus he would’ve had into sight into all his other senses.

Shsh, shshshsh—

Fwooosh, bang—!

Yuwon weaved between the monsters while blasting [Holy Fire.]

As he used multiple skills in succession, his mana was being used up rapidly, but it was all to maintain his speed forward.

“Hah—”

His breathing became rougher. Moving without resting his body had been draining his stamina. His mana was the same.

No matter how much his mana and stamina regeneration had been boosted by ‘night,’ his current self was like an empty jar. And even if a jar was to be constantly filled with water, it wouldn’t be able to keep holding water if it was leaking.

‘How much longer can I fight?’

Even as YuWon advanced again and again, he kept checking his body’s situation.

‘Halfway now.’

It had already been an hour since he’d entered the Sea Turtle’s body.

Even though he had fought all this time while controlling his strength a bit, he had used about half his mana.

But that was still fine...

Badump—

...Because the sound was close.

‘No, it might not be fine.’

As the sound grew closer, the number of monsters also increased a lot.

The number of monsters he could sense reminded him of ants. With this many of them, there were probably about the same quantity as all the monsters YuWon had fought on his way here.

‘Were they protecting the mana heart or the Divine Sea Crystal?’

The Sea Turtle probably had a self-defense mechanism of its own.

“Chiek—”

As YuWon arrived where the mana heart was, his feet stopped for the first time in an hour.

The monsters that had charged at him like bulls had all stopped moving. They were moving differently while circling around a central thing.

Their movements weren’t to attack YuWon. They were moving to protect something.

Badump—

And the thing at the center of them was obviously the mana heart of the Sea Turtle.

Shwoo—

Yuwon opened his eyes which had been clenched shut. As he used [Cinder Eyes,] the blurry surroundings became bright.

Badump—

Badump— Badump—

The mana heart beat slowly but powerfully.

A scarlet stone was the Sea Turtle’s mana heart.

Around the mana heart the size of a house, many monsters had already gathered.

“Grrrr—”

“Kyahaa—”

“Skwoooo—”

Thousands of monsters were gathered in one place. It looked like a party. If their sizes were smaller, he would have believed he had found an insect nest.

‘I’ll need to get through that.’

It was certain that the 「Divine Sea Crystal」 was inside that mana heart.

It was truly within his grasp.

Clench—

YuWon grasped his blade and put strength into it. He could no longer spare any strength or mana.

Bzzt, bzzzzzt—

The power pouring out of 「Kyneē」 grew stronger.

“I only did one thing.”

Hephaestus had said that the 「Divine Dark Crystal」 itself was the perfect item.

Because of that, when he was making 「Kyneē」 at YuWon’s request, he only focused on one thing.

“All I did was create a vessel in which you could put all the power that item had.”

The original 「Kyneē」 used by Hades was famous for its [Perfect Stealth.] Because Hades’s personality and fighting style was originally stealthy, he had commissioned it to have a related ability when 「Kyneē」 was crafted.

“If my guess is right, this...”

Vwing—

On the back of 「Kyneē」 on YuWon’s hand, a yellow eye opened.

“...Will become an item that could rival my father’s Lighting Bolt.”

[Summoning ‘Hell.’]