THE EXPERIMENTAL LOG OF THE CRAZY LICH

BOOK 02

Angry Squirrel

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The Experimental Log of the Crazy Lich

(疯巫妖的实验日志)

by

Angry Squirrel

(愤怒的松鼠)

Synopsis

This is a story of a crazy Lich who possesses an internal gaming system, bringing catastrophe to the entire world

“Looking at the daily quests... It is the damned choose one-of-two option again. Destroy a town with a population of 30,000 people of above, reward: 10,000 evil points. Steal lollipop from 3 children, reward: 1 evil point. If neither of the quests are completed, 2 points are deducted.”

“Tsk! You think that I would be so foolish? If I really destroyed a town, a crusade of epic class Paladins would definitely come hunting me down. Then, even if I did earn my points, there wouldn’t be any life left in me to spend them. I guess I better obediently stick to being my lollipop thief.”

I am long sick of being a notorious lich. Who says that a lich cannot be a good person? I will definitely find a way to triumph over this damned system and be an upright and dignified good man.

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Chapter 101: Tribute

AD1897, the summer of the Year of the Griffin, the enthronement ceremony of the Auland Empire's 20th Emperor was just around the corner. At the same time, the news of the invasion of the White Whale Tribe of the Seafolks was accidentally leaked.

The Emperor was enraged. In a single night, he demoted 37 high nobles and stripped the position of over 200 high-ranking military officials in three armies and put them into interrogation. The crosses used to hang those guilty rose from the ground by the river, extending for several miles. This day became known in history as the 'Bloody Night of the White Whales'.

On the same day, the Auland 3rd Fleet which was stationed on the upper river from the capital Kagersi City and the Auland 1st Fleet which was stationed on the lower river arrived in the capital on the same day and began to surround and eliminate the White Whale Tribe.

On the very same day, the Hermit River which was praised as the 'Flowing Chrysoprase' was dyed blood-red. The blast of the cannons and the sound of slaughter shook the heavens. The various districts of the capital became a battlefield.

Pincered by 2 great fleets, they held advantage at the start of the battle. But, when the SemiGod Sea Dragon Hydra and innumerable Seafolks and Sea Monsters joined the battle, the Auland Empire Guardian Hero 'Dragon Hunter' Deimos got killed in battle while the Empire Advisor 'Blood Mage Emperor' Marsolit was heavily wounded. The half of the 2nd Fleet was wiped out while the 1st

Fleet was completely annihilated.

During the war, the Sea Monsters cooperated and exerted their powers together, causing the water level to rise and the Pier District, Bacteria District and a few other districts of Kagersi City were submerged under water. As large amount of Water Elementals came to shore, rainwater continued to pour down as the war gradually stalls into a stalemate.

Two weeks later, ten cities that were close to the sea or by a river got assaulted. Sorolan City and numerous other cities fell in a single day. Of which, the Sorolan City was invaded by the Blood Shark Tribe, which comprise man-eating Fishmen, resulting in the entire city getting purged.

Symbolised by the Blood Night of White Whales, the horns of the eternal Sacred War is blown on once again. Led by the Water Elemental Goddess Aylos and the Malevolent Goddess Queen of Storms, the Seafolks who came to shore became the vanguards of this war and the Chaos Faction rises up once again.

Due to a letter from Princess Reyne, the Auland Empire managed to avoid being cornered into a desperate situation from a sudden invasion. Thankful to the East Mist Communal Country and Princess Reyne, the Emperor declared ‘The East Mist Communal Country will forever be a brother nation to the Auland Empire’, and proposed to Princess Reyne in front of a crowd once again. But, due to the current chaos, Princess Reyne once again rejected the proposal of the Emperor under the pretext of being worried for her country.

But privately, there were already rumors on the streets that Princess Reyne furiously reprimanded Darsos for being ridiculous and threw two red-colored high heels towards him, hitting both the Emperor himself and his Finance Minister Hermit. It is said that Hermit fainted on the spot and the situation turned chaotic.

“Being bugged by such matters when your country has fallen knee deep into such trouble, I have never seen such an idiotic Emperor. I have already said that I am uninterested in men. You want to marry me? Impossible, unless you find an Edwina’s Belt and come to me in a skirt.”

In the eyes of those who are aware, this move of Darsos’s is indeed very crafty. By proclaiming that the East Mist is a ‘brother nation’, they were able to directly take the East Mist Communal Country out of the list of vassal states. As rumors and gossips started to spread, as the shadows of war creep closer, as rows of people are hung on crosses, as a large amount of those opposing Darsos land in jail, his bad reputation is no longer of importance. As long as he is able to lead his people out of this period of turmoil, he would be able to unite the country even more strongly than any of those fleeting titles could.

Although the public evaluation of the Emperor is generally negative, the Princess of the small country who entranced the Emperor to the point he loses his prestige and rationality has become the hottest topic recently. Praises of her beauty and straightforward personality spread far and wide that she became reputed as the ‘The Pure Snow Lotus of the High Mountains’.

It is said that despite looking pure and young, she has a certain

charm that the Emperor is exceptionally attracted to.

At this moment, hearing the rumors that his companions have collected, that flower is on the verge of murdering someone.

“Lotus of the High Mountains? Darsos, you sure know how make people owe you conveniently. Using me to divert the attention of the public? This old man will remember this grudge. Make sure not to display any weakness for me to exploit.”

At this moment, I didn’t have the time to wallow in my resentment. There are many responsibilities here and there that I had to take care of.

After receiving the news, Darsos investigated the authenticity of the news before waiting patiently for an opportunity to make use this topic to ‘explode’ and get rid of those opposing him to solidify his authority. This is still within my expectations.

Afterwards, Darsos, using repaying the favour as an excuse, proclaims the East Mist as a brother nation, pulling the agreement on providing resources and assistance to the surface, thus hastening the progress of the fulfilment of the contract. Very quickly, when he fully fulfils the terms of the agreement, I would have to pass the key on to him. If I don’t speed up the progress, then my efforts would be for naught.

After all, this is the capital of the Auland Empire. Even if they have met with some trouble, no one thinks that the Auland Empire would actually lose.

That dragon may be powerful, but it isn't invincible. As the trusted subordinate of the Malevolent Goddess Queen of Storms, it heading out to the battlefield also signifies the Malevolent Chaos Gods officially stepping into the battlefield. With top tier powers, its ability to pull aggression is also top class. It is very possible that some Dragon-Slaying God Envoy of some true God is already on their way down.

However, the reason why Darsos hastened the fulfilment of the agreement is probably because he still holds some expectations for the things in the secret base. If an Air Fleet were to suddenly charge out from the bottom of the river, it would change the flow of the entire battle. Of course, he has also prepared himself for the scenario that he might walk out empty-handed from the secret base as well.

As for me, if I don't want to end up empty-handed, then I must really quicken my pace.

"Have you found Tracy?"

While reorganising our forces for battle, the disappearance of the Siren caused quite a hassle for us.

"She suddenly returned to the circus with a box in her hands. There is a special seal on top of it. Judging from the mark of a shield and longsword crossing one another, an insignia of a guardian, it is probably the insignia of some royalty."

The insignia of royalty? Most probably, this is the stolen tribute. Harloys and I look at each other with a smile on our face. It seems that we have found out target. Our patient surveillance has finally reaped its rewards and it is time to reel in the hooks of our fishing rods.

“Sidunwar’s Ocean Bottle, a legendary God Equipment of the ancient Sea God. It is said that in ancient times, it could stir endless tsunamis. Even though it has lost a large portion of its powers after the death of the ancient God, if it were to land in the hands of the Queen of Storms and Sidunwar’s wife, the Ancient Water Elemental Goddess, there is a chance it might regain its God Powers.”

After finding out that the stolen tribute was such a treasure, the moment we received intelligence from a Son of Greed that the Siren is looking for the stolen ‘tribute’, we immediately came to a ‘realisation’.

“Regardless of why she revealed the secrets of the Seafolks, as long as Tracy manages to find the God Equipment, we must prevent it from returning to the sea by all means!”

Solo Federation’s tribute (congratulatory gift) was stolen by the Celestial Tower. Given Tracy’s previous relationship with the Celestial Tower, if she had kept a lookout for it, she would definitely know where the lost tribute is. Based on our estimates, now that the members of the Celestial Tower are reduced to fugitives, she is probably the only one who can find the tribute now.

Thus, the moment Tracy returns back to her own tent in the circus, uninvited guests came knocking at her door.

“Open the door! We are here to check the water meter. What? You didn’t install water meter? Then we are here to deliver water to your doorstep! Forget it. You don’t have to open the door. Your family will never need to open the door ever again.”

Alright, when a Legend Paladin raises her sacred sword and charges forth, when a Legend Druid summons storm and lightning onto the entire tent, the tent is instantly reduced to wreckage.

At this moment, astonishment is clearly shown on Tracy’s face. With the barely opened box with the tribute in her hands, she looks at us, who suddenly appeared, in surprise.

“Haha, you didn’t expect this, did you? We have been waiting for a long time now, hand over the God Equipment…”

As I walk out gleefully, I set my gaze towards the box and the next moment, I am dumbfounded.

“What’s this! Where is the God Equipment?”

There is nothing that resembles a bottle in the box. That is a white jade sculpture and the shape resembles a banana or an ivory. It looks like a certain something, really alike… The more I look at it, the more it resembles it…

“This is a man-made dildo. This is a special kind of warm jade that simulates the body temperature of humans. Looking at its color and the handicraft, it is definitely a top quality good, the work of a master! This is the rarest of the rare goods. Definitely a God Equipment!”

Okay, I am regretting my decision in bringing Beifeng along. In an instant, he spoke the truth of the matter that we were trying our best to overlook.

“This is the tribute?”

Having her privacy invaded, Tracy nods her head in a daze.

“It is indeed a tool for concubines...” As the pronunciation for concubines and tribute is identical, it isn’t weird that Greed would make such a mistake.

“Since you all found out, then I will hide it no further. Actually, one of my main goals in staying in the human world is to research adult toys. You all know that we Sirens are mostly females and that we are cold-blooded creatures. We live alone in the sea and it is difficult for us to meet with another of our kind, making the long nights unbearable. Many of our peers have that kind of habit...”

“... Thus, I intend to open the first adult toy shop on the sea. It would probably be welcomed by Sirens, Mermaids, Nagas and other similar kinds of female Seafolks. But, it is a pity that the more deeply I research the intercourse of both genders, the more shallow I realised I was. I felt regretful for my previous

shallowness and made up my mind to spend another century here to research this art. Only when I become a master of this art will I open my mobile shop."

Even though this beautiful lady is speaking completely indecent words, her eyes were filled with passion and her face was filled with the realisation of one seeking the utmost of their path. I instinctively feel that she wasn't lying, that she really intend to devote her entire life into it.

I finally understand why I instinctively felt close and familiar to this beautiful Siren lady. Isn't it obvious that this is one of the specialty of Liu Huang Mountain City – Gentlemen (Perverts)?

"It is a pity. Perhaps due to the difference in our races, but why are humans unable to understand our point of view? Whenever they hear me speak of this, they would look at me with a very strange gaze. That fat Count even pestered me to no end. Hmph, to us, tools are only used to dispel loneliness, it is a non-living thing. It is a completely different concept from a companion who would accompany us in life and in death. Sigh, it is really difficult to find a soulmate."

At this moment, when the Siren laments the world's lack of understanding in her, that man stood out. On his face is realisation similar to that of Tracy's.

"This is incredible! This is touching! Partner (Over here, it refers to one who shares the same goals), I can understand it. The art of the intercourse between two sexes is really too complex. Actually, I am also searching for my own path and is unable to find anyone

who is able to understand me. I can help you! Testing it personally or whatsoever, leave it to me… AH!”

Alright, everyone can’t stand listening to it anymore. Ignoring the Siren whose face lit up after hearing those words, we began on our daily mission –Beating Beifeng up.

Clutching my head, I am really at a loss for words. The Siren in front of me reminds me of those fellows in Liu Huang Mountain City, making me want to stay as far away from her as possible.

“What about the tribute? The bottle of the Sea God? Isn’t it stolen by the Celestial Tower?”

Tracy shakes her head.

“Back then, they worked together with a local Thief Guild. Un, they used the Thief Guild to conceal their own identity, the ones who did the job were still them. After all, how could a small Thief Guild deal with the envoy party for a powerful country. Afterwards, in compensation, the spoils of the battle were all given to the Thief Guild.”

When realisation struck me, a faint ominous omen looms at the corner of my mind. Often, this is a foreboding sign that I have fallen into a pit.

“What is that Thief Guild called?”

“Blood Press Brother Band? Oh, I remember that their insignia was a bloody handprint, it should called the Blood Hand Brother Band.”

Alright, this name sounds very familiar. The memories of the past felt fresh as though like it just happened yesterday. I felt like I was on the verge of crying. It seems that this time I have reaped what I have sowed, I have worked in vain once again.

“I roughly know where the bottle of the Sea God is. Harloys... Return me the milk bottle that I gave you.”

Yes, after arriving at this city, I used the Blood Hand Brother Band as a target practice for my swordsmanship. Back then, I heard that they have stolen some tribute so I thought that their skills should be up to par. However, I simply ended up sweeping through them easily, even their Guild Master was sliced into two with just a single slash. I didn’t manage to gain much from the experience.

After getting rid of their Guild Master, I saw a box in the secret chamber and there was an antique bottle inside that looks like it could fetch quite a sum. However, the cat that I was rearing wanted me to buy her a milk bottle and personally, she also felt that this bottle had an artistic sense to it, so she just took it and used it.

There were totally no response from the magic tattoos inscribed on it. Who would have thought that it would actually be an ex-God Equipment...

“Meow, no way. A God Equipment bottle suits my palate. If you want it, take out something of equivalent value to trade.”

Just when I was about to rationalise with that darned cat and prepare to snatch it if it goes awry, a ‘ding’ sound echoes. I instinctively shivered. This sound never means anything good.

“Darn it, the System is here to pour salt on my wound again?”

【Cough, you got the correct answer, but there isn’t any reward. Congratulations on successfully recruiting another Gentleman into the Gentlemen Alliance that you built, the beautiful Siren Tracy whose goal in life is to open an adult toy shop. When the Gentlemen (Perverts) in your Gentlemen Alliance reaches 10, you will be rewarded with an Epic Title – The King of Gentlemen. Its effects is definitely powerful.】

【Now, you are just lacking one more member. Please work harder. Actually, there is one just right before you. I recommend Ogre Kavan Dixu who likes brawling with himself. Although his Gentleman level is a little weak, the System will give you a hand and reluctantly qualify him as one.】

【The current 8 members in the Gentlemen Alliance includes: the Shota-fetish female Elf Momo, the eccentric Elf Diana with 3 faiths, Casio who is gradually walking down a twisted path in life, Beifeng (He doesn’t need any description, he is a legend by himself, he is the legendary Beifeng), the Prince Clint who will one day blow a hole through the entire continent, the Krose whose gender is Krose, the Princess Reyne who is into her great grandfather and the Paladin Roland who is gradually awakening into a cross-dressing fetish】

“Cross-dressing fetish your head! You are the one with cross-dressing fetish, your whole family have cross-dressing fetish! You are the Gentleman, your whole family are Gentlemen!”

Translator's Notes:

“…This day became known in history as the ‘Bloody Night of the White Whales’.”

“On the very same day, the Hermit River which was praised as the ‘Flowing Chrysoprase’ was dyed blood-red.”

- Chrysoprase is a beautiful green gemstone.

“…he would be able to unite the country even more strongly than any of those fleeting titles could.”

- Emperors normally rule by propaganda. He means that he wouldn’t have to rely on propaganda/image building any more.

“…Darsos, you sure know how make people owe you conveniently.”

The exact phrase means Darsos is doing Roland a convenient favor (building up a good reputation for Reyne).

“…I have already said that I am uninterested in men. You want to marry me? Impossible, unless you find an Edwina’s Belt and come to me in a skirt.”

- Just like many other characters when they are mad (esp Momo and Harloys), he proclaims himself lao niang here, which literally means old woman but in China, where age is traditionally equivalent to your social position, he is establishing that he is kind of senior albeit in a very crude way (This phrase is usually used by gangster etc)

Okay, I know I keep repeating this but bear with it, somehow being unable to bring the gangster-ish tone over gets on my nerves.

Chapter 102: King Of Gentlemen

“This world is still full of love. Don’t always think that there are schemes and trickery behind everything. After all, this isn’t a novel. How can there be so many coincidences and masterminds? Look, didn’t it all end as a big misunderstanding?”

Un, this is my reflection of the Siren incident. Indeed, there is still true love in the world. We must learn to trust others!

“Meow, Roland, no matter how much you try to turn your eyes from reality, what that will come will eventually come. Open your eyes and look.”

The black cat on my shoulder mocks me gleefully.

“Shut up, aren’t I pretending not to see it at all!”

Yes, I am trying to escape from this scary reality. To think that the great Church of the God of Law would actually turn into a hideout for Gentlemen to exchange all kinds of perverted information.

“... Back then, I was still a normal Dracon. I had just emerged from my egg when I saw him. He is my birth mother, his crown was so majestic, his feathers were truly elegant... Only a long time later did I know that my egg went missing and the one who picked up my egg used the livestock they were rearing to incubate my egg.”

So, the only period when you were normal was the few minutes when you just emerged from your egg. How ridiculous can you be! Also, what is up with that birth mother of yours, he is obviously a male, isn't it? Since he has a crown, he is obviously a rooster. From the very start, you got it all wrong. It is said that a hatchling would regard the first being they see as their mother, are you Dracons the same as well? Well, I have never heard of it! You are the only one of your kind! Are you born a pervert?

Let me catch my breath. There is really too many details on him to retort on, there is really no end to it.

TL: Tsukkomi would be more accurate but it isn't really an English word.

"... The Great Hero Odysseus? Indeed, he had a romance with a Siren friend of mine. But, he isn't any kind of great hero. He is obviously a gangster and a playboy. It is said that the Sirens which he had fooled and laid his hands on number over twenty. He is really a bastard... We Sirens are really pitiful, we are born full of emotions but yet condemned to a lonely life. The treasures we pick up from the sea always end up getting scammed away by evil man who pretends to be some hero, such as the Saint Kaesora and Dragon Knight Edwin... Even if by chance, we really manage to meet a good man, he would turn into a sloppy uncle in less than 20 years. Just another nap and he would have turned into an old man and die, leaving us lovelorn for the rest of our life. That's the reason why most of us would find a remote island to reside in. Even so, sometimes when the loneliness gets unbearable, we would still fall for such tricks."

Alright, big sister, I know that it is hard for you to find a soulmate to confide in, so naturally, you would become more

talkative. But, please do not soil the image of those great heroes in my heart. How did those great heroes who left their mark in history become a bunch of playboys? Alright, if we were to look at those stories where Sirens had godly equipment and secrets robbed from them from another perspective, it does seem like they were the ones who bashed into the home of a lonely widower to claim their body and steal their fortune.

"Hmph, that's only because you Sirens are too dumb. Look at us Elves, we won't fall in love with those with short lifespan. Those lifespan often shout their slogan of 'you only live once', proclaiming that they should not restraint themselves and live radiantly and carefree. Isn't that just another way of saying that they would be irresponsible and reckless? Just like you said, even if you meet with someone good, they would die off the next moment. No matter what, it would end in a tragedy... However, the innocent children are an exception. They are so pure and cute. Those gazes of trust and innocence staring at me. I would be able to slowly dye the color I want on this blank white wall without worrying that they would so astray and wait for them to mature to reap my fruits... To us Elves, what does 20 years count as? As long as we are able to savor the delicious fruit in the end, even if it is a tragedy, I will give in to it!"

Hello, is it the police? There is a weird auntie here! Momo, can you stop sneaking peeks at me while saying these words? Can you stop salivating! I really feel that I'm in danger!

"Explosion, is an art form."

"No, explosion is just a means, a method to create a safe haven!"

“Hmph, how shallow! As expected of the short-sighted humans. No wonder your works are filled with the scent of a third-rate craftsman. Even if your bombs are precise and accurate, there isn’t a hint of passion and creativity in it.”

“I have seen the art that you speak of. What does it mean to be unsure of the time and strength your explosion? Do you intend to blow yourself up?”

“... This is an insult to the entire Goblin Engineering and Alchemy society! Do you know how we treat those foolish Dwarves who question the art of the Goblins? We kick their butt and blast them away!”

Alright, Yingou Beyar, I know that you are excited from escaping from the prison cell. But, we didn’t save you so that you can cause destruction. Also, Clint! I know that you are the practical type, but if you don’t keep those bombs away, I will hang you on the ceiling! I mean what I say! You too, Beyar! If you dare to ignite the Alchemy Bomb in your hands, I will dump you into the main cannon of Roland No.88 and blast you back into prison.

The district where the royal family prison is was also affected by the flood. Naturally, the short fellows who almost lost their old lives in their flooded cells won’t calmly wait for their deaths.

Without any hesitation, they brought forward the plan to escape from the cell. A giant robot creating havoc at the prison and prisoners escaping from it is the recent headlines. Now, I can only

hope that the spies of the royal family are spending their efforts on the battlefield and that Darsos does not turn against me during this crucial period. At the very least, before I finish my planning.

"Old fellow, even if you saved me this time, don't expect old Lowens to give up his own hobby. Next time, let's spar in the battlefield once more. Old Lowens will make sure to return this favour back to you. Also, the fallen Gray Elf, you as well. There will be a day which we will cross blows."

"Hah, as expected of a smelly and rough Shield Dwarf. We should have left you there to drown."

"Hmph, we Shield Dwarves aren't landlocked villagers who have never seen water our whole life. When old Lowens was hunting Snake-neck Dragons under the water, you were still feeding on breast milk."

"Oh ho, we don't have to wait for that day to come. We can start right now."

Alright, I know that you Gray Dwarves are mortal enemies with the Shield Dwarves but at the very least, consider the camaraderie that you both have just built up as fellow prison mates. Alright, it looks like beating around the bush doesn't work, so I will say it directly. You short things, put down the stools and cups and fight outside! Otherwise, I will also throw you all into the cannon and blast you all away!

Somehow, I feel really tired, as though my mental energy is being

polluted. As expected, I shouldn't have listened to the words of these fellows. I better continue appreciating the beauty of the world.

"Big Brother Roland, your tea."

"Oh, thank you."

Only my great great great great granddaughter cares for me. Just when I am thinking so, somehow, I feel that something is wrong.

"Great granddaughter fetish and great grandfather fetish huh? Such heavy taste."As expected, this black cat would not give me a moment of peace. If she didn't get tricked to become my binded equipment, going by the identity of this undying old demon and her twisted personality, she is definitely worthy of the title of the Great Gentleman.

However, her sarcasm made my heart skip a beat. I am also a little suspicious of the obedient behaviour of this little lass recently. Also, that System Notice which I found it hard to look straight at made my heart beat furiously.

However, looking at how she proceeds to serve tea to her temporary mentor, Diana, with a sweet smile on her face, I shake my head and dispel my suspicions.

"She is probably just paying respect to her elders. The System is never reliable. After all, I am not a cross-dresser who is into female

clothing. Naturally, Reyne wouldn't be so blind to be into me. After all, we look so alike. If she were to have a crush on me, wouldn't it be narcissism?"

I hesitate for a moment before finally speaking out.

"Everyone, prepare for a little bit. I am going out to find 2 people. When I return, we would probably have a tough battle to fight. Oh right, also prepare to abandon this place."

Yes, from the moment the invasion of the Seafolks began, the enthronement ceremony has been postponed indefinitely. From that moment on, our official reason of staying here for the enthronement ceremony would be voided and naturally, we no longer have a reason to remain here.

Also, somehow, I feel that something is amiss with this situation. The development of this war is a little too bizarre.

If it was just the prelude battle to the Sacred War, then the God Beast appeared too early. However, if we were to slightly think about it, it all made sense.

It isn't difficult for a Nine-headed Dragon Emperor of his level to transmogrify to the form of a human. So, there is a high possibility that he was concealing under the river to overlook the troops. However, the sudden pincer attack of the two Fleets caught him off-guard. If he didn't make a move, the two SemiGods of Auland Empire would be more than enough to clear off all of the invading Seafolks.

Thus, while the Nine-headed Dragon got to slaughter innumerable lives, he was also forced into a bad situation. As a pet of a Malevolent God, he represents the will of the Malevolent God. If he were to launch an assault on the coastline, then the level of the battle would escalate immediately. Even if the Order Gods don't make a move personally, they would also send an expert Dragon Slayer down. A direct warrior of a true God, that is an existence very different from the human SemiGods.

If he were to escape, not mentioning how the Seafolks here would be wiped out, his master would also lose prestige as a result. Thus, not making a move became the ideal choice.

The Auland Empire would probably have some trump cards behind their back. However, seeing how they chose bomb to bomb a few shells every few hours, they are probably afraid to offend the great God if they were to engage its subordinate. The same goes for the Nine-headed Dragon as well. It doesn't have any intention to leave its original position at all. As long as you don't get on its nerves, it would only spit two Dragon Breaths now and then. While the Seafolks are fighting maniacally on the surface, seven of its nine heads were lazing about.

The horns of the eternal Sacred War has just been blown on and no one is fully prepared yet. If they were to clash with their full might as this point, regardless of who it is, they would only be reduced to cannon fodder (pawns), the Nine-headed Dragon and Auland aren't dumb to not see such facts.

But, on the contrary, this kind of stalemate made me feel the

precariousness of the situation.

A stalemate on a battlefield is often created through a certain balance between both parties and this kind of balance is always temporary. Both of them are only restraining themselves because they are not prepared for the heavy price they would have to pay for the conclusive battle. It is just a matter of time before preparations would be completed. As the stalemate collapses, it would most probably lead to the complete defeat of one party and going by the current situation, the one to fall is most probably the Auland Empire who is not fully prepared.

If the Queen of Storms were to set her heart to launch a full-out war, even if it might mean her downfall or if some dumb SemiGod were to go and slay her beloved Nine-headed Dragon... Just thinking about the possibility of it happening and what would happen afterwards, I can't help but feel that this city by the river is really unsafe.

The technology that Darsos promised me is already in my hands and the carts of resources are already out of the territories of the Auland Empire. There is a possibility of the contract being fulfilled at anytime, so I have to start preparing for my retreat as well. But, before that...

"Reyne, follow me. There are two people who you must meet." After hesitating for a moment, I decided in the end to call another person along.

"Yingou, you as well. This time, the person we are meeting is your peer. Your mission is doing what you are best at, brag as

much as you can and try your best to coax them over to our side.”

‘The Master of Magic Engineering’ Timmy Lade, ‘Miraculous Alchemist’ Olivia Wright. They are the creators of the Magic Engineering Study as well as the creator of the future tier-5 troop Magic Machinery Dragon. In the future epic war, of all of the rising stars, they are the two brightest ones.

War is a stimulant for the development of new technologies and a training ground for troops. In the future war, the Magic Engineering Study that these two came up with will create numerous godly weapons and war equipment. They play a crucial part in the reason why Auland Empire was able to walk to the pinnacle of mankind before their destruction.

Of course, in history, they would start proposing the combination of Alchemy Magic Formations and Engineering Study only after the war with the Underground World. Also, the Magic Mechanical Dragon is a product 60 years from now. Right now, one of the hero of Kagersi should still be a rookie Engineer who relies on selling toys for a living while the other is an unqualified Alchemist who just got expelled from the Alchemy Campus.

Even if they are obscure unimportant figures at this point, even if history has changed and those two might not rise up as they did, these two people are way too important. Lacking manpower from the start, there is no way I would let them off.

The reason why I haven't looked for them all along is because of the reason that geniuses tend to be eccentric and these two are supreme geniuses who have left their mark in history... Alright, I will be more direct. Back then, my goal for recruiting companions is for them to be normal. The quirks and habits of those two are definitely the most gentlemanly of the Gentlemen, so why would I take the initiative to look for them.

But now...

Looking at the System Notice, I shake my head helplessly.

【Exceeding the normal logic, un, otherwise known as perverted Gentlemen, we might not be understood by others. That is because we fervently pursuit the path in our hearts while ignoring the eyes of others. But, to a true Gentleman, so what if other people are unable to understand us? It is sufficient that those who are also seeking their own paths are able to understand one another. As the King among Gentlemen, you are able to comprehend everyone's frustrations and pain. You are the brethren of all Gentlemen. Everyone naturally respects you.】

【Honorary Title King of Gentlemen: As the Gentleman among Gentlemen, the legendary uncrowned king, your reputation will spread throughout all dimensions. All Gentlemen who you meet will feel as though they are meeting with an old friend and their intimacy towards you will rise significantly. However, normal people will resent and avoid you. At the same time, as the King of Gentlemen, you will attract Gentlemen to you. Also, if you were to extend an invitation to them, there is a higher probability they would come under your command.】

At that moment, even if the strength of the Ogre is really not bad and Tracy even guaranteed that he would listen to me obediently and that he would be a good fighter as long as I provide him food, I still hesitated on inviting him to join us.

But, very quickly, my dilemma vanished. When the 4 short fellows escaped from jail, the number of members in the Absolute Gentlemen Alliance exceeded the number required and the System decisively granted this title onto me.

【Congratulation, King of Gentlemen. As the King who rules over perverts, your Gentleman level is unmatched by anyone else. – Don't talk to me. Mum, there is a pervert here! 】

"Hehe, I suddenly find you a little more pleasing to the eye."

I have already tested the prowess of this aura and the words of the others made me a little happy. However, this 'pleasing to the eye' which came from the Dracon made a shiver go down my spine.

Cough cough, back to the main topic at hand, after receiving the 'noble title' of the King of Gentlemen, after being so depressed that I almost gave up on myself, I can only hope that this title is as powerful as it is described as and that it would help me coax those two future rising stars.

"Hmph, I have never heard of that Timmy Lade but that Olivia is a well-known freak. Of the 13 main lessons, she failed 7 of them, resulting in her expulsion from school. She is almost becoming the shame of the school, so how could she still count as a genius?"

Unexpectedly, our band had a new companion, the granddaughter of the Paladin Kane, Kathleen. She turned out to be an ex-student of Kagersi 3rd Alchemy Campus and classmates with Olivia.

Since the sword is already in my hand, naturally, Kathleen has made her decision. Right now, she is my Knight squire and a Mage apprentice.

Yes, she chose neither the path of a Knight nor the path of a Mage.

“That... Can I try both of them? I really can’t make up my mind.”

From what I know, she hasn’t given up on Alchemy yet too. The time and energy of a person is limited, learning 3 of them simultaneously is really suicidal but I didn’t say anything. Anyway, reality would force her make a choice sooner or later. Her impression of it would be deeper if she were to crash into the wall herself.

When she heard that we are looking for a genius in Alchemy, as a fellow Alchemist, she volunteered to tag along. But, when she heard that it was Olivia, displeasure could be seen on her face.

“It should be somewhere here. Do you know exactly where Olivia lives?”

As expected, I got an affirmative no from Kathleen. Thus, I

casually asked a passer-by for directions.

“Excuse me, do you know where Alchemist Olivia…” Alright, halfway through my words, the burly man’s face turns ghastly white the moment he heard Olivia’s name. Perspiration flows profusely from him as his eyes swims about.

Alright, from the reaction of this passer-by, I can roughly guess what kind of person she is.

“If her Gentleman level is high, with the assistance of the King of Gentlemen title, it should be easy to coax her to join us. But, if she is too Gentlemanly, that bunch of bastards is already enough to deal with… Should I hope that she would be more normal or should I hope that she would be more abnormal? Such a dilemma.”

“Boom!”

“Alright, you don’t have to show me the way anymore. Little bro, you better get going. I think I found her.”

The beautiful green mushroom cloud, the shrieks not too far away and the action of the passer-by getting ready to escape spells everything out clearly.

“This color, looks like bringing along the Dwarf Anti-Poison Mask is the correct decision… It looks like there is no doubt about it, there will be another member in the Gentleman Alliance.”

ps:这几天工作有些忙，搞得每天下班到家后才能开始码字，总是晚点.....明天应该会轻松点，争取爆发吧，又欠了三次爆发了。RT

Translator's Notes:

“...such as the Saint Kaesora and Dragon Knight Edwin”

- I tried googling the names but I couldn’t find who the Saint and Dragon Knight is, so I will leave the names here so maybe someone who is familiar with these names could enlighten me. <贤者卡索拉、龙骑士埃德温>

Chapter 103: The Miraculous Alchemist

Despite being called the 'Miraculous Alchemist', just by her outer appearance itself, Olivia looks just like an ordinary cute girl.

Her golden wavy hair emits the radiance of youth. Her light green Alchemist Robe is unable to conceal her proud contours that surpasses those of her age. Her face has traces of baby fats, giving it a natural dazed look. In contrast to that, the silver-rimmed spectacles on her face adds a scholarly touch to her tone.

Although it is our first time meeting, Olivia gives me a kind of nostalgic impression. Perhaps, it is due to the scholarly feeling that is similar to that of Elisa's and Magaret's, especially the silver-rimmed spectacles which is obviously serving as just an ornament.

How do I know that? Not mentioning how Elisa's glasses are flat, in this instant, Olivia's spectacles were lacking a lens. But, not only did the girl herself not realise it, there were guests in front of her and yet she was still muttering under her lowered head about where her experiment went wrong.

Even when staring face-to-face with someone else, the eyes of the young lady is unfocused as her thoughts were in the skies, not even guarded against us in the least. There were food stains on her face and her entire living room is incredibly messy. The first impression that she gives is that she is a very messy person.

After roughly scanning the room, I can roughly understand why Kathleen wasn't very fond of Olivia.

"So it is a conflict due to them being of different levels." The liveliness and youthfulness that Olivia emits, not to mention her proud and moving figure, gives the plain-looking robe an elegant aura whereas when the same robe is worn on Kathleen...

Having a slim and flat figure is advantageous for cavalry battles. How can someone with a voluptuous figure hold firmly onto their weapons in a battle? You all are born physically talented as a Knight. Un, next time I see Kathleen stare at the chest of a beautiful lady, I will make sure to console her like that.

Why you all? Alright, my page Reyne is also staring at her with hostility. Looking from the sides, she is even grinding her teeth.

"... So big, how could she be of the same age as me. Hmph, with such size, it will start sagging sooner or later."

Alright, allow me to rationally ignore this mysterious cursing and turn the attention back to the main topic at hand.

"Cough, Miss Olivia, nice to meet you. I am Rolande." Although I greeted her, I am unable to bring back her floating spirit.

"Could it be that I added the Magic Rock Oil too early? Then, I guess I should try adding some fusing reagent."

"Hey, hey! Miss Olivia, do you hear me?"

Alright, the Alchemist starts to take out her pen and begins drawing and writing on a piece of paper, ignoring our presence.

"Since you want to play the game... Olivia! Big-breasted girl! The sun has risen! Lessons have started!"

Kathleen sneaks by Olivia's side and screams into her ear. The echo of her voice lingers in the room for a few second, even I was stunned by it. Her resentment towards Olivia is really apparent. Only then did Olivia regain her senses.

"Ah, Teacher Dana, I am not dazing off, I am really listening attentively to your lesson!"

Alright, the ex-student immediately stands in an upright position after being alarmed from her junior shouting out her nickname. She seems to have forgotten that she was expelled from the school.

"Puu! Senior Olivia, did you think that it was still Teacher Dana's herbology lesson? Rest easy, no one is punishing you this time. We are here for some private matters."

"Little bamboo stick, stop calling my nickname. You scared me, I thought that teacher was raging at me again. I really don't know why Teacher Dana is always targetting me."

Alright, while Kathleen's nickname is exposed, it turns out that 'big-breasted girl' is also a publicly-accepted title for Olivia such that even the teachers were using it. Exactly how deep is this

grudge?

"Teacher Dana is still unwedded despite being advanced in age. When she finally found a boyfriend after much difficulty, her boyfriend dumped her due to small chests. Naturally, she would feel her temper rising when she sees you. Can you at least try to sympathise with her? Big-breasted girl."

"Oh, no wonder she is always staring at my chests. I even wondered if she was just like those weird boys..."

"Cough, Alchemist Olivia, there is something I would like to talk to you about."

Seeing how their chatter is getting more and more heated up, they probably forgotten that there is an existence of a male here. I try to interrupt their conversation but...

"... This smell, it should be a strong Troll Tonic. Why is it labelled as Hair-growing Reagent?"

Yingou retrieves a bottle from the shelves and questions her with a high-pitched voice. Putting his identity as a Gold-rank Alchemist on the line, regardless of whether it is the color or the smell, it is definitely a Troll Regeneration Tonic. It is impossible for it to be a Hair-growing Reagent."

"Oh, that is still incomplete. I considered trying to localise the effect of the Troll Regeneration onto one's hair, so that no matter

how stubborn the baldness is, hair would be able to grow out from one's head. In the end... Wait, don't drink it!"

To an Alchemist, trying one's experimental product is the best way to understand its effects. Basing it on his outstanding resistance against such effects, Yingou opens the bottle cap and gulugulu, he drinks it without any hesitation.

"Owehh." Yingou clutches his stomach as he kneels down. Then, a pitch-black bunch of hair drops to the ground. So, it seems that he was wearing a wig all along...

He wasn't trying to test the medicine in the first place, he was making use of this opportunity to fill up his flaws!

"Did the medicine fail? Will he be okay?"

"No, it is a success. It is just that there is some slight side effects."

There is no need to ask anymore. The result before us has explained everything. Thick and long hair started growing out at a rapid pace from Yingou's bald and shiny head. That Goblin was so excited that he started pouncing about delightfully. But, very quickly, the trouble came. The hair has already reached his feet and yet, it was still growing longer and longer.

"This conceptual design is a success but the problem lies in controlling the uncontainable regeneration ability of the Troll Tonic. That is to say, the growth cannot be stopped..."

In just a brief moment, Yingou has turned into a gigantic hairball and his entire body is filled with pitch-black hair. A round furball rolls around the floor, even his eyes and face disappears under the bulking mass of hair.

"Save me, I can't breath."

He wanted to retrieve his own medicine in his clothes to save himself but he couldn't even stretch out his hands. There were too much hair restricting his movement. Some were even invading his nose.

Alright, if we don't start saving him now, he would suffocate to death from his own hair. That would be a hilarious cause of death.

I quickly withdraw my sword to sever the hair, but the severed part immediately regrows. This hair is even more troublesome to deal with than tentacle monsters. But, Olivia had an even better idea.

She has already ran to her experiment lab by the side and retrieved 3 reagents. She expertly pours them into one bottle and tosses it into the sky. The fluids mixes together along with the dancing of the bottle midair. In a few short seconds, the final product took shape. Then, she throws it forcefully towards Yingou.

"Pah!"

As the antidote splashes onto him, the effects of the Troll Hair-growing Reagent dispels and his hair starts to fall off rapidly.

"I am saved. Phew."

As his hair falls to the ground, Yingou sits paralysed on the ground, thankful that he has survived this ordeal. But...

"Puu!"

"Haha, what is this? A chihuahua? An egg?"

Goblins look a little similar to cats and dogs and they have quite a bit of hair on their body as well. That's why Dwarves often mock them as furry short-legged dogs. This is also why the effect of the reagent just now didn't just cause the hair on his head to grow furiously, but the hair on his body as well.

Apparently, Olivia's antidote is just as effective as her Hair-growing Reagent. If all of his hair were to drop off at the same time, then he would be as ugly as a bald dog would get. Furthermore, on that hairless head, even the eyebrows are missing. He looked completely like a white-cut chicken. He looks a little like the head of a hairless Fishmen, no wonder Reyne and the rest would be clutching their stomach, rolling on the ground from all the laughter.

"My... My hair, there were obviously 10 strands previously! It's

all gone! Big hair, second hair, number 3... little ten, you all died tragically. How can you all leave me here alone? How can I live on by myself?"

Alright, the bald Goblin bawls on the ground. His action of naming his 10 strands of hair is really...

"Puu!"

I'm sorry, I wanted to say depressing but looking at the tears flowing down that bald egg, I couldn't hold it in. Please allow me to laugh by the side first.

Alright, back to the topic at hand. Yingou, who has suppressed himself to remain calm, starts to gauge the capabilities of his new disciple.

Disciple? As a new Gold-rank Alchemist, even the principal of the Alchemy Campus wasn't up to his standards. Yingou only has to flash his identity, indicate his willingness to accept a disciple and show his approval for the rookie Alchemist's talent for her, who was just expelled from school, for her pay respects to her new mentor on the spot.

At just 15 years old, Olivia is obviously still a rookie. Perhaps, she might hold great potential and many creative ideas are blooming in her head. However, her lack in understanding of basic theories would require her to grind her knowledge for at least a few more decades. Being at Bronze-rank, she might be considered outstanding among her peers. But, to a master Alchemist, she is an

obvious novice. Being expelled by the Alchemy Campus has made her a laughingstock in this circle, causing her paths to further her studies has been cut. At this point, the future Miraculous Alchemist is just an innovative apprentice.

"Is this the medicine you made? This smell, it should be Savage Bull Tonic. Judging from its color, there is still room for improvement. What is the strength multiplier ratio?"

After suffering once, even the master Alchemist refuses to test her medicine anymore.

"I replaced the bull blood with the concentrated blood of a Tauren instead, increasing the effectiveness of the original drug by 30 times. If consumed, one’s strength could be increased by 3 times. However, the side effect is that the person will find horns and tails growing out from their body and they would randomly go into a Berserk state."

I saw Yingou's face twitched for a moment as his hands shook, causing him to almost drop the little bottle in his hands.

A normal Savage Bull Tonic would only increase one's strength by 10%. That 300% multiplier along with the transmogrification effects is incredible. But, great returns comes with a price. While their strength would explode in the short-term after consuming it, there is a high chance they would die after the effect wears off."

"Have you tried it?"

"Un, I tried it on Xiao Bai. Ah, that is a dog that my family keeps. After consuming it, he knocked down a wall and it took him half a year to recuperate from that. Now, he thinks that he is a hellhound and often spits saliva at others (breath fire)."

"That green bottle... That is a natural recovery medicine right, but why would it be red in color?"

"Hehe, I added Dragon Mane Grass and Petrifying Lizard Reagent into it. It is one of my prized work. While healing one's injuries, it will grant them the ability of Stone Skin, increasing their defense exponentially. For a bottle to have 2 different beneficial effects, it is one of the few successful products of mine."

"The side effect?" Yingou wasn't moved. He can already roughly tell that his disciple here is a little eccentric.

"That... I prepared a potion to undo the petrification and gave it out as a complimentary gift. I even wrote in the label 'If you do not want to become a statue, please do not use this medicine when you are alone'. It is weird that I am still unable to sell it to anyone."

It is entirely reasonable for you to be unable to sell it out. Who would dare to drink a potion that could cause one to turn into stone?

"This? Un? The smell of milk?"

"Oh, this is the Breast Enhancement Medicine that my juniors

requested me to create. I managed to achieve my primary objective and this is also one of my few successful works."

Hearing her words, Reyne's eyes glitter. She is tempted to give it a try but looking at the bald head and the bunch of freakish medicines, she hesitated.

"... Don't even think of it. This is one of the main culprit to why she was expelled from the school. This can indeed enhance one's breast size. But, to maintain its effects, a bottle of milk must be drunk every hour. During that period of time, all of the milk around the campus were sold out and the scent of milk engulfed the entire campus."

Hearing those words, Reyne hesitates once more. That side effect seems acceptable to her.

"There should be something else, right? She shouldn't be expelled just because of this."

Suddenly, Kathleen's face reddens as she walks towards Reyne and whispers in her ear.

"... The milk can't possibly be ingested continuously without being excreted. When it is accumulated past a certain extent, it would spill out explosively. Back then, this was how our Teacher Dana screwed up her blind date. Nowadays, she don't even dare to meet others."

Alright, even though she was whispered it softly, but the ears of those in this room were quite sharp. At the very least, I regret hearing those words.

The Miraculous Alchemist would only start to gain fame a decade later. Apparently, we came too early. The side effects of her completed products were much too strong compared to the original effects intended. However, a half-filled bucket has its own use. At least, she would be easy to coax.

In this era, the relationship between a teacher and a disciple isn't that different from one between a parent and a child. Since Yingou is willing to accept her as his disciple, this relationship is much stronger than anything else. Alright, a certain line of heritage where murdering one's teacher is a tradition serves an an exception. At the very least, looking at the harmonious sight of the teacher and disciple duo, the kitten on my cat looks at me in resentment.

"Stop biting me, didn't I get done in by my disciple as well?"

"Hmph, you deserved it. Besides, you actually still dare to mentor someone else, aren't you afraid of the tradition working up once again?"

"That is two different matter. The reason why you got rid of your teacher was because your teacher attacked you, right? The reason why I got rid of you back then was because you had malicious intentions as well. You said that I was looking for it, but I think that you are the one who is reaping what you sow."

"Hmph, forget it, let bygones be bygones. Just look, I think that this teacher and disciple duo does seem a bit like how we were back then."

"I doubt so, I think Yingou would impart his knowledge seriously. He isn't like some stingy Banshee who requires her apprentice to do some mission to please her just to teach him a spell."

"No, I am talking about the point where the disciple will get rid of the teacher sooner of later. I mean, just look, didn't she almost succeed already? Look at those things that she created. I bet that within 3 years, if the egghead doesn't die of anger than he would have died from poison."

Unsure of what was touched, after a cloud of red fog scatters, Olivia lowers her head apologetically while the old Goblin was on a verge of tears after losing his final strands of hair -- eyelashes, and completes his evolution into a round egghead. Looking at the sight, I mutter to myself.

"I'm in. But not three years, I bet that he would be played to death within a year."

"Then what the heck are we still betting for? Why don't we bet whether he would die from anger or poisoning?"

"I think he would most probably be blown to death." Recalling Yingou's 'noble title' of being called the Alchemist of Explosion, if

he were to impart all of his knowledge to the already dangerous Olivia...

"She is my future subordinate... Am I unknowingly digging a pit for me to fall into by creating a dangerous terrorist?"

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Chapter 104: The Frigid Nightmare

From the beginning, Olivia isn't an Aulander. She’s the daughter of a merchant from one of the seven countries of the Southern Lands, Rhodes Kingdom, and she specially travelled here to study Alchemy.

As a foreign student, she doesn't have any property here and her luggage is scant. After throwing her medicines and reagents into a Spatial Equipment, packing her books and notes, refunding the deposit and returning the key to the landlord, she is ready to leave.

By the way, the East Mist Communal Country is also one of the seven countries of the Southern Lands. Half of the land of the seven countries altogether was part of the original Mist Country. If I were to reunite the Mist Country again, it would mean merging two countries together and claiming land from two other countries. Under current conditions, it isn't feasible.

Olivia is quite delighted, being able to become the disciple of a Master Alchemist and to leave this country. After all, in the eyes of other countries, the people of the Southern Lands are barbarians who wear fur coats. Although she is happy over the fact that it isn't snowing half of the time in a year, she has met with numerous bothersome matters through these years when she was studying.

Now that I’m done with the 'Miraculous Alchemist', it is time to look for the 'Master of Magic Engineering' Timmy Lade. While searching for him, I stumble on some trouble. However, this isn't my first time meeting with such problems.

There is still 17 to 18 years before Timmy Lade makes a name for himself. The current Timmy Lade... Alright, I wasn't surprised in the least when I saw a snot-filled rascal. At the very least, this time, I managed to the find the person in question. This is significantly better than the last time, when the ancestors of the historical heroes that I was looking for were still in their egg and sperm form.

But I met with some trouble when persuading the guardian of the kid.

Timmy Lade has an elder sister and they were interdependent on one another. When she finally returns, I soon realise that she is a person we are familiar with.

"Olivia, Kathleen?"

"Tea... Teacher Dana! Why are you here?"

"This is my home, I’m still curious over why you lot are here. Didn't you all leave school already? What are you all doing here? Is something up?”

The calm-looking lady in front of me looks like she is in her early thirties. Her solemn face has a dignified atmosphere to it but there is a trace of bitterness on her beautiful face. Looking at her flat contours, I recall the milk story from before...

"Puuu!"

Alright, it is too impolite to be laughing out like that. Reyne, I will make sure to report you to Kelly when we get back. You will be in for some remedial etiquette classes... I laughed as well? Un, at the very least, I didn't spurt out. I retained some basic respect for the lady.

"Nice to meet you, Teacher Dana. I'm Kathleen's Knight mentor. I require the help of an Alchemist, so Kathleen recommended me to you. This is a long-term contract and I'm afraid that you may lose your job at the school as a result. However, I can ensure that the remuneration will be generous. Furthermore, there will be opportunity for you to climb to higher grounds. This man over here is the Master Alchemist Yingou Beyar. He is a Gold-rank Alchemist, you can have a chat with him."

Given that Timmy Lade is interdependent with his elder sister, kidnapping the rascal by himself isn't a practical solution. On the other hand, as long as we are able to hire this teacher here, Timmy Lade will naturally tag along with us.

However, what is unexpected is that after hearing my words, Dana's face lights up, as though she is moved by my offer. But the next moment, her face sinks again.

"I'm sorry. While I really do require a new job, we have already decided to leave this city. I'm afraid that I would be unable to accept your goodwill."

"Leave? Why?"

Initially, she refuses to speak but under my relentless questioning, she finally gives in.

Actually, the reason is quite simple. She feels that the city isn't safe, so she decided to leave.

The reason why she feels that the city isn't safe is because she could see the silhouette of that gigantic figure just outside the window.

The gigantic body of the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor Hydra fills almost half of the entire river. The proud dragon heads could be seen even a few districts away. The Dragon Breaths every now and then might not mean anything much to the entire city, but to the unlucky fellows who got struck by it, it is definitely an instant death.

This isn't some Nine-headed Snake in some marsh regions who inherited a portion of the Dragon Bloodline. The Sea Monster Hydra which has survived numerous tribulations since ancient times is a God Beast. It has obtained a portion of God Power from very early on. If a grade must be given to his bloodline, then his would definitely not be too far off from my Double Diamond Bloodline. When this kind of existence reaches the realm of a SemiGod, a human SemiGod doesn't mean a single thing in his eyes.

From the very start, this Nine-headed Dragon Emperor is almost an invincible existence in the mortal world. Due to its

overwhelming strength, the Hydra's movements is also restricted. Its aversion towards fighting is quite apparent. However, if you were to approach him and get on his nerves, then who can you blame when you are the one seeking death?

This is like a prologue of a large-scale war game. A few powerful figures come out to lecture you and fight with a few old friends to brush up their existence, but this are all simply part of the storyline. As a rookie, you can just treat it like a movie and just watch the show. However, if you think that you can solo the boss and charge forward, screaming 'Die, evil! I want to slay the dragon' and get instant KO-ed, who else can you blame for it?

At the very least, after understanding the prowess of the other party, Darsos doesn't intend to break through recklessly, nor does he want to anger the master of the Nine-headed Dragon, the Queen of Storms. Looking at how he is trying to avoid battling while sending letters to numerous great Churches, he is obviously waiting for the Order Gods to deal with this problem.

Of course, if the Nine-headed Dragon were to come ashore, Darsos would probably stake everything in and make a final stand to protect his country. The Hydra also understands that and it doesn't intend to escalate the battle. That's the reason why the battle is stuck in a stalemate. On the contrary, the ones who were working the hardest are the Seafolks under its command. Other than there being a powerful being pressuring them from the back, the main reason for it was because of a coincidence.

In order to display their extravagance, the Magic Lamps were hung by the river coastline and the fuel used is the highest grade

luxury of the human world, the expensive Mermaid Oil. Mermaids are the favored children of the sea, well-reputed as the royals of the Seafolks. Thus, when the Fishmen of the White Whale Tribe saw those oil lamps, it is equivalent to a human watching an Ogre cooking human meat. No matter what, they would go into a frenzy. Naturally, the fight escalated.

Even if the Seafolks are unable to get past the solid defensive line and the temporary barriers set up, the Auland Empire still suffered considerable losses. The appearance of the Nine-headed Dragons has caused the Pier District to be submerged in water. There are a portion of civilians who managed to escape on time, but at the same time, there are also a portion who are unlucky and swept away by the river water along with their houses, fated to never appear on land again.

"My uncle and his entire family lives in the Pier District. Also, my boyfriend's house was struck directly by the Dragon's Breath, not a single bone remains of his family. Thus, we decided to leave this depressing city."

There are quite a few people who choose to leave the city because of such reasons. Dana is just one of them. It is just that her luck is really bad. Despite just dating her boyfriend for just 2 weeks, he met with such a tragedy.

Many of the wars on the continent are the same as well. Regardless of who wins or loses, no matter how sacred or reasonable the reasons for the war are, the ones who suffers first are the weak ordinary civilians.

"That's great. Oh, I am not talking about your kins. My apologies, lady. I have misspoke. What I meant is that this job requires you to move to a foreign country as well. Since you intend to leave this city, then this job may be suitable for you."

"Really? Can you fill me in on the details?"

Alright, since the other party also intends to leave the city, the generous remuneration of the employment contract easily moved the heart of Dana, who was worried for the future.

When the two future rising stars were finally under my command, I couldn't help but fall into deep thoughts.

"Since I interfered in their fate, will they still be as influential as they were in 'history'? Will they still reach the pinnacle like how they did previously?"

But looking at it from another perspective, even if I do not interfere, the fate of those two would have changed anyway. Since the sudden invasion of the Seafolks would cause Timmy Lade to leave, then regardless of whether he becomes a Master Engineer or not in the future, there is already no basis for the both of them to work together in the future. If so, there is not a possibility for the emergence of the Magic Engineering Study. However, my interference may relight this possibility once again.

"Oh well, why should I think so much about it? At the very least, they are both good buds. If so, I should just wait patiently and groom them as an outstanding rookie. Un, since I introduced

Olivia to Yingou, I should introduce little Timmy to Jinya. If the Magic Machinery Dragon were to be born in the future, it should be in the style of the Goblin Explosion Study."

There is an ancient legend in the Southern Lands. Every year, in the few days when snow blocks all passageway to the great ice mountains, in its deepest core, spirits and monsters will emerge for a festive gathering. Regardless of whether it is the Specters, the Snow Woman, the Yetis or the Snowman, all that should be present will be present.

There tend to be a basis for all legends. For this, it is the Frigid Nightmare.

Nightmare, it refers to the demons who looms in our sleep. In reality, the Frigid Nightmare is the common term used for the nameless magic beings living in the ice mountains.

They are intangible beings of magic, yet they are corporeal existences. They are just like the Aurora Lights unique to the Southern Lands. They come in all shape, forms, colors and varieties and yet, when you approach them, you realise that there is nothing there at all.

There is a few thousand years of history to their legends. Southerners would often tell their own children to not head to the great ice mountain in days where it is snowing heavily. That is until one day, a man who didn't believe the legends intentionally

chose to meet the Nightmare of the icy mountains on the day of a blizzard.

He is the ancestor of the Mist Royalty. No one knows exactly what happened in the depths of the ice mountains, nor do anyone know who exactly was the one who ventured there. But, after this incident, the Aurora Knights who turned the heads of the entire continent started appearing in this country of snow.

Knights have always been a backbone of the human armies. This is due to the fact that all kind of mounts can make the originally weak humans become powerful. Even a rookie climbing up a Griffin would make him a tier-3 troop. However, for the weakest of the Aurora Knights to be a tier-4, this proves how powerful the Frigid Nightmare is.

The Frigid Nightmare is a spiritual being, it doesn't have a fixed form. It is also due to this Aurora-like indeterminate property that allows the Knights to be have strong adaptation capabilities and high growth potential.

The Frigid Nightmare will grow along with the young Knight whom it has linked its soul to. They will absorb nutrients from the soul of the Knight. That is the reason why the beast each Aurora Knight is contracted to is different. A large portion of Nightmares will choose to assume the form of beings living in the ice mountains such as the Snowman and Snow Leopard. Of course, the one people are the most envious of are the Snow Women, despite their weak battle capabilities. Alright, I don't think I have the explain the reason for this, all men should be able to comprehend it.

However, in order to make it convenient for a group battle, all young Nightmares will be trained to assume the form of the Storm Eagle, Armored Arctic Bear and Ice Unicorn. This would allow the charging army of Aurora Knights to be able to switch among a flying assault, furious charge and violent stampede in a just a few short minutes. Without any doubt, they are the sovereign of the snow.

As a top-tier magic being, the Frigid Nightmares possess high intelligence. A young Frigid Nightmare would already have the intelligence of a three to four year old child whereas a mature Frigid Nightmare is often even smarter than humans. The reason why most of the Aurora Knights who have a Snow Woman Frigid Nightmare remain unmarried could be attributed to the fact that they have fallen in love with their contractual beast.

Due to the existence of the Bloodline Contract, those of the Mist Royalty can obtain the acceptance of the Frigid Nightmares with greater ease. Many descendants of the Royal Bloodline would have a double identity as an Aurora Knight, making it a very prestigious job to attain among the civilians. In our generation, Karwenz is also an Aurora Knight. His Nightmare is able to transform freely between an Ice Dragon and an Ice Behemoth. In normal times though, it would assume the form of the Snow Woman. Not only is it strong, it is also pleasing to the eye, making others very envious.

Alright, at this point, everyone should have already guessed it. The reason why I keep emphasising that I am envious of those who have a Frigid Nightmare who can transform into a Snow Woman is because I don't have one myself. In fact, I am not even an Aurora Knight.

Silver-rank, this is the bare minimum required to gain the acceptance of these proud ice magic beings. Back then, I was still a Bronze-rank rookie. By the time my power rank reached the standards, our country had already plunged into a long-term war and changing my power type at that moment wasn't a practical decision. Thus, I could only look on at the cute intelligent elder sisters by the sides of the Knights with envy and resentment. Then, in my 2nd life and 3rd life, the Aurora Knights have already went extinct in this continent. If another one were to appear all of a sudden, won't I be exposing my own identity? I am still not that foolish as to seek my own death.

Now to the present, my power types have already been confirmed and I have a plan on how I should develop on in the future. Given that I already have too many types of power in my hand, adding in an Aurora Knight into the mix would be much more disadvantageous, compared the benefits it brings. Thus, I can only look at those Snow Woman elder sister with envy and resentment.

Yes, Snow Woman elder sister. There were only two people who were accepted by the Frigid Nightmares during this period of time. One of them is a male Knight named Elohim. The usual form that his Frigid Nightmare assumes is that of a Snowman, or rather, should I say Snow Ape? Although it is shockingly unattractive, it possesses great strength and incredible agility, making it extremely suited for a chaotic battle.

Other than because that Nightmare was a companion of his ancestor, a greater part of the reason why he was accepted is because he is the only Gold-rank Knight of the Royal Knights.

The advantages to using a Nightmare left behind by their ancestors is that they are able to skip by the long cultivation period. However, this would also mean that many gaps will appear in the coordination of the Knight and the Nightmare. They won't be as harmonised in thoughts compared to a duo whose Knight cultivates his Nightmare from young.

As for the other new Aurora Knight, it is Reyne who I pulled up forcefully using the Golden Ring. Right after she reached Silver-rank, the bunch of incredulously proud Nightmares who refuses to approve of anyone took the initiative to look for her to contract with. In the end, she ignores the strongly-recommended heavyweight Ice Boar and Ice Giant and chooses a Snow Woman called Seva. Truthfully, those heavyweight giant monsters are the best way to bring up her pathetic fighting capabilities and grant her the ability to survive, an aspect which had been very worrying us.

"They are all very ugly. Look at how beautiful and mature Big Sister Seva is. I must choose her."

Alright, should I say as expected of a princess? The moment these words are spoken, the hearts of those hulking Nightmares were broken.

But, I also approve of her decision. Although the Snow Woman form is extremely weak in close combat, they have the strongest Power of Ice, allowing them to forge an ice armor and ice weapon in the shortest period of time. At this moment, this is the ability that we require the most.

With the help of Siren Tracy, we swam straight to the bottom of the river. Even if we met with the Fishmen patrol teams, as a high-tier race of the Seafolks, she can easily command those lower-tier Fishmen to retreat.

It is very probable that even a Mermaid would be unable to float when equipped with plate mail and heavy weapons. Thus, to ensure the convenience of movement underwater, all of us were dressed lightly.

By the time we reached the secret underwater base, the giant Snowman forged a whole set of equipment for his own Knight before heading to one side to prepare for battle. On the other hand, Seva created a weapon of ice for everyone else.

【Magic Ice Sword】

【Attack Power: 10 - 12】

Tier: Elite

【If the wielder is an Aurora Knight, the attack power will be doubled and the weapon will go up by 1 tier.】

【Frost Blade: Deal additional 5 Frost damage.】

【Indestructible Ice: The Extreme Freezing Magic of the Frigid Nightmare has made this Sword of Ice to be much stronger than steel. You can feel free to cross blows with Adamantine weapons】

【Frostbite: Anyone who touches this magic sword with bare skin will suffer 1 damage/second. If the wielder were to put on Arctic Wolf Gloves enchanted by a Frigid Nightmare, he would

be immune to this effect for half an hour. Aurora Knights are not affected by Frostbite.】

Now that everyone has a handy weapon, the panting Seva starts to forge an armor for me.

This is the ultra-heavy armor for a job unique to only the Mist Country, the Avalanche Defender. When this heavy armor is put on my body with a door-size gigantic shield in my hand, I turn completely into a moving fortress, assuming the role of a tanker which we are sorely lacking.

Although the Ice Armor also has the Frostbite effect which hurts the enemy as well as the user, my Titan Body ability renders this pathetic 1 damage/second null.

Security alarms echo throughout the entire base. Even the slowest of the Undeads would have already noticed us, who were preparing for battle. Looking at the Undead Knights, Zombies and Skeletons press closer, I stroke the Pale Justice in my hands and ignites the Sacred Inferno on the blade of the sword.

"The Undeads who should have long returned to their graves, using my Sacred Inferno, I shall bestow upon you purification and eternal rest." After finishing the standard declaration of a Paladin when facing Undeads, I somehow felt displeased and muttered to myself.

"Why does that warcry sound so uncomfortable to me. Forget it, I think I will just use the warcry for charging. O Holy Light, that evil

is worth a fight!"

Notes:

Chaotic battle -> Trying to refer to battles where everyone do their own things, imagine the sight when you send tons of footsoldiers in and they just fight as hard as they can to survive (something like that)

And the final warcry, if I remembered it correctly, he used during the Dragon chapter (where Adam and the rest stalked him to ensure his safety), but I'm a bit lazy to check it up so :X

Chapter 105: Sword Saint

"Give me 10 seconds!"

After a roar, I unsheathe both of my swords. Facing the wave of attacking Undeads, I charge at the very forefront of the group without any hesitation.

"So fast."

Killing, is an art form and art form requires the devotion of one's mind and body, perhaps even one's soul.

There's no need to think excessively on the battlefield. Just let go of everything and allow your body to dictate everything.

The gasp of surprises behind me no longer matter as I dedicate my entire body and mind to swinging my sword.

Swordsmanship is always the foundation of everything for a close-combat fighter and indubitably, I am a Master Swordsman.

On the Eich Continent where cold weapons reign supreme, swordsmanship is a skill an art of death. Through thousands of years of inheritance and development, each country and region has a sword style that belongs to them. A pure Warrior might not be have the magnificent Holy Light of a Paladin or the profound magic spells of a Magic Knight, but they still continue to stand at the pinnacle of close-combat jobs. The only thing that they rely on

is the 3 feet long sword in their hands and their physical body that is forged thoroughly through countless training and relentless hardships.

The sword is the king of all weapons and Warriors who walk in the path of the sword is always in the majority. Even though everyone can train in the way of the sword, those who manage to reach high altitudes are few. If one surpasses the limits of mortals in the art of sword, they would earn the title of a Sword Saint. This has nothing to do with the identity of the person, his job or even his power rank. The only thing that factors in here is his skills with the sword in his hand.

Sword Saint, the Saint of Swords, is a sword-bearer who has exceeded human standards.

I am a Sword Saint. What's more, I am one without any inheritances. I am a wild Sword Saint who grew through battles.

Self-taught, my swordsmanship isn't as mystical and diverse as the mainstream swordsmanship in this world. It doesn't have the ten thousand years of noble heritage of Karolan's Soaring Eagle Sword and I am unable to use the Soaring Strike. It isn't as unpredictable as Solo's Illusory Dragon Sword and I am unable to create 9 clones with a swing of mine.

Auland's Collapsing Dragon Sword is violent and grand, that continuous wave of jianqi makes me envious. As a Paladin who grew up in the Holy Church, I didn't learn even learn slightest bit of the elegant and beauty Mist Swordsmanship of my homeland. Compared to the thousand years of heritage of different countries

that created profound swordsmanship which could recreate the effects of magic, my sword comprises the simplest art of killing. It is the crystallisation of my experience in battle, simple, inelegant and ugly.

Jianqi -> Sword Beam, imagine Getsuga Tensho of Bleach, where ‘sword energy’ leaves the tip of the sword. I will leave it in Chinese as so far still can’t really find a word for it.Italics are used for hanyupinyin translated words and sounds (although I keep forgetting to italics sound)

Even more so, despite being a wild Swordsman as well, even before he received the Inheritance of the Phoenix, Adam's swordsmanship had a fleeting and grand feeling to it, reminiscent to that of a Master Swordsman. After his inheritance, as his powers soared, his sword became even more elegant. The faint image of a Phoenix would appear and the call of a Phoenix would sound whenever he swings his sword, making it look extremely magnificent and striking. When he fights with his full might, the battlefield could be seen even a few kilometers away. In fact, that's how the praise 'A sword from the red lotus fills the sky with the afterglow of the Phoenix' came about.

As half of a swordsmanship mentor to him, my swordsmanship still remains at the lowest level and consists only of basic sword skills. The only thing incredible about it is that it is just that bit faster, that bit more accurate and that bit more deadly.

The first thing I learnt was basic swordsmanship. After so many years, after learning countless famous sword arts and dozens of profound philosophy, the one that I was the most adept at and used the most frequently is still the simplest and most practical basic swordsmanship.

Basic swordsmanship, just like how it sounds, is the basic fighting sword skills that every Swordsman, Paladin and Dark Knight will learn. Stab, hack, flick and raise, these are the basics. Fast, accurate and deadly, these are the main focus. Strength, reaction and agility, these are the foundations. Everyone knows them but if someone were to say that they could become a Sword Saint with just these, the listener would probably laugh his teeth off.

The Red Lotus Sword Saint is a well-known Great Sword Saint recognised by the entire world. In fact, his swordsmanship is even treated as the pinnacle of humans. However, whenever that lad Adam pits his swordsmanship against mine, he has never gotten the better of me.

The reason? Truthfully, I don't even know myself. Perhaps it is due to the fact that I am extremely fond of playing with swords. Just by using swordsmanship that everyone is able to learn, I still became the most famous Sword Saint of that era.

The sacred sword in my left hand turns into a radiant light whereas the magic ice sword in my right turns into an elegant aurora. The beautiful flashes of sword reminds one of the wings of a butterfly as the colorful wings spread open into a three meter wide luster. Bringing it down violently, the entire ground trembles while I myself have already turned into a hurricane that brings about destruction.

The two swords with differing attributes in my hands and Holy Light added a bit of color to my standard swordsmanship.

The giant blade in my left hand that was intentionally forged thicker is blunt, but the heavy body of the sword itself makes it convenient for me to execute different kinds of swordplay.

The zombies have overwhelming strength, their skin is thick and they don't fear pain? Decapitate it with a strong slash first. Then, by pulling the sword through at a slanted angle, its pivot bones would be broken, reducing the indefatigable Zombie into a heap of flesh.

The Skeleton General's skeleton rack is as tough as metal and they aren't afraid of stabs and sharp weapons? By twisting the blade of the weapon, the giant sword turns into a giant club. With a smack, its bones would be rattled and might even fall apart to the ground.

Death Knights? I have heard that you're good at martial arts and that you can use Dark Magic and Necromancy? Hey, what do you mean by falling in a single blow? Why are you weak? Even little Lionheart was thousand times stronger than you when he just resurrected.

Banshee, it is said that you are immune to physical damage, that you are adept at all kind of Weakness Spells and Curses and that you are the nemesis of melee combatants? Un, Curses are indeed troublesome. Face my Secret Sword: Seven Bitter Sword... Hey hey hey, why are you escaping? Can you have some pride as a High-tier Undead. You really threw the face of Banshees. Look, even the Queen of Banshees on my shoulders can't stand watching you any further.

Knock, flick, smash, chop! Heavy hammer, rapier, cudgel, katana! Despite it being a bulky giant sword that is difficult to use, many different fighting styles are executed through it. The swordsmanship fundamentals that I have accumulated allows me to turn the giant sword into a sure-kill attack catered directly to the weakness of my opponents. From the start of the battle, an enemy would fall from every single sword of mine and my armor has yet to suffer a single attack.

That is only considering the Ice Sword in my right hand. It is even simpler for the sacred sword in my left. After I infuse sufficient Holy Light into that sacred sword, 'The Judgement of Justice' starts to declare the doomsday for the Undeads.

【The Judgement of Justice: Activate the Soul Gemstone's judgement ability. When this sacred sword strikes on a Chaos being, the target will be forced to undergo Judgement. If the target fails to pass the Judgement, the target will be directly destroyed thoroughly. Duration: 10 minutes. This ability can be used 3 times daily.】

As long as the sword strikes them, even if it is just a slight scrape, the fragile Undeads would be reduced to a pile of ashes. After realising that this ability is extremely powerful against Undeads and finding the Undead's ability to retaliate pathetic, the sword on my left hand which was used primarily for defense starts to be utilised for offense as well. Immediately, my killing efficiency increases multiple folds.

The Ice Heavy Armor only has the weight of slightly bulkier chainmail. My ordinary-looking physical body possesses overwhelming brute strength. Despite being dressed in thick

armor, I am still able to execute the footwork of a swordsman.

However, there is actually no need for me to. Not to mention getting injured, to this point, I haven't even been struck once yet.

I finally realise that I have made an error. Using those fellows in Liu Huang Mountain City to gauge the strength of these newborn Undeads, that is just like how even though a little child in kindergarten and a powerful war veteran are both humans, there is an overwhelming difference between the two. If we were to use the might of the special forces to deal with little children, they would be able wipe out an army of them easily.

Just as I was getting high from killing, the sight in front of me turns completely empty. There isn't any more enemies in my surroundings.

Thus, making use of this opportunity, I flip the sword in my left hand around and grips it in reverse. Then, I start to gather strength.

"Slow, blunt and foolish. Yet, you all still wish to pit your skills against mine? Dream on!"

After a furious roar, I hold up both of my swords as the bright light flows through them. My whole body starts to turn, turning into a hurricane of death.

Following the whirl of both swords, the jianqi-filled tornado

starts to overflow. The excessive and rampaging jianqi starts to expand while the rapidly rotating blades brought the jianqi into rotation as well. In the end, I turned into a formless but deadly storm of jianqi.

【Ding, congratulations for comprehending the general Legend-rank Secret Sword: Blade Storm. Using this skill, you will turn into a fast rotating storm of blades. The rotating swords and jianqi will severely damage all enemy land troops in the surroundings. Under the effect of Blade Storm, you will not feel remorse, regret or fear. Other than death, nothing can stop you. Prerequisites: 20 Strength, 10 Agility, 15 Stamina -- For those who get carsick, seasick or have low Agility, please use with caution. There is no way I will tell you that the invincible Sword Saint Hodore got dizzy from spinning too much and vomited. A group of Kobolds took advantage of that moment of weakness to kill him.】

Rather than comprehend, it is actually more like recalling memories. Basically, sword skills can be executed once the basic stats fulfills the prerequisites. I already can't remember the number of sword skills that I have 'comprehended' along the way.

There is a reason why Blade Storm is the favorite general Secret Sword used by Sword Saints. It has a wide AOE, allowing swordsman to get rid a large bunch of enemy at one go. Even more so, it is an effective means of dealing with a situation when one is surrounded. Of course, its weakness is that one would be unable to stop once they start using the skill. Not to mention, their path of movement would become very clear. If one were to meet with a strong enemy, then that turning top would become an easy target.

At this moment, the Undeads who are struck by the hurricane of jianqi found themselves put in a situation as though they were attacked by two swords simultaneously. Those who were able to survive past two seconds could already be considered strong. Along my trail, there is not a single Undead who is spared from it. The Blade Storm consumes everything in its range.

When I finally stop, the battlefield around me has been cleared. Only the corpses of hundreds Undeads remain on the floor.

"Hahaha, I am already invincible... What the heck, where did this come from?" Looking at my newly arrived opponents, I, who was just carried away awhile back, immediately turn around to flee.

The reason? The newly arrived Undead army has pulled out high-tier siege cannons. In the distance, the airships which are slowly activating starts to turn their magic siege cannons towards us. With just a single hit, I would definitely be reduced to ashes and I can prepare to reincarnate once again.

"The rewards are not bad."

In a short moment, these experience gift packs allow me to level up again. Also, the System Notice about me receiving some spoils of war seemed to have popped up awhile back but it isn't the time to be organising my gains now.

When I return back to my teammates, I found them all looking at me as though I was a monster.

After all, I only said that I would be charging in for ten seconds to draw the enemy’s firepower. However, not mentioning how I only went in for a couple of seconds, I singlehandedly cleared the Undeads by the pier.

"I'm sorry, they were simply too weak. It is just so convenient for me to cut them up, so I didn't leave anything for you all... Why are you all looking at me like that? Oh, I never told you that I am a Sword Saint?"

Alright, they shake their head harmoniously. Only Kelly who knew in advance nods her head slightly with a smile. On the other hand, Reyne looks as though she is witnessing the vicissitude of life. It seems to contain a slight trace of surprise, regret and excitement.

"As expected, his usual slovenly and unreliable look isn't his true self. The true Paladin Roland is still extremely fearsome. I am still far away from his standards."

Initially, she was still delighted over becoming an Aurora Knight, even more so after seemingly possessing sufficient power to suppress her mentor, who is still Bronze-rank. However, from the looks of it, even if he went into decline, the legendary Paladin Roland is still a legend. Just by that swordsmanship of his, he is able to dominate the world.

"Bronze-rank Paladin Sword Saint, incredible."

On the other hand, the new page Kathleen is also shocked.

Initially, she was dissatisfied with the strength of her mentor. But now, it seems like not only is he qualified to teach her, he could even teach a thing or two to her father.

After all, swordsmanship requires a massive amount of practice, fundamental strength and the accumulation of battle experience. Paladins focus most of their time on the Holy Light and Divine Arts. For a Sword Saint to appear among the Paladins who tend to be subpar in swordsmanship is already incredible. But, to actually witness a low power rank Paladin attaining the strength of a Sword Saint goes totally against their common sense.

"If only your magic had half of the talent of your swordsmanship, you wouldn't become the embarrassment of spellcasters, becoming a cannon tower."

As usual, the black cat on my shoulder puts me down. As usual, I ignore her words.

However, it isn't the time for us to be chattering idly. The Mage Towers used to defend this secret base starts to glow and on the tallest Mage Tower, a dark figure stands out. Looking at the familiar skeletal rack filled with Death Magic makes me sigh -- "To think that it is another nude fanatic. Do you think you can choose not to wear clothes just because you are a Lich? How uncivilised and immoral. The name of Liches were soiled by people like you. If this was Liu Huang Mountain City, you would have been bashed by the Town Security."

What is even more dangerous at this point is the airships, which are already floating in midair by the port, is already starting to

charge the black holes of the magic cannons.

However, I am not in the least affected by such a sight.

"Pah!"

After a snap of the fingers, two cannons open fire at once but...

"Boom!" "Boom!"

The target of the Air Fleet isn't us but the two Mage Towers in the secret base. A hole is opens up in one of them and starts to collapse.

"I never met such a lousy cannoneer. That short fellow over there, raise the altitude by 10 degrees and move 30 degrees to the left."

The voice of the Ace Hunter Lowens echoes from midair. From his gleeful commands, it seems that the blast which destroyed the tower came from him.

"Idiot, we were aiming at the Lich."

"Then, you were even more off. You all hit the wrong tower. Raise the altitude by 40 degrees and move 30 degrees to the left."

At this moment, Diana and Krose appear on 2 different airships. See, the 'we attracted the attention of the other party to allow the two of our top fighting power to bring the Goblins and Dwarves who are skilled into using cannons to sneak on the two ships by the port and take them' plan is successful.

"Hah, I have already said that I am invincible... Keng, looks like this word really can't be said."

A few warehouses in the secret base opens and in an instant, four identical airships start to float upwards. Looks like our plan isn't flawless. After all, the airships aren't real ships. Since they are able to fly, they are completely able to hide in the base.

"Those on top, focus on dealing with the airships. Leave the Lich to us!"

Leaving the spellcasters to do as they please is almost like courting death. Looking at the Lich who is chanting under the protection of a group of Death Knights, the Snowman Knight below who serves as a tank is charges at the forefront. Since the Knights have begun to charge fearlessly, how can I lag behind?

“Stab, hack, flick and raise, these are the basics.”

Chapter 106: Aerial Battle

"Only by knowing your own strength and your enemy's prowess will you be able to survive a hundred wars."

This isn't a new adage, but I have always believed that if one isn't even sure how much troops their enemy holds in their hands, then the war shouldn't be fought in the first place.

"Those who forethink more brings victories, while those who forethink less brings losses, needless to say not forethinking at all." Often, the conclusion of a negotiation is determined by the current circumstances of both parties. I believe that the results of war are also the same, determined before it even begins. A war that doesn't bring interest and without a possibility of victory is a war that one shouldn't start.TL to ED: This is famous phrase in China which before a war, the king and generals will gather to discuss their current situation and the enemy's situation. So, the more they know/discuss, the more they win. The less they know/discuss, the more they lose.

Due to the sudden appearance of the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor, Auland and the Seafolks are stuck in a stalemate. However, stalemates are always temporary. I reckon that there will be a twist occurring very soon. No matter which side gains the upper hand, it isn't a good thing for me and the East Mist.

If Auland were to achieve victory, Darsos's seat on the throne would be stabilised. Given his character, he would definitely seek vengeance against us. If the Seafolks triumph... This city would probably no longer be the territory of human. It isn't impossible

for it to become like the legendary underwater city Yaso, submerged completely under water.

Thus, I decided to make use of this stalemate to gain control over the underwater base to use it as my base of operation as well as to obtain the technology and a sample of the Air Fleet. This way, if we choose to stay, we may be able reap more benefits and if the situation sours, we also have the option of escaping. Anyway, we have already earned enough.

The contract could be fulfilled at any moment and we are sorely lacking time. We only have one opportunity. If our first attack were to fail, it would be much more troublesome the next time around.

With the assistance of the Queen of Banshees, it isn't difficult for us to sneak a few Low-tier Undeads in. Before the attack, we have already done sufficient surveillance and preparation.

This structure of this secret base isn't very complicated. There is the pier where the ships are built, the Mage District where the Mages live, residential area and research lab for the craftsman as well as six tall Mage Towers which is the most dangerous defensive structure here.

A squadron of around 300 White Wolf Guards are stationed here. Other than those, the only force who could be considered as a fighting power are the Mages. Going by the usual 10:1 exchange ratio, there should be 30 of them who are qualified to be converted into Death Knights. As for the conversion of Mages to Banshees, Skeleton Mages and similar High-tier Undeads who possess

intelligence and the strength of a Silver-rank at the moment of their awakening, the success rate is even lower. No matter what, I don't think that it is possible for it to exceed the number of Death Knights. That is to say, the number of High-tier Undeads shouldn't exceed a hundred.

But, from the looks of the current situation, there are a hundred Death Knights already. For there to be such a high exchange rate, there can only be one possibility.

"The King Carlohin has been secretly training in Necromancy since young? For a king of a country to be a Necromancer of minimum Saint-rank, it seems like he has great ambitions."

Very quickly, the sentries found a pit with a few hundred people inside. Looks like after he became aware of their isolation, in order to reduce the consumption of rations, he started a slaughter. Realising that something is amiss and suspecting that they will be unable to get into contact with the outside world within a period of time, Carlohin eventually decided to expose his identity as a Necromancer and converts himself into a Lich. Then, he converts his subordinates into Undeads. With the assistance of the sleepless Undeads, the pace of the construction went faster than planned.

In reality, while scouting about, we discovered the Soul Gathering Tower which is an Undead Conversion Tool used to convert living beings into Undeads. It is unsure whether it is secretly built before or after the isolation. This kind of evil tool that plunges living beings into endless pain while converting them into mindless Low-tier Undeads is definitely the worst of the worst.

Such Undead Conversion Tool is banned even in Xiluo. After all, although this toy is able to convert beings into Undeads on a large scale, anything that goes in will be converted into cannon fodders like Skeletons and Zombies. Besides, the Undeads created through this method are lacking, making it difficult for them to advance in power rank, needless to say to becoming a High-tier Undead to awaken their intelligence. Also, it isn't like the Xiluo Empire doesn't have living civilians (although a large portion of them serves as slaves). Besides, their many Necromancers fulfills the requirements for conducting a conversion. This kind of efficient but ineffective conversion method is only suited for wars when they urgently require pawns to slaughter a city.

The previous pit of a few hundred people have already touch the bottom limit of the Rules of God. A slaughter along with the Undead Conversion Tool, King Carlohin's actions words can no longer be described using the word brutal. This also gives the law jobs a reason to launch a crusade against Carlohin. Otherwise, I would still have to come up with an excuse to fill the loophole of Krose and the rest.

At this moment, the enemy's forces mainly consists of brainless Skeletons and Undeads who were probably converted from the craftsmen and their family. Looking at the daunting quantity, the forbidden Undead Conversion Tool does lives up to its name and reputation. Carlohin had done well to make the ‘full use’ out of his tools.

I had done sufficient intelligence gathering beforehand, but it is impossible for anyone to be able to process all the variables that could happen in a battle. What that I wasn’t aware of but expected

to happen is that they were efficient in their work, there are actually four light assault airships in the storage already.

"Boom!" "Boom!"

The sound of the cannons shot from mid air echoes and black smoke gushes upwards. Occasionally, some metal pieces and wooden planks would fall to the ground. The cannon battle between fellow airships seems to be even more intense and savage than the other battles occurring at the moment.

Eagle No.1 Assault Airship, its original model being the smaller frigates used on battle on the surface of the water, is a prototype for the Air Fleet. With a magic-charged main cannon, two engineer-type side cannons and two fish-hook cannons, it is originally a powerful weapon used for water battles. It can hold up to a capacity of 30 people but five to six members are sufficient to operate it.

At this level, the Air Fleet is still stuck in stage of imitating the water fleets and has yet to attain the level of what it is ten years later, the formidable might of an army conducting a sudden assault from the skies. In my eyes, two Legend Mages would be more than sufficient to smack them down.

Although it isn't very powerful, what is important is that it is the original prototype. The turbine system as well as the air control system on the ship is the most classic model. Being the 'initial design' means that its structure is simple, making it easy to analyse and imitate. This is the reason why even though Auland started to sell some of the lower-tier airships, they refused to sell this

primitive Eagle series.

Originally, in terms of manpower, we were in a disadvantageous situation. However, as Yingou brought a few Goblin Engineers to join our ranks, compared to the slow and blunt newborn Undeads, the shipmates on our side turns out to be much more capable.

As for the Ace Hunter who had been wielding a rifle for more than two hundred years now, he displays astonishing capabilities in maneuvering the cannons. Not only is the main cannon he maneuvers a sure-hit, he even had the leisure to calculate the angle for another cannon on the ship.

Newborn Undeads are still fragile. The Undead army of Carlohin lacks a core force. The intelligent Undeads under his commands are extremely limited. Not to mention, even though most of them are manipulated by his Necromancy, they still possess hatred and resentment against him. After all, for the average human who worships the Order Gods, they would rather die and enter the Heavenly Realm then to be reduced to a bloodthirsty Undead that is viewed with hostility by the rest of the world.

The 'personnel' he can use is limited. A group of them has to be dispatched to the airships. Two Skeleton Mages brought two Middle-tier Undeads who can barely talk up to the airships. At the same time, they order a group of Skeletons and Zombies to serve as the rower. The Skeleton Mage who serves as the Captain is most probably a Mage in the past, for him to forget to operate the cannons while he gets absorbed in fighting. Or perhaps, he realised that he is unable to hit any targets with the cannons, so he decided jumped on the deck and use magic instead.

This, on the other hand, sent a reminder to Krose instead. Thus, a thunderstorm appears over their heads.

As a Legend-rank, Krose's intervention made the scales of the battle in the skies tilt completely. As lightning rampages, the enemy's airship suffers consecutive lightning strikes, such that their sail ignites and black smoke gushes from the wooden platform.

In the Elf kingdoms, Storm Druid is a job that is able to rival the Fire Mage in terms of their prowess as a cannon tower. When they unleash their full strength, it is as though dozens of main cannons suddenly came to life.

"Huala!" After a barrage of attacks from cannons and lightning strikes, the Eagle Warship labelled with the No.3 starts to break apart from the center. Then, the rear of the ship carrying the energy system explodes and the front of the ship starts to plummet from the sky.

At the same moment, the Mage Tower where Lich Carlohin is in emits intense red light. Then, a gigantic Explosion Fireball is shot with a crimson-red glow.

"Boom!"

Even though Krose tried to intercept the spell with her lightning, the gigantic Fireball still hits the No.1 Airship where Diana is at. The offensive ability of Fire Element Spells are formidable. The

strategic-level Explosion Fireball that Carlohin cast with the augmentation of the Mage Tower isn't something Krose's Lightning Storm is able to compete with. The next moment, the misfortune that happened on No.3 happens to its brother ship No.1, as it begins to fall apart amidst explosions.

"Jump from the boat!"

The good habit of the Goblins Engineers to always be prepared against explosions saved them. The next moment, white color parachutes open one after another. That is the Goblin Parachutes that were hung on the deck of the ship.

But, it is a pity that...

"AHHHHHH!"

As a close-combat Paladin who often dons heavy armor, Diana is completely useless in an aerial battle. Ever since they successfully took control of the boat, she became like a decorative ornament and had free time on her hands. However, when she found an Auland Missilor Mythril Body Plate, she was extremely delighted. This is a treasure that cannot be found on the market. Recalling that we are still in a battle, she wears it without hesitation...

Alright, I can understand the desire for good defensive gears of a melee Knight who serves as a long-term meat shield, but it is apparent that the parachute cannot carry a fully-geared Paladin. The Legend Knight who is shrieking as she plummets downwards serve as an ideal example. Even for a Paladin, it is important to

allocate some stat points to Intelligence... Even if she is unable to contribute to the battle, dying from stupidity is still very embarrassing.

Throwing a jar of apples from a height of 100 meters downwards, regardless of whether the jar shatters or not, the apple inside would definitely be reduced to apple jam. If Diana were to really crash down, regardless of whether she is a Paladin or not, she will definitely be reduced to Elf jam amidst the fragments of the armor.

With her prowess as a Legend-rank, if she didn't don on this full body armor, she could still think of a means to survive. But now, even as she regrets her actions terribly, there isn't anything she could do.

Moon Knight Diana, died in AD1897. Cause of death: Pilfering and too dumb. Silly Big Sister, why are you so foolish... She can already imagine what those callous fellows would write on her grave.

"AHHHHH, SAVE ME! THIS KIND OF DEATH IS REALLY TOO EMBARRASSING. I HAVE YET TO COMPLETE MY LIFE GOALS, MY... MY SAVINGS ARE HIDDEN IN MY BOOTS, PLEASE HELP ME HAND THEM OVER TO VICADORE, ALSO... LORD PATRICIA, PLEASE GUIDE MY WAY. I REPENT TO THE HOLY LIGHT. LORD WUMIANZHE... I HAVE YET TO DATE, I DON'T WANT TO DIE. SAVE ME, LORD WUMIANZHE!!"

Alright, she even starts to close her eyes and begins on her final prayers. But suddenly, she feels her body lighten as the speed of her descend slows. Soon, the descend seems to have stopped

altogether.

"Idiot! At least you remembered to ask to be saved, you aren't incorrigible yet."

Opening her eyes, she sees a familiar person. Just that, the golden wings which were spread open, the burning halo of flames on the head and that legendary stance reminded Diana of a certain legend.

"Angel? Am I dead? Lord, why are you here as well? Are you dead too?"

Panic shows on the face of the already traumatised Legend Knight. The moment she opens her mouth, she fully exposes her true nature of being blur despite her mature appearance.

Indeed, in the legends, Angels are the one who guide the souls of the dead. However, why do I feel uncomfortable at her words?

"I take back the words that I have said, you are indeed incorrigible. What do you mean by why are you here as well? I have never been to the heavens in my whole life... Un?"

My wings flap and I circle in an arc, avoiding the Storm Arrows and Fireballs shot from the Mage Towers.

"I will talk to you about that ridiculous repentance of yours when we return back. If the three Gods were to hear it, with a worshiper

like you, they probably would burst into laughter. But now, let's cooperate and deal with the important matter at hand first."

In the midst of gliding, I glance at the situation below. They were already in the midst of fighting.

Other than the endless flood of brainless pawns, the main force of the enemy is obviously the Death Knights converted from the White Wolf Guards.

Most of the newly awakened White Wolf Guards are still in a period of a confusion and have yet to recover sufficient intelligence for them to use Black Magic and their Race Talent, such that is a bit pushing it to say that they are Death Knights. They seem more like slightly higher-tier Zombie Warriors. Even so, they are still hard to deal with.

There are no other reasons. The equipment of the White Wolf Guards are simply too good. The Missilor Savage Sword carries a crimson-red glow as the corrugated blades roars. The specially crafted swords of the East Mist Royal Guards are unable to withstand more than a single blow from it. Furthermore, the Missilor Savage Javelin is a large AOE weapon of destruction. With just a single throw, a giant pit is blasted open. A moment of folly and one could probably die from them.

However, what is fortunate is that their intelligence are simply too low, causing them to commit fratricide continuously in the midst of the chaotic battle. When the Javelin is thrown, those who are blasted are basically their own pawns, causing the Death Knights and Skeleton Mages who are leading the troop to stomp in

anger.

Due to King Carlohin's identity as a Necromancer, the number of Death Knights are much higher than expected. When I flew upwards to save Diana, the Snowman Knights is the only powerful meat tank remaining below. Not to mention, the enemy were assisted by Mage Towers. In a moment, the fight below stalls into a stalemate.

It is fortunate that Beifeng and Casio are here. Against the dangerous Savage Javelin, their arrows can easily ignite them in advance, thus reducing casualties on our side.

However, I didn't have the intention to interfere with the fight below. After all, it is important for one to take the initiative in a battle. Since I don't have much time left in my transformation, it is important for me to make the fullest out of it. As for the battle on the surface, I reckon that it is about time.

"Boom!" "Boom!"

As expected, very quickly, an explosion from not too far away catches my attention. The secret pieces which I had prepared prove their worth.

"As expected of Clint and Yingou. Throwing them into frontal battle is a complete waste. It would be more suitable for them to cause destruction from the back."

Following the explosion, the light of the Mage Tower starts to flicker before going dark completely. Obviously, Clint and the others managed to fulfill the requirement for their explosions, destroying the energy source of this base.

"Before the spare generator and the smaller back-up energy source in the Mage Tower activates, let us accomplish our primary goal."

Primary goal? That is Carlohin himself. To expend oneself against an army of Undead is always foolish decision. The endless sea of Undeads doesn't know the concept of tiredness and morale. They are always able to drain their enemies of their stamina and blood in a prolonged fight. Against this type of enemy, slaying their commander is always the wisest decision. As long as the Undead Lord falls, his army would naturally become meaningless. They might even start to disintegrate on their own.

The fact that the Mage Tower is temporarily ceasing their fire means that the sky is mine once more. Bringing along our foolish ace fighter with me, if I don't go straight for the primary target, I would really be dumb.

Spreading my wings, I glide through the sky. With a 20 points in my Strength, it allows me to bear the weight of the female Knight with my right hands.

"Boom!"

I accidentally knocked into the wind sail of the No.6 ship. I am

fine, but a giant hole of a female Elf appears on the wind sail.

I casually split apart the mast and watch as the ship descends into chaos. Then, I flew upwards once again. Lowens didn't let this opportunity slip by. Making use of their temporary stall in movement, he accurately fires into the gunpowder vault, causing No.6 to ignite into flames.

The situation in the air has turned into a 1V2. The side which is in a disadvantage in terms of numbers had a Legend Druid and an ace sharpshooter in their ranks, so I'm not worried.

"Aiyo, I'm very sorry. I didn't see it."

"You must have did it intentionally."

"No, that one before is really an accident. This one, however, is intentional."

"AHHHHHH!"

Looking at my relaxed right hand and the screaming Diana below me, I smile gleefully. Looks like my aiming is on the mark this time.

"Boom!"

The platform of the pitiful No.5 is broken through. The bones of

the Skeleton Mage I had my eyes was crushed into shattered bones. On the other hand, Diana falls straight to the second floor.

"I'll give you two minutes! Clear away all High-tier Undeads here."

But, what was bizarre is that I didn't hear the sounds of slaughter that I expected to hear. Instead, after the rumbling of footsteps, Diana appears on the platform once again.

"Lo...Lord, bring me away quickly. This ship is about to explode!

Alright, I still hold great trust her words. I will speak my suspicions afterwards on the way. As expected, a short moment later, before we managed to get too far away, I heard the sound of explosion from my back.

"Boom!"

The explosion this time is even louder than the previous. It seems that the gunpowder vault has mixed with some other object and explodes concurrently with it.

"What happened? You fell on the gunpowder vault?"

"...Why am I so unfortunate recently?" Diana mutters, regaining her senses only after she hears my words.

"On the second floor, I crushed another Undead Knight. Looking from its hat, it should be the captain of the ship. However, I continued to fall all the way to the third floor, into the power room, onto the main engine..."

"The engine is spoiled? For the entire ship to explode just after its engine spoils, looks like the stability of the airships are quite terrible."

"That's not it." Diana says with a tearful face, a red blush of embarrassment appearing on her face.

"Just when I was about to get up, I accidentally pressed a button. It is a red button with a skeleton head on top of it."

Alright, as we both came from Liu Huang Mountain City, it is sufficient to stop the story there. Everyone knows of the bad habit of the Goblins Engineers to leaving behind a button with a red skeleton head on it.

"To crush two High-tier Undeads while falling through and press the self-destruct button when you are about to get up? This luck... choosing you to be my bodyguard was an excellent choice."

Such a great misfortune directing rod. No wonder I felt that my luck recently has been not bad. Looks like you have taken in all of my bad luck.

I nod my head satisfactorily. On the other hand, a look of

incomprehension and helplessness appears on Diana's face after hearing my words. However, it isn't the time to be sentimental or explain what happened.

Looking at the top of the highest tower, under the protection of a group of Death Knights, Carlohin is currently casting Burst Inferno and his target seems to be us, who is already a potential threat to him.

"Darned Darsos! You traitors, I, Carlohin, should have been the next Emperor of Auland."

Alright, this Lich seems to think that we are Darsos's men. However, there is no need to do explanations.

"Un, then, your highness, allow me to send you on your way."

Suddenly, the voice of the Queen of Banshees sounds by my ear.

"To think that it would be someone that we know. Look at the ring on his finger."

When I carefully examine him, I realise that there a mark of the Celestial Tower on the Lich's right hand. In that instant, rage fills me.

"Darned Celestial Tower, to think that their people would even be here."

"I'm not talking about that. Look at the insignia of a magic book on the ring on the pinky of his left hand. He should be one of my disciple in name, your junior."

"Even if he is my junior, does it make a difference?"

"No, I'm just warning you to pay heed. None of my disciples, even if just in name, are easy to deal with. Every one of them would at least have a few underhanded tricks. Don't treat him just like any other normal Lich."

TL: I know I have been translating Carlohin as Prince Carlohin. But actually, he is a king. In the feudal system, princes who aren't killed are sometimes crowned as kings in some principality, especially if they are close with the emperor etc. It is like a noble position, higher than that of the Great Dukes (Will change the other chapters to reflect as so)

Eagle No.1 Assault Airship, its original model being the smaller frigates used on battle on the surface of the water, is a prototype for the Air Fleet.TL: I googled it and frigates are the smallest unit for battle (Although navies tend to name as they want, they are large ships called frigate as well). Not sure whether it is suitable in this case (the raw writes small cannon boats and frigates seem to reflect that).

Chapter 107: Semigod Equipment And Gamble

Carlohin.Menon, the blood-related uncle of the current Emperor Darsos.Menon, as well as the blood-related younger brother from the same mother of the previous Emperor, Crowe.Menon. He was deeply trusted by the previous Emperor. As a Mage, not only is he the Head of the Court Mages, he is also one of the top 3 military commanders of Auland. In his later years, the old Emperor entrusted him with the important weapon of the country, the Air Fleet, to him.

But, the truth is that Carlohin has never thought that he is inferior to his elder brother. The reason why he helped Crowe in the vie for the royal throne is because they both came from the same mother. If he doesn't assist the elder brother he is closest with, he could only wait to be ridden of after some other prince sits on the throne. In reality, as the top genius of the Royal Family, his dream to become the Emperor has never been quenched.

In fact, in order to gain power, the young him even hid his name and went to the fearsome Xiluo Empire to study Necromancy. He became the apprentice of the 3rd Senator, the Queen of Banshees Harloys, and researched specifically in Death Magic under her.

Yes, on the surface, he might be a Legend-rank Fire Mage. But, at the same time, he is also a Saint-rank Necromancer.

Necromancers aren't viewed as an evil job for no apparent reason. Other than interrupting the slumber of the dead, this class of vile magic can sacrifice the living and ingest their blood, flesh

and soul to become stronger. As their strength soars rapidly, these powers would accumulate in their body and obstruct their body and soul. Bearing powers beyond what their body can hold, they would be corrupted by the powers that they are unable to control, causing changes to occur in them in all aspects.

For example, Necromancers are known to not treat humans as humans. They would gradually grow more and more indifferent to life and death. Demon Mages and Soul Reapers would gradually become less and less humane, such that it would become normal for them to salivate upon seeing other people's soul. When the Blood Mages finally become bloodthirsty, they would become even more vampiric than vampires. They would view humans as livestock. Those Evil Priests who gain powers from the Malevolent Gods would gradually become more and more fanatic. They would lose their sense of self and become the puppets of the Malevolent Gods.

Of course, you can also progress a step at a time and digest these powers slowly, turning this unorthodox power into the demon sword in your hands rather than being consumed by this demon sword. But, for some people, if they were to do it slowly, it would go against their motive of learning 'evil' magic. They are willing to accept the side effects these powers would have on their mentality.

The most alluring quality of these unorthodox magic is that it is very easy for them to become 'immortals', although they would tend to have to pay a price for their immortality.

For example, Necromancers, as long as they don't meet with 'accidents', even if they are not of sufficient standard to become

Liches, it is of no difficulty for them to become a Skeleton Mage. To the humans who fear the unknown and death, sometimes the tempt of 'immortality' is hard to resist, especially to the ambitious who seek to climb to the pinnacle.

Of course, those who train to the pinnacle via orthodox means are also able to become immortal. For example, the Heroic Spirits, God Envoy and God Beasts. However, they have to pay a price for it as well. Although they may seem to be of a much higher level, they are in fact just the servants and warriors for the Gods.

Achieving immortality, Carlohin's ambitions had always been wild. However, despite the fact that the individual strength of his elder brother is negligible, Crowe possesses great talent in politics and military affairs. Under his rule, the Auland Empire was prospering day after day. Heroes are built during chaotic times. If the country is stable, no ground would be left for for troublemakers. Naturally, those ambitious would have to hide their intentions and feign as a loyal and capable subordinate.

Thus, even though Carlohin is obviously a Saint Necromancer, he put on a facade as a Legend-rank. During his career in the military, he even groomed a large bunch of subordinates who are loyal to him, controlling nearly 30% of the entire White Wolf Guards. He was waiting for a gap to occur in Crowe's rule. He has long noticed that his nephew, Darsos, had wild ambitions but he helped to cover it. After all, as long as Darsos were to strike, he might be able to use his rebellion as an impetus for him to grab the crown.

Fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately, perhaps it is due to

Carlohin being too outstanding in feigning as a loyal subordinate or perhaps, Crowe had detected the ambitions of his younger brother and was afraid that a problem may occur during the inheritance of the throne, he made Carlohin accept the position of the Commander-in-Chief of the underwater base. Naturally, after realising that it is the biggest trump card of the Auland Empire, how could Carlohin reject his offer? Thus, when Darsos made a move, this ambitious uncle of his was instead trapped in the base, missing the ideal opportunity for him to strike.

Alright, let's stop talking about how this ambitious unlucky fellow was sent out of the game for such a ludicrous reason. What we have to face now is the rage of a person who had prepared for decades for his wild ambitions.

"Die!"

As he raises his staff, pitch-black Power of Death warps into an eerie ghastly finger and rushes towards me.

"Instant casting Finger of Death? Impossible!"

Finger of Death is a 8-circle magic which only Legend-rank Necromancers are able to wield. In order to instant cast it, its difficulty is heightened by at least 2 circles. That isn't something a Saint-rank Necromancer would be able to do.

For my thoughts to be wandering even at death’s door, am I seeking death? Actually, if this Finger of Death is directed towards Diana, even the Legend-rank female Knight with Magic Immunity

Skin would have to tremble but if it is directed towards me...

【Perfect Courage: Immunity to all fear-related magic, death-related magic, race talents and abilities. The wielder will always be in a state of high morale. This effect can be shared with 3 party members.】

The completed version of Pale Justice lives up to its name as the Order Faction's Sacred Sword of the Holy Light. Paladins are natural Undead killers and their abilities are almost specially tailored against every aspect of the Undeads. Regardless of whether it is deadly higher circle Necromancy Magic or fear-inducing curses, the sword is completely immune to these all, leaving no gaps for the Necromancers to break through.

As I expected, in the instant when the Finger of Death strikes me, the golden Holy Light shrouding the sacred sword radiates brightly and the dark mist of death starts to scatter.

However, even though the death effect has been dispelled, the shock wave from the Power of Death still isn't something a Bronze-rank rookie could withstand. The ice armor immediately shatters and breaks apart while the impact from the blow sent me flying.

Cold sweat trickles down my back. If it wasn't for the ice armor I had equipped, with my current 'fragile' physical body, I might have just died there and then.

"Death and Decay!"

Alright, this time, it isn't an instant-cast. However, for a 9-circle Saint-rank Magic to be flung out like that as though it was nothing, this is really too unbelievable. What kind of Saint-rank Mage is this? He is just like a Myth-rank Mage already.

"Go!"

It was due to my timely sharing of the aura of Perfect Courage that prevented the Breath of Death from evaporating the surrounding moisture and absorbing the life force in the area, which would have resulted in an instant death. Even so, Diana was still sent flying with a mouthful of blood. This time, the outstanding defense of her full body armor saved her.

The Lich's choice of spells are well thought through. With both the physical damage from the burning steam in the surrounding and the Affliction of Death, Diana's Magic Immunity Skin isn't able to work its prowess.

"The Dark God's Breath of Death! That is a SemiGod Equipment, the ultimate treasure of Necromancers."

The black cat on my shoulders shouts in astonishment. It is because of this personal weapon of an Ancient SemiGod Undead Emperor that Carlohin is able to throw all of those high-circle instant-death spells frenziedly without compromising their effectiveness.

I unfurl my wings to soar into the sky to avoid the enemy's magic from locking on. Gazing towards our fighting ground, I can’t help

but feel that the situation isn't in our favor.

Carlohin's guards have already rushed here. The Savage Javelin of those Death Knights are still difficult to deal with. If we do not end the battle fast, not mentioning how our plan to behead the commander would fail, Diana and I might even fall here.

Looking at how Diana is struggling to stand up, I could tell that the 9-circle magic which had been augmented by the SemiGod Equipment definitely dealt serious damage to her.

"Darn it, the SemiGod weapon is too ridiculous. How can one possibly cast high-circle magic spells with such rapid speed? Is there really no way to subdue him? Think, there is no perfect human in this world. Hurry up and think!"

"Breath of Death? This name sounds like an effect which strengthens the effects of instant-killing magic. Even with the 'Perfect Courage' ability from the sacred sword, the shock wave from the Power of Death is still fatal. These days, other than the dead, who doesn't fear the Power of Death. If I had known earlier, I wouldn't have revived... Wait, the dead?"

Immediately, an idea pops into my list of options. Thus, I start to laugh.

"You have an idea?"

"Of course, that is tradition!"

After realising that he is unable to lock onto me, who is moving rapidly, Carlohin's gaze turns towards Diana. The next moment, I swipe downwards towards him.

"Foolish living beings. Accept the misfortune fate has in plan for you."

As I expected, a black color vector comes shooting towards me. That is a 6-circle Necromancy Magic Physical Frailty.

The fact that two high-circle Death Magic is unable to kill me made him suspect that we might have some treasures on us that allow us to be immune to the Affliction of Death. Thus, he chose to cast this spell.

Physical Frailty inherits the vileness of the Necromancy Magic. It will make the target feel as though he had carried 200kg of rice sacks to run two marathons. It is exceptionally effective against Warriors who depend heavily on their physical body and is reputed as the melee killer. If a physically weak person were to be struck by the spell, it isn't impossible for them to die from excessive loss of stamina.

The vector comes at me at high speed. I had no time to change my path of movements and was about to come crashing head-on with this black vector. In that instant, Diana grinds her teeth and leaps with her hands stretching forward, attempting to try her luck with her Magic Immunity Skin while I...

"Move away!"

I push away the foolish lass without any hesitation and collide straight into the vector.

"AHHHH!!"

Shrouded in pitch black light, I couldn't help but shout in agony. The next moment, I crash violently onto the floor and roll around in pain. Even the gold wings on my back starts to disintegrate.

"Hah! As expected of the foolish living beings. To still be playing the laughable game of friendship at a time like this... What!"

"Sin-Splitting Strike!"

The location where I fell was less than five meters away from the Lich. After which, I pretended to roll to close in the distance on him by another two meters. Then, I leapt upwards and covered the final three meters in an instant. The sacred sword Pale Justice comes striking down on his head along with the lethal Holy Light. It is impossible for him to dodge the attack.

"Clang!"

Even though the Lich has been forced into a kneeling position through brute strength, the sacred sword was still stopped by the pitch-black short staff. Can the basic property of the SemiGod Equipment of being tough be used like that as well?

The green soulfire burning in the Lich's eye sockets starts to blaze. Judging from how his lower jaw is opening and closing at a rapid pace, it seems that he has started to chant another spell.

"Descent of the Hell's Black Core."

The darned cat's rich knowledge of magic spells allows her to instantaneously identify that this is a 10-circle Myth-rank Forbidden Spell, a large AOE destructive spell combining both Necromancy and Fire Magic together. As long as he completes this magic, this entire platform would turn into the volcanic vent to hell's hellfire. There is no way we would be able to survive and the same goes for him as well.

For a life form like a Lich, as long as his phylactery remains undestroyed, he is able to revive again and again. Apparently, forced to this point, Carlohin no longer has the confidence to get away unscathed. He intends to die together with us, then revive himself.

Actually, the reason why Liches are that abhorred by adventurers is that not only are they difficult to deal with, they also have the bad habit of committing a double suicide whenever something comes up.

As the sword and the staff crosses blows, I found myself in an extreme close proximity with him. I could see the malicious intent on the skull head and there is even a trace of gleefulness on it.

However, to dare to chant your incantation after I had gotten close, aren't you looking down on me for a little too much?

"You want it? Catch it."

Thus, without hesitation, I let go of the weapon which we were pitting our strength through and in front of the Lich's eyes of incomprehension, I stretch out my hands.

"Look at my Flying Dragon Cloud Exploring Hands!"

"Kacha." A crisp sound echoes and the incantation stops. That is because I have removed the lower jaw of the Lich.

"Aha! Let me help you wash your bones and maintain it for you! Dragon Exploring Hands! Dragon Exploring Hands!"

My both hands assault him simultaneously and continuously. In an instant, a bone from his hand and rib cage has been removed. Soon, even his spinal cord was pulled out and with a powerful stomp on the ground, his entire skeletal rack falls apart.

As an experienced Lich, through the last century, I can't even remember how many times I have taken out my own bones to maintain it. Just like how an experienced veteran could take disassemble his gun with his eyes closed, I could take apart a skeleton into bones and put it back together with my eyes closed.

In a few short second, all that remains of Lich Carlohin is a

skeletal head without its lower jaw. I stab the sacred sword into the soulfire of his skeletal head without second thoughts. The bizarre ripple of his soul disperses and we could vaguely hear the scream of agony from the depths of his soul.

"Alright. He would take at least a few days to revive after his soulfire was incincerated by the sacred inferno. What we have to do next is to find his phylactery before he revives."

After Carlohin falls, the shortcoming of an Undead army being over-reliant on an Undead Lord shows itself once again. The large group of Low-tier Undead whom he was controlling with his Necromancy Magic immediately falls to the ground.

A few intelligent Undeads shouts 'Aulanders don't hit Aulanders', 'We were all forced into it, actually we are all good citizens', 'Actually, I am your father'. Of course, the one who shouted the last phrase got lynched.

"Reorganise them and question them where Carlohin's phylactery is? Forget it, they can't possibly know it. How about we search Carlohin's room? Now is my favorite moment of a battle, collecting spoils of war... Cough, punishing evil."

Just as I picked up the 'The Dark God's Breath of Death' smiling, Diana suddenly leaps over.

"Are you fine? Why did that evil magic have no effect on you?"

"Hmph, what do you mean by no effect? I paid a heavy price for it. Look!"

I open my clothes. In there, a black cat with half of its body exposed outside is brawling with my resilient throat. She bites, gnaws and claws, using both her fangs and claws simultaneously, but she is still unable to scratch out a wound. However, when I looked at her, she spits towards me without any hesitation.

"Look, cat shield!"

Dodging that feeble and unthreatening attack, I pull her off me and shake her about. Holding her in my hands, I made a stance of defense, as though she is a shield.

"...How can a kitten block such vile magic?"

Towards Diana's suspicion, I smile mysteriously without replying her question. You can't expect me to tell her that although this darned cat seems very cute, she is in fact an 'evil' Undead creature? Alright, actually there is no need for the inverted commas for evil. If the Queen of Banshees Harloys cannot be considered as evil, then everyone else in this world could be considered as saints.

Yes, when I said tradition previously, I meant our line’s tradition of pulling our mentors down. Back then, I thought that Harloys would be a good meat shield against the Necromancy Spells.

Currently, Harloys is an Undead Slime. Although she has a

portion of the composition of a living being within her, she is still an Undead creation of mine. Using Death Magic against Undeads is just like throwing a fireball towards Fire Elementals. Other than making the other party even stronger, it has no effects whatsoever.

Thus, after the 'cat shield' has blocked that Physical Frailty vector which is made of Death Magic, I am actually unaffected by its effects at all. All that came afterwards is just a performance to get closer to him to conduct a sneak attack.

In a way, this is also taking advantage of the other party's inexperience. I deduced that being in an esteemed position, Carlohin must have often cast magic safely under the protection of many bodyguards, so how would he have thought of being assaulted like that? The result is just as I have anticipated.

"Wuuuuuuu, you unfilial disciples only know how to bully me! If only I knew that all of you had malicious intentions in mind. I was blind to accept you all as my disciples. Teacher, I finally know how you felt when I stabbed you back then. Now, I also have a knife stabbed in me, not to mention that it is by two of my disciples in both the front and the back. I will never have disciples again. Wuuuuu!"

Alright, the only victim is the traumatised Harloys and her saddened heart as an educator.

"Stop faking it. If you had good relationship with Carlohin, why didn't you say it back then? Which of your disciples have you never taken advantage of? Probably, if the other party knew that it was you, he would have went even further. Besides, have you forgotten

the existence of the Magic Pet contract? Your true emotions cannot be concealed from me. You expect me to believe that such a minor thing would cause you to be in such a state of agony?"

Alright, she got exposed. The next moment, the darned cat immediately stops her tears, shocking Diana, but displeasure could still be seen on her face

"Let me eat the SemiGod staff. I want to become stronger. I have had enough of the days of serving as a pet."

"Fine, then show me a cute gesture. If I am satisfied with it, I will give the staff to you."

The little kitten smiles mysteriously.

"Meow, master. Give me the thick one, the black short stick, okay? Loys really wants to eat the stick. I begging you. Meow!"

"Pu!" Alright, looks like I still underestimated the lower decency boundary of the darned cat. Initially, I only wanted to tease her, make her do some backflips and bark like a dog. After her words came out, not mentioning how I burst into laughter, Diana starts to look at me with a bizarre expression.

This silly lass believes the words of others too easily. She is probably thinking of me as a Gentleman (Pervert) once again.

However, I had intended to pass this SemiGod Equipment on to

her from the start anyway. After all, bringing this SemiGod Equipment around in the mortal world is simply looking for trouble. Also, after Harloys consumes it, it would be more convenient for me to use it as well.

"That, can you stop overthinking it? Even if I'm that desperate, I won't go to the extent of venting my frustrations on a cat."

Right after I explained myself to Diana, an evil smile flashes across Harloys's face. After a distortion in space, she turns into a cute golden-haired Elf girl. Although she turns back within a single second, it is sufficient to mark the sight into the brain of the Legend Knight.

Without doubt, this is the vengeance of the 'cat shield'.

"No wonder it’s called Gentlemen Alliance. So you are a Great Gentleman (Pervert) yourself, to actually make your own cat turn into a little girl, how much..."

Alright, she doesn't even use respectful language anymore. Looks like my reputation has gone down the drain this time.

"Actually, it is understandable for man to be slightly Gentleman. Actually, if you really can't bear it any longer, you can consider Momo. Although she goes a bit far with her words, she is really a good girl. She has liked you for a long period of time."

"Forget it! She definitely can't make it! Anyone but her."

Diana’s untimely matchmake reminds me of what happened a few days ago. We were conducting a selection for Aurora Knights and as a Silver-rank, Momo comes running over to join in the commotion. Originally, as she is considerably powerful, she had a chance to succeed with the Frigid Nightmares. That is until she opened her mouth.

"Is there anyone who can turn into a cute shota? Hehe, that’s right, an eight to nine years old little boy. Hehe, right, I have little Rolo's picture here. Can you transform into him?"

"Big Sister Seva, please help me just this once. On the account of how I helped you deflect an arrow just now, just for a moment. Just for a split moment. I really want to see little Rolo, but I am unable to defeat that pervert. Wuuuu, Momo's life is so tough."

Looking at the Momo who is pestering Seva on the airship, Diana sighs helplessly.

"It is due to her becoming weirder and weirder that I want her to marry out quickly."

"Passing the disaster onto others just because you can't deal with it? Diana, you have also been corrupted. However, I have to thank you for your warning for yesterday's night assault. Otherwise, the outcome would have been unimaginable."

"Sigh, actually this is also partially your fault. In the past, she was obviously quite normal."

"How can you blame me for this, she is obviously the one... Alright, let's just blame it all on me."

At this moment, I can't help but recall the 'King of Gentlemen' title, what all Gentlemen would proactively join my group. Throughout this journey, I have still yet to meet more than a handful of normal people.

【Ding, congratulations for noticing the hidden effect of the 'King of Gentlemen'. Not only will the title make Gentlemen proactively join your faction, it will also turn ordinary people into Gentlemen. Little Gentleman will turn into Great Gentleman, Great Gentleman will turn into God Gentleman and God Gentleman will turn into King of Gentlemen! ——System Notice: Did you notice how I gave you the greatest honor amongst the Gentlemen from the start, aren't I caring?】

"Caring your head! Do you think that we are lacking Gentlemen among our midst!"

While we were celebrating our victory in the underwater base and getting a headache over the Gray Elf who is getting weirder and weirder, in the Auland Empire, the Emperor is meeting with an esteemed guest.

"Hah, with your help, what would that smelly nine-headed snake count as? Inform the envoys of the other countries. The enthronement ceremony will be brought ahead and it will be held

along with the Lord Dragon Slayer's great undertaking. We will be written in the annals of history together!"

"Your highness has spoken too highly of me. I am only an insufficiently powerful old man who has yet to die. I could probably drive away the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor but killing it is probably impossible. My master also told me not to go overboard."

Despite looking like a handsome youth, he had the tone of an elderly. Judging from the golden glow radiating beneath his white skin and the halo behind his head, he isn't a mortal but a Heroic Spirit of a true God.

After a bunch of formalities, when Darsos finally sends off the Heroic Spirit, the arrogance and frenzy he displayed previously turns into calmness.

"Dragon Slayer" Bastlar. When the enemy he is facing is a Dragon, will he show mercy? Even to the extent of not going overboard? That is an insane idea. Sending down this bloodthirsty Heroic Spirit, does the Goddess of Moon intend to clash with the Queen of Storms? Darn it. Get our army to make preparations. It is possible that the situation might get out of control."

"Yet, you are still making use of this opportunity to hold the enthronement ceremony?"

"It is not like you don't know how many envoys are returning back to their homeland everyday. If Auland wants to become a

superpower, then this alliance must be conducted successfully. It is hard for us to step down at this point. Since the situation can't get any worse, why don't we just throw in all our stakes and gamble a big one!"

Notes:

"Instant casting Finger of Death? Impossible!"

TL: DotA reference

Just clarifying, the spells his cast normally carries Power of Death which I think probably works just like poison, afflicting someone with death (status), something like that. So, if it isn't dispelled, the magic will just assume like something like poison; if it hits, he will be poisoned/ whatever effects. But, when it is dispelled, the magic power probably bursts, resulting in a shockwave. (Based on my interpretation)

"Death and Decay!"

TL: WoW3

"Descent of the Hell's Black Core."

TL: I can't find a decent translation for it. I can't be sure but I think the reference is to Bastard!! (A Japanese manga and anime) There's one spell by its protagonist Dark Schneider whose name is really similar to the name of this spell and if I'm not wrong about the English translation, it's called Halloween.

"No wonder it’s called Gentlemen Alliance. So you are a Great Gentleman (Pervert) yourself, to actually make your own cat turn into a little girl, how much..."

Alright, she doesn't even use respectful language anymore. Looks like my reputation has gone down the drain this time.

TL: If you recall, she always uses Lord and (rarely) a more respectful Chinese word for you. This time, she just addresses him casually as though like a peer.

Chapter 108: The Secret Of The Lich

The over reliance of the Undead Calamity on its mastermind dealt it a solid wound. Following the fall of the Lich, Carlohin's Undead army falls apart.

In our eyes as ex-Undead Lords, this shows that the army's structure is extremely chaotic. The more mature an Undead army is, the more Middle-tier and High-tier Undeads they would have. With more middle-level commanders within the army, the low-tier cannon fodders would be able to exert a greater impact on the battlefield through their leadership. They would also be even less fearful of getting killed.

However, the reason why Emperor Yongye's Yongye army fell apart after his death back then was because he also walked the opposite extremity. His army had too much High-tier and Middle-tier Undeads in their midst. After losing their common leader, Emperor Yongye, along with the formation of the Country of Undeads and the temptation of the Yongye Scepter, an opportunity opens for the powerful to climb to the pinnacle, causing them to fall into internal strife.

"That being said, that junior Lich of mine is really quite dumb. To actually chant right in front of a melee fighter, not to mention a spell with a long incantation. Is he that sick of living? Is this what you taught him? His battle experience is incredulously horrid. Looks like your standard as an educator is getting worse and worse."

The darned cat on my shoulders became so mad from my words

that her hairs stood on ends. If it wasn't for the fact that she is still feeling awful from trying to bite through my skin, she would definitely come assaulting me once again.

I understand her quite well. Usually, she is about just as thick-skinned as me, indifferent to any words directed towards her. However, the moment when doubt is cast over the standard of her magic and her standard as an educator, she would be provoked in an instant.

"That... That isn't taught by me! Also, I don't teach such a basic thing. The fool is obviously the one who lacks battle experience. I am not some kindergarten teacher, do I still have to teach these basics over and over again?"

Yes, basics. As a fragile Mage job, the first law that they have to observe is to maintain a safe distance from close combatants.

During a battle between a powerful Mage and a close combatant, the close combatants would often be trying their best to close in distance on the Mage while the Mage would be using their defensive spells to avoid them and further the gap between them through Teleportation. This cycle will go on continuously until a gap appears in one's defense, and that would be the decisive moment.

In the final conclusion, either the Mage would gain sufficient distance and time to focus their firepower to blast away the close combatants or that the close combatants would successfully grind away the defensive spells, escape spells and control spells of the other party and slice them apart.

To say the truth, this isn't very fair. The Spellcasters could err over and over again whereas it could be fatal the moment the close combatants commit a mistake. Under most circumstances, close combatants would find themselves unable to catch up with the Mages and end up being played to death.

However, there is no such as absolute equality in this world. Mage jobs have a high requirement for innate talent and they number less than a tenth of the other jobs. Furthermore, they require a large amount of time and fortune to groom. Thus, it is often easier for Mages to earn a position of respect in the human society compared to close combatants.

Without doubt, as the Head of Court Mages and a king of the royal family, Carlohin possesses true authority. However, being in an esteemed position, he would be lacking in opportunities to accumulate battle experience. Venturing out, he would always bring along a large group of bodyguards. So, how could it be possible for him to stand on the frontlines and be forced into a life and death situation?

Should I say that he inexperienced to the point of naivety? This junior of mine actually dares to chant right in front of a close combatant. Even though my power rank is much lower than his, he shouldn't underestimate me that much. Assuming that I didn't dismantle him forcefully, if I were to send in a few more attacks from the Pale Justice, he would also be done for.

"I... I think that I should expel Carlohin from my apprenticeship. I have never taught such a shameful apprentice. Actually, you

should be secretly joyful over it. If it wasn't for this fellow lacking in battle experience to such a ludicrous point, given his strength as a Saint-rank Lich along with his SemiGod Equipment, it is definitely impossible for you to defeat him."

What Harloys said is true. Actually, this couldn't be blamed on the teacher for not guiding him well. Apparently, he would usually make full use of his strength as a Saint-rank and his SemiGod Equipment to blast everything with high-circle spells. Meeting someone who is immune to his spells, he immediately panics. If Carlohin wasn't that foolish, given his strength as a Legend-rank Fire Mage and a Saint-rank Necromancer, not to mention the possession of a SemiGod Equipment, he could have dealt with us patiently. There would at least be a dozen methods for him to claim victory and he wouldn't have ended up decapitated.

This sufficiently verifies an old adage. No matter how powerful a person's martial arts is, if their brain is unable to function well, they would end being put in place by a concrete brick.

I nod my head solemnly, even though a smile had creeped onto my face.

"Heh, this junior of mine is almost like a captain of a treasure delivery convoy. The equipment on his body is not bad at all. Then, I will be taking this SemiGod Equipment with joy."

【The Dark God's Breath of Death】

【Attack Power: 1-2 Tier: SemiGod】

【Single-handed staff. Prerequisite: Intelligence 15+, High-

ranked Necromancer】

【Breath of Death: Allows one to store 3 Death Spells that is of maximum 8-circles (Legend-rank), allowing the user to instant cast it the moment it is activated. For a 9-circle spell (Myth-rank), the user is able to cast it without incantation and only one 9-circle spell can be stored.】

【Domain of Death: With this staff as the center, an intangible Domain of Death exists. In this domain, the effects of Death Magic is increased by 50% and the probability of Affliction of Death being inflicted is increased by 30%.】

【The Countenance of the Dead: The wielder's Intelligence will be increased by 2, Stamina by 2 and he will be immune to all fear-related and death-related effects. However, his charm will be reduced by 10 (This stat can be reduced to the point of negativity)】

【The Protection of the Dark God: Summon a formless protective barrier which can withstand 200 magic damage/magic equipment damage. Before the protective barrier breaks, the wielder will be immune to all stunning, hexing and any other control-type magic. Duration: 10 seconds】

【The Rage of the Dark God: An active ability. After it is activated, the next magic spell will be enchanted with the Affliction of Death effect, even if it is just a normal Magic Bullet. The Affliction of Death effect would be equivalent to the power rank of the spell.】

【Soul Conversion: Siphon the soul of a dead and convert it into pure Power of Death】

【The Ancient Undead Emperor Dark God has once reached the pinnacle in the field of Death. It is said that just by breathing, he is able to plunge the living into the world of the dead. Even if he has already fallen, the SemiGod Equipment

still contains a fragment of his soul. Perhaps, an Undead Lord would be able to comprehend the profoundness of death through this equipment and ascend to the highest throne of as a SemiGod Undead Emperor.】

This is a classical SemiGod Equipment catered for battles. The Undead Emperor's soul fragment as well as the profound wisdom hidden within it that could send Undead Lords into a state of frenzy could actually be neglected. After all, it is much more dependant on luck than anything else, it is not something that could be attained forcefully. Rather, the three instant-cast Death Spells of the Breath of Death ability already makes it an astonishingly powerful killing tool.

Just with this 'Breath of Death' itself, it doesn't need any other abilities. Throwing out three Death Spells in an instant, who would be able to withstand it? Also, with the 'Soul Conversion' ability, the wielder's mana would never run dry,

No wonder Carlohin's battle experience would be that lacking. With this SemiGod Equipment, he is probably used to instant killing everything. Even if he is obstructed temporarily, he just have to siphon a few souls and continue blasting spells over.

"Although they say that I am a cannon Mage, this junior of mine is obviously the true outstanding cannon Mage."

Looking at the Protection of the Dark God, it seems that I have underestimated the other party. When he chanted the spell to commit a double suicide with us, he seems to have been putting his faith on this protective barrier. To get through that 200 damage

barrier, I would have at least taken me 7 to 8 strike. I wouldn't have the time to do anything else even if I managed to break the barrier. However, he didn't expect that I would be unlike his previous opponents, that I wouldn't utilise my powerful weapons while challenging the powerful Lich and instead choose to pull out his bones barehanded. After pulling out his lower jaw with one strike, he was unable to even chant any spells normally and naturally, the odds fell in our favors.

If this toy were to be exposed outside, the Church of Holy Light would probably launch a crusade against me instantly. I intended for Harloys to consume it but the current her should still be unable to ingest a SemiGod Equipment. Preparations still have to be made and thus, I kept the SemiGod Equipment joyfully.

Just when my evaluation of Carlohin went up after catching sight of that defensive ability which didn’t activate as anticipated, five minutes later, my overly high evaluation of him crumbles once again.

"This... I really didn't taught this. I... I don't know him!"

"I believe you. Such a brainless student indeed cannot be justified by the improper guidance of a mentor. He is probably born with a defect in his brain that cannot be cured with any medicine. His intelligence is probably on par with that silly lass. How did he ascend to Saint-rank?"

The moment we walked into Carlohin's room in the Mage Tower, we began to 'collect spoils of war'. However, the moment we started searching around his room, we found a square box under

his bed.

Opening it, we saw a blue bottle wrapped in velvet. Inside the bottle, a soulfire burns quietly.

If there isn't a second Lich here, this toy is surely the Carlohin's phylactery.

This is an ideal textbook example. A model soul bottle, placed in a box in fear that he might lose it. To interpret the word 'phylactery' literally to such a level, he could be considered as eccentric as well.

TL: Phylactery literally means Soul Box in Chinese. And his soul is literally placed in a bottle in a box.

While other Liches are trying their hardest to disguise their phylacteries over and over again, fearful of someone finding this weakness of theirs, this phylactery which sits upright there without a hint of disguise left us stupefied.

"Hey, Harloys, if you were to be converted into a Lich here, how would you create your phylactery?"

"I would find some debris and throw it into the water after successfully converting it. I can guarantee that no one would be able to find it. You?"

"I would put it into an ordinary-looking concrete block and use it

in the main passageway. Passers-by would cross it everyday but they would never imagine that there would be a phylactery under their feet."

The two of them stare at each other, a hint of a smile appearing in both their eyes.

"Alas, our heritage was unfortunate! Back then, I should have included an intelligence test in the entrance exams."

"Don't tell others that I am his senior. I can't afford to gain such a title."

The sighs of the two harmonises as one. Finally, someone can no longer withstand all the sarcastic remarks directed in his face.

"Darsos's dogs, do you think that you could insult me casually just because I have lost? No matter what, I am a king of Auland. My senior? Do you know who my master is? You think that you... Don't shake the bottle, I am feeling really giddy now. Stop shaking it!"

One of the reason why the textbook example of soul bottles has died out is because that souls contained in a bottle is really too fragile. Just by slightly shaking it, Carlohin immediately surrenders without second thoughts.

"This sensation feels so familiar."

"Un, it is made from your skin, darned cat."

Alright, ignoring the darned cat who stops what she was doing to bite me with all her might, I turn my attention towards the phylactery which fell into silence.

"Alright, allow me to reintroduce ourselves to explain why I am your senior. Un, I should the oldest senior who managed to survive until this point. I am Roland.Mist and this darned cat is our master, Harloys."

"How could this be possible!"

Carlohin is unable to retain his silence. Not mentioning how his heritage is exposed in a few words, how could that fearsome Queen of Banshees be reduced to a soft and furry little cat.

However, that black cat glares at him in displeasure. An apparition-like figure flashes behind her for an instant. That familiar ripple of her soul is the best name card.

"How have you been doing? By the way, don't claim to be my disciple in the future. It is really embarrassing for me. Right, Harlock (Carlohin's fake name), seeing you in such a state, all of my anger has been dispelled. Let's just strike off the grudges we had in the past. Of course, you can also reject it and we could recalculate the debt between us."

The soulfire in the bottle ripples. If the bottle could nod its head

freely, it would have most probably have turned into a roly-poly toy.

"Teacher Harloys, you said it as though I wronged you. You were obviously the one who made use of all of us. We should be the one seeking you for revenge, not... Alright, I will stop talking."

Noticing the black cat baring her teeth, he recalls her narrow-minded and vengeful nature and that he is now in the other party's hands, Carlohin immediately gives in.

"Wait, the oldest senior? That legendary person is also one of Harloys's disciple and it is said that he is from Mist Country... Yong yong yong yong Emperor Yongye!"

Alright, the agitation of his soul ripples throughout the room, revealing his shock and fear.

As the only Undead Emperor and the founder of the strongest Undead Calamity in recent times, Yongye Calamity, Emperor Yongye is an existence well-known to all Necromancers. He is an obelisk which can't be surpassed as well as an existence which strikes fear in them.

"Un, that's me. You don't have to be that shocked. You are also an immortal existence yourself now. Are you that shocked that I didn't die?"

I planned to reveal my own identity from the very start. The

world of the Undeads is much simpler than the world of the living. There is only one law in the world of the Undeads, the powerful reigns supreme. With the golden name of Emperor Yongye suppressing him down, the reality of his failure just awhile ago and his phylactery in my hands, I don't think that he is able to play any tricks.

"I won't be saying anything excessive. From now on, you will listen to me. We are all from the same trade and are well-versed in means to torture souls. If you wish to play any tricks, go ahead. However, if your schemes are sub-par to the point that I can't stand looking at them any further, I don't think much have to be said about your outcome."

Don't think much have to be said = Think for it yourself = Scaring yourself. There is no bottom limit to the imagination of intelligent lifeforms. The more used one is to being cruel to others, the more easily they are able to think of cruel tortures that could be done to themselves. This kind of method of inducing fear in others has works hundred out of hundred times, especially against Necromancers who are adept in torturing the souls of others.

If Carlohin is really some warrior who refuses to yield even upon death, he wouldn't have converted himself into a Lich in the first place. Seeing how even the almighty Harloys was turned into a pet, he lost all of his will to resist.

Thus, what happens afterwards is me giving the commands and him carrying out the commands.

"... I will stop here. Anyway, you already have a grudge against

Darsos, so when he opens the door, you can lead your army to battle against him. Of course, it will end with your loss, but do remember to end it with a splendid self-explosion. Of course, the information on the fleet must be left behind as well. Don't destroy it along with the explosion."

I don't think that we would be able to conceal everything from Darsos after we start to develop our own Air Fleet. However, it is entirely possible to create a little bit of chaos. The traces of the existence of Undeads cannot be concealed, not to mention the scars of the battle which was just fought. The easiest way to conceal the scars of a fight is to cover up with new ones.

Of course, there are no eternal secrets. There are some matters that would surely leave behind traces if done and a day will come when everything is exposed.

To the East Mist which lacks everything, the rare alloy equipment of the White Wolf Guards is already a priceless treasure. There is no way we could give up on the spoils of war we collected here. The thing we have to do now is to do a series of preparations so that our existence here won't be exposed that quickly.

"Heh, after Auland is done dealing with the Seafolks, it would be about time for the onset of the 'Vultures of War', the great war of the human kingdoms. When the war finally ends, it should be about time for the onset of the Underground Alliance and the Undead Calamity onto the stage. As long as we are able to tide through our current crisis, I do not believe that he would still have the leisure to find trouble with the southern countries.

Furthermore, the East Mist would have grown stronger by then. It would be hard to tell who would be the one finding trouble with the other. Right, the seven countries in the Southern Lands aren't that unambitious as well. Since we have decided to stake it all on East Mist, we should also make preparations for war."

No matter what, this is the territory of Lich Carlohin. The best way to clean up the base is to obtain the assistance of the other party. Currently, the most important thing to do is make him submit to us obediently. In order to make him work for us without worries, it is imperative for us to offer him some benefits after slapping him in the face.

"I am not an unreasonable person. If you listen to me obediently, no matter what profound magic secrets or godly weapons and treasures it is, if there is something you want, feel free to bring it up. You should have heard of it before, that I am not a stingy person and I tend to be credible."

Emperor Yongye's promise is extremely valuable. Hearing my words, the soulfire in the bottle stuns suddenly before blazing frenziedly.

"Pardon my insolence, but what is with the current form of yours and Lord Mentor? Could it be that you all have been revived?"

This isn't something much to hide about. I nod my head directly.

"Then, have you all regained your senses? Do you all possess the desires of a physical body?"

I nod my head once again. Although Harloys is still half an Undead, her functions on all aspects are no different from the living.

"Harloys's body is created by me. You should also be aware of my ability in that aspect. Why, do you wish for me to create a physical body for you as well?"

"Of course! I have had enough of the days living as an Undead. Although it is true that we aren't plagued by hunger and thirst, we are also devoid of the desire to enjoy luxurious food. While it is true that we are devoid of the instinctive desires of the physical body, living on like this is really a torture. Lord, I am begging you, as long as you are able to restore the senses and desires of the physical body in me, I am willing to pay any price!"

"Alright. It is just a body of a male. It is but a simple task. However, I have to first emphasise that even though you would be similar to a normal person on most aspects, you are still an immortal Undead internally, so you will be unable to leave behind descendants. I am able to restore senses and desires, but I am still incapable of transcending the boundaries of life and death at this point."

"Just restoring desires is enough. Just desires is enough."

I smile gleefully. I am not afraid of you coming up with unreasonable requests, I only fear that you are devoid of pursuits. Since you have something to request of me, naturally, it makes it

easier for me to control you.

"Fine, leave it to me. When it is time, pass me a painting of how you were previously. I can guarantee that I would be able to restore your original appearance."

"That… Are you able to make a female physical body?"

At that moment, I lost my footing and my hands loosened, almost dropping his phylactery onto the floor.

Based on my many years of experiences of meeting with such incidents, I can already guess the damned developments that is about to happen.

"That, liking cute little boys is a common little interest among nobles. I believe that Lord would be able to understand that as well. Although it was fine with my original body back then, if there is a chance, I would still like to change to a different style!"

As though intimidated by my livid face, the next moment, Carlohin yells out his desire as though he is putting his everything on the line.

"No, I will honestly tell you, my Lord, that this is the goal of my life. This is also the main reason why I pursued Necromancy!"

"Shut up, gay!"

I suppressed the urge to smash the bottle and ignored the darned cat who is busy rolling around in front of me in laughter. She seems to have knew it from the start. I have no desire whatsoever to interact with this kind of pervert. The next moment, I turn around to leave.

"Lord! Please don't go. I am begging you, this is the deepest innate desire of a foolish man who was born in the wrong body..."

"Pui!" I already have enough Gentlemen by my side. This kind of gay pervert is challenging my tolerance and bottom line as a man. Thus, I refuse to stop for him.

"Lord! Have you heard of Cassomes?"

Of course I have heard of it. The future flagship of the Auland Air Fleet —— The Unsinkable Cassomes. That is a super warship that would be known by every single household in the future.

"Hmph, of course I have heard of it. However, if its construction is complete, is it possible for you not to take it out in this battle? That is a flagship of an Air Fleet after all. It isn't that easy to build it."

"Of course its construction isn't completed yet. However, its prototype, the King Carlohin which I built privately, is almost completed! Lord, as long as you fulfill my wish, he would be yours."

Notes:

No matter how powerful a person's martial arts is, if their brain is unable to function well, they would end being put in place by a concrete brick.

TL: i.e. Even if they are extremely powerful, if they are not smart enough, they will still end up defeated by creative methods sooner or later by an enemy.

即死类法术

TL: Truthfully I had no idea how to translate this. Literally, it means Instant Death Magic and it afflicts an Instant Death Status (or Brink of Death status, depending on how you interpret the word). I tried googling it but couldn’t really find any usage of it in any literature. So, I’ve translated it into Death Magic and called the status Affliction of Death. The terminologies I chose to use doesn’t really affect the story or the meaning of it but just leaving a side note to inform you all.

Chapter 109: Borealis

Unable to resist the temptation of the powerful warship, I eventually agreed to the request of the pervert. Even so, I drew a fine line between us in our head.

"After I'm done using him, I will tie him to a boulder weighing a ton and toss him into the river. No, I'll feed him to Beifeng. Wait, what if his tendencies spawns a new attribute in Beifeng. That would be really scary. It'll be safer to just sink him in the river. Those Gentlemen are already a handful to deal with. I must make sure to prevent him from interacting with the rest!"

I am gravely disgusted. After all, I'm just an ordinary person. Yes, without a doubt, I'm an ordinary person. After all, it is impossible for me to be the King of Gentlemen.

"Darned Auland Empire! They should rename themselves into the Auland Gay Empire instead. Hmph, one of them fell in love with a man who looks like a woman while the other one feels that he should have been born a female. I think that pair of uncle and nephew complements each other well!"

However, with Carlohin's full cooperation, we managed to attain our goal of taking full control over the secret base a lot more efficiently. Also, whenever I see the super warship docked in the underground space below the Mage Tower, I would pinch the tail of the darned cat and verify that I am not dreaming from her shrieks and flurry of claws.

The King Carlohin, originally named as the Warrior of Auland, is a prototype for the flagship Cassomes. In reality, however, the capabilities of the prototype exceeds that of his brother ship. Just like how the Roland No.2 is much stronger than its other kins, prototypes are built without a cap on the budget to prove the feasibility of their theories. It is not surprising for King Carlohin's capabilities to be above that of the Cassomes.

King Carlohin, super heavyweight battleship, length 243m and width 40m. It is armed with nine magic siege cannons, seven medium-sized Mage Tower, one Supreme Mage tower and 32 medium-light technical cannons. The main cannon of the ship has a range of 30km. Also, the ship has a hangar, allowing it to hold three Eagle Corvettes.

The ship can be used in both air and at sea. Upon descending onto the water surface, it would displace 65,000 tons of water. Floating on the surface of the water, it would take around 10 minutes for it to start soaring into the sky. When it is in the sky, it can travel at a maximum speed on 120km/h. As a flying unit, its speed isn't very fast. However, when its big size is taken into consideration, I think that its speed can already be considered ridiculously fast.

It is originally designed as the flagship of the Auland Air Fleet. Due to the a lack of upper limit on the budget, regardless of whether it is the size, speed or firepower, the numbers on this super warship exceeds that of Cassomes significantly. However, in the official record, it is stated that the ship's aft suddenly exploded in the midst of a certain experiment and 'sunk' into the deep sea.

Although both the sinking and the explosion are real, none of the crewmates on the ship lost their life. Their families are also well-taken care of by Carlohin. A year and a half later after the incident, the King Carlohin activated once again and enters the underwater secret base, which was under Carlohin's complete control. At this point, the ship has became his trump card in the vie for the throne, waiting patiently and silently for the day it would be renamed as Emperor Carlohin.

On top of that, in order to raise the success rate of an assault on the royal capital, when all eight Mage Towers are fully activated, the ship can form a formidable barrier as well as to go into stealth mode.

This ship is the ultimate crystallisation of the Auland Empire's centuries of effort, but yet, due to a certain person's greed, it has became a tool for seizing the crown.

From the moment when Carlohin realised that the underwater base is isolated from the outside world, he acutely sensed that the next time the door opens, he would fall out completely with his nephew. To prepare for the day, he devoted 90% of the manpower and resources onto this massive ship right after tests on the Eagle's engines were completed.

With indefatigable builders, coolies and engineers, the construction of the King Carlohin is already 95% completed. On the other hand, the Cassomes which priority was given to, was only half-completed.

In "history", when the gates finally opens ten years later, Darsos

found himself facing the strength of a completed fleet... If it isn't for the fact that their nation is in grave peril, forcing the uncle and nephew to come to a temporary ceasefire, as well as the fact that the noble title of the King of the Frost Wolves is already known throughout the continent, Darsos would probably found himself forced off the throne.

But now, this super battleship that did not appear in any official records came easily into my hands.

With Carlohin's assistance, we weren't impeded by the traps while heading to the bottom levels from a Mage Tower. Upon reaching the dock for King Carlohin, we found the ship surrounded by industrious Undead workers and top-notch Engineers.

The weaker a person is, the lower the probability they would able to retain their intelligence after converting into an Undead. In order to retain the knowledge and wisdom required for the construction of the ship, all of those top-notch engineers and scholars from various professions were still alive.

Despite having the remaining food supplies distributed to them, given the fact that they have been isolated from the outer world for a long period of time as well as the hard labor they underwent with minimal food, they became so thin that they looked like Skeleton Soldiers.

From another perspective, our assault on the base actually rescued the dying them. After being forcibly displaced into this location then witnessing their friends and loved ones being

converted into undying beings, the engineers hold deep resentment against Auland Empire, Darsos and Carlohin. Upon hearing that I am from East Mist Communal Country, my recruitment of the personnel went unbelievably smooth.

Of course, being able to survive until now proves that they're all smart people. They know what choices they have to make to continue living on.

"It'll be completed by next month and that it would be able to forcibly set sail in two weeks?"

After obtaining this information from the jovial engineers and scholars who were enjoying the dried meat I distributed to them, I am astonished. If I were to come a month later, we would most probably have no chance of winning the battle.

"Prioritize the completion of the Mage Towers. If required, use the spare parts from the Mage Towers in this base. What we need the most now is the stealth ability of the ship to conduct assaults."

I gave out new orders on the construction of the ship delightfully. With this ship in my hands, I feel much more confident and hopeful about my future plans.

King Carlohin... The moment that I recall that this is the name of a certain gay and that I might need to live in a ship named after a gay, I did not hesitate to put renaming the ship as my utmost priority.

However, naming has never been my forte. Just as I was hesitating to shout out The Roland as name for the ship, the words of the darned cat dispels my intention.

“Have you forgotten the Roland Titan robot? Do you intend to create a transformer set or a whole series of Roland products?”

Then, I thought of naming it over the concept of law and justice, so I recommended the name ‘Absolute Justice’. However, the darned cat retorts, “In short, cancer?”, and I was defeated once again.

TL: Absolute Justice (Jue Dui Zheng Yi Hao) -> Cancer (Jue Zheng) which is a homophone for Cancer

“Love And Courage?”

“Little kid, how old are you this year? Are you trying to make people laugh their heads off?”

“Angry Birds?”

“The name makes it feel like the ship would crash into either a pig or a house. Think of something else.”

“Angry Grape?”

TL: i.e. The Grapes of Wrath, written by John Steinbeck

“This name feels like it’ll bring us bad luck throughout the entire journey, as though we would meet with an economic crisis and go bankrupt!”

“Angry Banana?”

TL: An author from Qidian

“How about Angry Squirrel! Give the name some serious thought! Stop considering the names of animals and fruits. Go for something mighty and domineering.”

TL: The author of this book

“Archangel!”

TL: Gundam Seed

“Although Archangel does sound impressive, it sounds like an extremely inauspicious name which would bring down its teammates.”

“Snowy Wind!”

TL: Japanese Destroyer Yukikaze.

“No way, it sounds even more inauspicious. I can already feel a chill down my spine.”

“Danyang!”

TL: It’s the exact same ship as Yukikaze, just a different name after it came into China’s possession

“Is there even a difference from the one you just proposed? Can you stop coming up with such inauspicious names?”

“Titanic.”

“Will you only be content when the ship sinks? Do you hold some kind of deep-seated grudge against the ship? Can’t you come up with an auspicious name?”

“Gentlemen, Unite”

TL: Transformers

“Sure, I have nothing to say about that. However, do your parents know about your suicidal tendencies? Do you find your the number of Gentlemen under your command lacking?”

“Soaring Dragon.”

“I know at least 20 ships with this name. Are you sure you want to add a 3-digit number behind it?”

“Queen Elisa(beth)!” Alright, a certain Demon Marquess is crossing dimensions in a furious attempt to brush up her presence.

“Revoked. Why don’t we name it the Chaos Banshee Empress?” Alright, you darned cat. Your intentions are finally revealed. That name smells strongly of the name of an evil boss. Somehow, it feels like the ship would end up imploding if we were to use this name!

…The endless proposals and rejections feels more like a depressing exam.

I can confirm once again that naming is a task that saps one’s spirit and strength. Even though I came up a whole string of more than twenty names, they were all rejected. (Mysterious voice: Are you sure you weren’t looking for it?)

“Borealis”

TL: Aurora Borealis, name of the Northern Lights, a reference to this.

“Although it feels like it’s secretly representing something, let’s use it since it has yet to sink.”

Aurora Borealis is a natural phenomenon exclusive to the northern lands. From another perspective, it represents the desire

of the Mist Country to rise up once more through all odds.

“Do we still require two more weeks? Can the progress be hastened?”

The answer that I received is quite depressing. The ship can be forcibly commissioned in two weeks, but it would only possess the ability to fly. Most of the cannons on the ship would be unusable. Furthermore, two weeks is an assumption of an idealistic situation. Looking at the current situation, there is a high probability that the work would be delayed.

The destruction of the power source in our attack as well as my intention for the survivors who barely survived the crisis to take a break and eat some good food to recover makes a delay in the completion of the ship even more probable.

However, what is great is that as long as we are able to fly it out of the base, we could complete the remaining construction in the midst of the journey.

Without a doubt, with the standoff between the Seafolks and the Auland Empire, a complete outbreak of war between the two factions can erupt at any moment. On the contrary, this underwater base is the safest location at present time and very quickly, I made my decision.

“Since the Auland Empire has approved of departure within the contract, it’s about time for the envoys of the East Mist Communal Country to return back to the the North.”

Once I return to the surface, I will arrange for a convoy back to the North. At the very least, on the surface, I cannot allow the envoy team to remain in this dangerous city.

“Reyne, find those people whose name are on this list. If their names are underlined in red, it means that the person must be acquired at all cost, even if it means the use of force or outright abduction. If their names are underlined in blue, it means that while it would be for the best if we could recruit them, but do not force them if they are unwilling to. The ones underlined in purple are the ones not to use force against no matter what happens, otherwise they will become a source of trouble.”

We are already bound to offend the Auland Empire, it doesn’t really matter for us to go a little further. Since we have already begun poaching their talents, we might as well claim more of them while we’re at it. With these ‘historical figures’ under our command, regardless of whether it is us, the East Mist Communal Country or the Auland Empire, the future would probably change significantly.

“After locating them, get their family to move in here. Remember to inform them that the city is in danger and that we are rescuing them. This is the truth, so go ahead and do what you must.”

Without doubt, the underwater base and the Borealis in my possession is the ray of hope in this chaotic situation. It gives us a foothold with the option to advance and to retreat, guaranteeing our safety.

However, my good mood immediately sours the moment I arrive back at the Church of Law.

“Inviting me to the enthronement ceremony which would be held in advance? Am I crazy or has Darsos gone mad?”

Following the invasion of the Seafolks and the annihilation of their three main fleets, the Auland Empire is gradually losing their control over their coastal areas.

All the towns along the coast has come under attack by the Seafolks and in response, the Empire has mobilised all of their garrison troops. The cities which had been purged by the carnivorous Fishmen Tribes has already hit the 3-digit mark. Despite the uneasy balance that is being maintained in the capital, the surrounding areas have already descended into complete chaos.

Facing endless hordes of Seafolks, the Auland Empire’s navy, which wasn’t really strong in the first place, began to be pushed back. On the great river leading to Kagersi City, the garrison fleet of the human forces are either annihilated or has docked on the pier of the towns, seeking the assistance from the local troops.

Hundreds of tribes are gathering and advancing forward. Under the leadership of the Storm Priests who possess the Crest of the Storm, the tribes are gradually transitioning from mere

mercenaries into a true organised army.

Among their ranks are the short and ugly Fishmen, the gorgeous and pure Mermaids , the gigantic and burly Sea Giants and the ones who number the most, the half-human half-fish Nagas and the many different types of Water Elementals.

After their marshalling and a simple training is completed, the Seafolks are prepared for battle with the Storm Priests standing in the core of the army. Under the guidance of the true Goddess, the Queen of Storm, after a long march, their destination comes into view.

“Capital, a new capital, a new capital that belongs to us.”

This is what the Seafolks are chanting.

Snowy Wind/ Yukikaze

TL: Although she was known for being a lucky ship, various crews aboard other ships throughout the war viewed her as a bad omen, due to the fact that she escorted Shinano (when said ship was torpedoed and sunk by USS Archerfish), and Yamato (during Operation Ten-Go, where said ship and five others were sunk)

I have no idea when did I transit from Northern Lands to Southern Lands but just clarifying, Mist Country is in the North (lol only realised it after noticing the mention on Northern Lights)

Chapter 110: Dragon Slayer And True Love

“‘Dragon Slayer’ Bastlar. Is the Goddess of the Moon crazy? Why would she send this mad dog out?”

The arrival of the Heroic Spirit under the Goddess of the Moon is not a secret. After all, the difference between a Heroic Spirit and a human being is obvious at sight. Not to mention, that person didn’t even intend to conceal his own identity, living in the city as though it is normal. His rate of appearance in the city is surprisingly high.

In the legends of the Order Gods, Heroic Spirits are mighty heroes in history. When their lifespan nears its end and their feats are recognised by the Gods, they could sign a soul contract with a God, becoming the God’s glorious and eternal warrior.

Of course, this is from an optimistic point of view. From what I see, Heroic Spirits are magnificent only in appearance. If one were to throw away all the meaningless praises and poetry, they are actually just a different kind of Undead in the Order Faction, not to mention Undeads who signed a contract of eternal slavery. They are unlucky fellows who don’t even have a private life or holidays.

Their most obvious trait of that is that despite possessing a physical body and lust, they are unable to bear offsprings. This was decided by the nature of their soul of the dead who has entered the process of reincarnation. This is true no matter how their physical body is changed. Furthermore, if one is just talking about restoring one’s physical body and lust, my Undead Creation techniques are also able to achieve that feat.

On the other hand, reincarnated God Envoys and Angels are able to leave bear offpsprings because they have been through the complete cycle of reincarnation, thus becoming a living being once more. Un, the truth is that Angels actually originates from humans, similar to how Demons of the Lower Realm are made.

Furthermore, they are a beings of fixation just like the Undeads. In fact, even the Heroic Spirits, despite possessing a much better name, are beings of fixation. There is no doubt that they were once great heroes of history, but being a great hero doesn't mean that they are saints devoid of desires. After becoming Heroic Spirits, they still retain a high level of fixation towards the interests of their previous life and their past.

Bastlar's past can be summarised through his title, 'Dragon Slayer'.

He is born a noble of the Wood Elves. Back then, the Elf Kingdom was prosperous and he should have had a blissful childhood. However, his happy days didn't last.

During the era which he lived in, the Dragon race still weren't as rare as they were today. Just like many bedtime stories, he once had a happy family. However, one day, a Green Dragon passes by his house and casually breathes a Dragon Breath, similar to how some uncivilised fellows spit would do casually by the roadside, though the worst thing that could occur is them meeting with the fining auntie wearing a red armband. Unlike humans, the result of an uncivilised Dragon is Bastlar's entire family getting annihilated, leaving him behind.

Alright, the rest of the story is quite cliche. Motivated by his past, the orphan slowly grows up and eventually climbs to the pinnacle of the world. However, even after his name tremors the world, he was still unable to find the Green Dragon who killed his parents.

“Since I am unable to find him, I might as well wipe out all of those vile Dragons. This is vengeance, as well as to prevent tragedies like mine from occurring again.”

Without doubt, these are arrogant words from someone afflicted with paranoia. However, when the one who said such arrogant words is an expert who has the ability to carry it out, tragedy strikes on the giant Dragons.

The Dragon race holds deep hatred towards him. He doesn’t limit his targets to just the Green Dragons. In his eyes, these massive creatures are all threats and only a dead Dragon is a good Dragon. Thus, exploiting all means, not questioning the morality of his actions, he doesn’t even spare fledglings and their eggs. In his opinion, anyone who sides with the Dragons deserve to die.

The vengeance of the Dragon race struck, causing him to lose his wife and his friends, plunging him into loneliness once again. This fuelled his motivation further and he eventually became the most renowned professional Dragon Slayer in the world.

As someone who is perfectly afflicted with paranoia and a Dragon Slayer hero, his abilities are catered specially against giant Dragons. Be it Dragon Slaying Javelin or Dragon Slaying Sword, he

possesses it all. Also, it is recorded that the number of Dragons that fell under his hands number at least four digits and there isn't a lack of SemiGod Dragons in the mix. Even after he incited the common wrath of the Dragon race and was lynched to death, he successfully dragged down hundreds of Dragons down with him.

"My cute baby, listen obediently to your mummy. If you were to cause a ruckus, 'Dragon Slayer' Bastlar will come."

This words have become the trump card of the Dragon mothers to scare their children. Through their Bloodline Inheritance which passes knowledge down one generation to the other, the fledglings are well-aware of that title and the countless Dragon lives who have fallen under him. Thus, from young, they hold fear to this name.

Even if it is the fearless Xiao Hong, she also had a period when she is lulled to sleep by bedtime stories. Back then, when Bastlar is mentioned, unease and hesitation would appear on her face.

It is to the extent that when the Goddess of Moon Patricia accepted Bastlar as her Heroic Spirit due to her side Concept as a Goddess of Hunters, she is viewed with hostility by the Dragon Tribe. Two war of Gods even broke out due to their soured relationship.

Judging from solely his strength, there is no problem whatsoever sending Bastlar down into the mortal world. Even if he could only forcibly exert the prowess of a SemiGod through his body as a Heroic Spirit, he still possesses fighting power capable of rivaling with the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor. At the very least, this

Heroic Spirit has descended to the mortal world for three times in the past and during which, he was able to kill three powerful giant Dragons while clearing away a few hundred of grown Dragons along the way. In the view of most people, there isn't a single Dragon he is unable to defeat.

"As an outstanding Hunter, the first thing one has to do when hunting down a massive target is to study its habits, weakness and personality. These few days, Bastlar may seem to be strolling around leisurely but in fact, he is observing the weakness of his opponent. He is just choosing not to make a move now. When he makes a move, it will definitely result in a merciless and deadly slaughter."

This is an evaluation from the veteran Hunter Lowens. Indubitably, Bastlar who views hunting Dragons as his raison d'être is a idol-like figure among Hunters like Lowens. These few days, this fugitive (escapee) had been willing to go through the trouble of putting on a mantle and avoiding the sentries and guards in the cities just to look at the hero in his heart from afar.

Of course, his actions of peeping is unable to escape Bastlar's acute senses. However, what was surprising is that this Dragon Slayer who is reputed to be bloodthirsty is actually quite easy to get along with. He even took the initiative to call Lowens over to chat with him.

When Lowens requested his idol to impart some hunting techniques to him, he even provided him some pointers. When Lowens asked him for the reason, this was how he replied:

“Heh, I can feel the screams of agony of wild beasts on the verge of death from your hands. We both walk the same path, so how could I be stingy with you? It is really a pity that you aren’t an Elf Ranger and you don’t use a bow, otherwise I would be able to impart you some little tricks on Dragon slaying. The current generation is too weak and there are too few people who actively seek strong preys like you. It is about time for the periodical extermination of those cockroach-like lizards who lay eggs everywhere.”

To speak of slaying Dragons like a periodical clearing of cockroaches, his plain tone made Lowens sense the formidable strength of this Heroic Spirit and his bone-piercing resentment against the Dragon Tribe.

This isn’t the only time the Gentlemen has met with Bastlar.

“It is a pity, lacking just another half more…”

The Dragon Slayer who seems to just be passing by suddenly appears, glances at him plainly and sighs. His actions almost scared Beifeng to death.

The pitiful Dracon Hunter was only strolling around the alleys when he is obstructed by the Heroic Spirit who had caught onto the scent of a Dragon. If it wasn’t for the fact that a large portion of Gods and mortals view Dracons as a DemiHumans rather than the descendants of Dragons, Beifeng would probably have been destroyed at that moment.

“It is such a pity.” This is the evaluation I casually made after I was aware of the incident. The moment I spoke those words, I noticed a wave of head noddings in my surroundings…

“However, the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor Hydra is a God Beast. For Patricia to send down the Dragon Slayer who would never show mercy to him, does she intend to start a war with the Queen of Storms?”

There is no doubt about his strength whatsoever. However, I made the same judgement as Darsos and the rest. There is no way Bastlar would show mercy. That is the crux of the problem.

“The moment he strikes, regardless of whether he wins the battle or not, the war would escalate immediately. We must quicken our pace.”

To me, every battle and the time after each battle is precious. A real-life battle is the most direct and reliable experimental lab to test out one’s abilities. Even the most powerful and striking Race Talent or battle technique cannot be considered reliable if it has yet to be tested in a practical battle.

Personally, I am used to tallying the gains and loss at the end of a battle and I would write down my acquisitions and reflections on my diary. Of course, of what is written, the most important matter is the most important matter of all is excavating my weaknesses and making up for them.

Although this battle isn't a long one, our opponents weren't weak. After all, he is a Saint-rank Necromancer and a moment of carelessness could potentially lead to our deaths... Alright, I admit that my words weren't really true. The more I find out about that Lich junior of mine, the more I feel that I wouldn't lose to the other party. Even if I didn't successfully dismantle him back then, most probably we would have only ended up in a prolonged battle. In the end, the ones who would emerge victorious would still be us, the team who are weaker in terms of absolute strength.

It seems contradictory for the ones with weaker absolute strength to emerge victorious? Actually, this isn't contradictory at all. Carlohin's lack of battle experience only plays a small part in it. His soul which is corrupted and twisted right down to the core is the main culprit for the reason why he is unable to emerge victorious.

"Soul World? This Soul World you speak of sounds incredible. What does it do?"

As a Necromancer who specialises in Death-related offensive Magic, Carlohin's Soul Imprint augments the effects of the Death Magic. There is nothing really unique about it. On the other hand, I heard that his Soul World is the rare type which doesn't just boost one's stats. Hearing that news, I was astonished.

Most of the Soul World of Saint-rank Mages consists just of a simple modification of their surroundings to create an environment suitable for them to exert their full strength. For example, a Fire Mage would be able to warp his surroundings into

the Fire Elemental Dimension. Although it boosts the might of Fire Magic significantly, controlling it burns a lot of energy, making it highly inefficient.

A normal Soul World is often used in battles involving large armies or to assist a few Mages of the same attribute in a fight. By stacking the bonus attributes on top of one another, if they are able to turn a land of ice into a blizzard, that would be extremely scary.

On the other hand, unorthodox Soul Worlds tend to be based on a person's experiences and is a protrusion of their soul. Although there may be a great disparity in terms of their might, given that the person is able to change the world solely on their soul alone, this would prove that the person's will and fixation far surpasses the norm. Not to mention, this kind of Soul World is hard to guard against and hard to deal with. Possessing a unique Soul World tend to be the exclusive right of powerful experts and serves as a symbol of their status.

Hearing that Carlohin actually has a Soul World known as 'Real World', my curiosity was piqued. I raised my personal evaluation of my junior in my mind, which has reached rock bottom.

"I didn't expect that you would still have some aces on you. What is the effect of your Soul World? Why didn't you use it back then?"

"Hehe, it actually isn't that good. It is just a little obsession of mine. It works like this..."

After hearing Carlohin's explanations, my evaluation of him

lowers once more. This time, it isn't just rock bottom anymore, but underground level. Harloys, after listening to his words beside me, emphasises once again for him to not claim that she is his mentor.

The reason? His Soul World really makes one at a loss of words.

"An AOE gender change? What meaning is there to it! Can you be more normal? For example, plotting a coup d'état or starting an Undead Calamity. If you were slightly more normal, you would have long overthrown your elder brother!"

"But this is the deepest desire in my heart, and Soul Worlds are the physical manifestation of one's hopes and desires, right?"

Alright, although Carlohin's said this with a tearful face and the tone of his voice lacks of confidence, his interpretation of a Soul World isn't wrong. The next moment, as though recalling something, a gleeful tone appears in Carlohin's voice.

"Also, I have used this Soul World twice and successfully defeated a few extremely troublesome opponents. Of them, one of them is a Myth-rank expert!"

Hearing this, I am a little speechless. Indeed, not every men are able to remain calm when they find two additional lumps of meat on their chests and the disappearance of their vitals. Having one's thoughts wander in the middle of a tense battle is suicidal. However, for an expert to die due to their attention being focused on their nether regions is also a little too embarrassing.

I shiver at the thought of what would have happened if he had suddenly activated this Soul World of his in the midst of the battle then,

“Definitely by no means should you use this Soul World! Right, do not tell anyone about this Soul World as well, especially Krose.”

I can’t imagine what would happen if Krose were to know about his Soul World.

“You mean that female Elf Druid? Is she my comrade? That’s great, I’ve been wanting to find someone to exchange thoughts with. I… Alright, Lord, stop staring at me like this. I will do as you say.”

However, there are some things that cannot be avoided. What that would come would eventually come. The day which Carlohin would meet the Gentlemen eventually came. Furthermore, sparks flew about the moment they met.

“The reason why you still like grown men is because you have yet to meet a shota which you truly love. Age? That is never a problem!” A certain Gray Elf said.

“The reason why you still like females is because you have yet to meet a male you truly love. Gender? That is never a problem!” A certain Lich said.

“The reason why you still like humans is because you have yet to meet a life form which you truly love. Species? That is never a problem!” A certain… certain person who everyone knows said.

Three hands grasp each other and a bizarre resonance occur between the three. A friendship exclusive to Gentlemen is being built swiftly, a relationship of transparency and mutual understanding. Friendships between Gentlemen are always forged that quickly.

“Comrades.”

“Brothers!”

“Sisters!”

The Gray Elf and Lich stare at each other in mutual understanding before eventually bowing in submission to the third person.

“Big Brother Beifeng!”, “Boss Dracon!”

Yes, if there is an unit of measurement for Gentlemanliness, then the unit would surely be Beifeng units. This clearly displays the noble and esteemed position Beifeng possesses in the road of the Gentlemen.

“All of us are comrades who see past facades and dedicate our soul into pursuing ‘true love’. There is no need for formalities. My

path isn't a lonesome one! From now on, let's address each other as siblings. Even if the world is unable to comprehend our pursuit for true love, as least we still have one another. My little brother and sisters, don't you all think so as well?"

"Great! I am 67 this year, so I'll be the 2nd Sister."

"Although I am 235, I am content with being the 3rd Sister."

Alright, I won't retort on why there are two younger sisters here and how the oldest Momo would turn out to be the 3rd Sister. Apparently, the way they determine their seniority of their sworn siblinghood isn't by age but by the level of their Gentlemanliness.

When three pairs of hands grasp each other, when a certain Dracon became the elder sibling of the three and their relationship were being established swiftly, when the True Love Three Siblings were born, the other people in the room found themselves blinded by the sight.

"I can't take it anymore! My eyes!"

Someone rolls on the floor, clutching onto their eyes.

"Don't stop me, let me destroy her! The glory of Liu Huang Mountain City's Town Security cannot be ruined in her hands. For someone who catches pervert to turn into a pervert, for someone hunting mummies to turn into a mummy, this is too shameful."

Someone draws their sword in rage.

“Big Brother, I will try my best. Someday, I will also find my true love!”

Someone feels moved and impassioned by their sworn siblinghood.

“If my true love lies with the dead, can I…”

Someone, even though she didn’t join in due to her pride, upon watching such a sight, she feels a surge of momentum…

“Stop it right there. I have had enough of all these damn Gentlemen. If you dare to join their gang, causing the proliferation of the ‘True Love Siblings’, I will really make a move.”

Someone intends to use force to stop the Beifeng virus from spreading.

“That, can true love be with one’s blood kin as well? That’s not right, I remember that two people can only be considered as blood kin if they are within three generations of one another. We are one generation, two generation, three generation… Our clan’s genealogy book has been lost. Anyway, it has been many generations between us so there is no obstacles at all. Heehee.”

Someone is chuckling in happiness secretly.

“To be laughing so foolishly over nothing and even starting to count with her fingers. It looks like under the influence of Roland, Reyne’s etiquette has crumbled completely. She is also becoming more and more insane. This is unbefitting for a princess of a country. Looks like I will have to conduct remedial lessons for her after we return.”

Someone is worried for the princess whose behavior is growing stranger by the day.

As for me, I am deeply regretting my action of realising my promise so quickly. My creation of Carlohin’s body resulted in the formation of the True Love Siblings. Un, perhaps should I call him Rosemary (The name he came up with) now.

When I received Darsos’s invitation letter for the enthronement ceremony, which he sent with malicious intent, I immediately started working on the creation of Rosemary’s physical body without second thoughts. In this beautiful female body, it contains the overwhelming vile intentions of mine.

Her face is modelled after the Queen Victoria, who has tested and verified in ‘history’. Also, I added in a few aspects of Krose and many other people’s androgynous beauty. On top of that, the body had the sexiness of a mature woman to the point that the seductive curvature seems slightly unnatural. Rosemary is also well-versed and educated in the mannerisms of females. Without doubt, this is a masterpiece. Furthermore, it is catered specially towards a certain person’s interests.

At the very least, when Rosemary made an appearance, the fellows from the East Mist Royal Knight Order were enchanted. The young Knights of the Auland's White Wolf Guards almost threw aside their treasured swords. Judging from how men were staring fixedly at Rosemary with an impassioned gaze, it seems that my workmanship is still up to standard.

What about me? Just like how you make a puppet using mud bit by bit, how can I be attracted to a human-shaped puppet that I made by patching flesh together?

At this moment, I am in a carriage, sitting on the opposite end of the supreme beauty as I spitefully thought of the shocked expression that would appear on Darsos's face to vent the frustration I accumulated from having to put on a skirt once more.

"Wait, stop for a moment."

Looking at the time, we were still early. I am a bit curious about the sight around us so under my request, the Auland Empire's reception carriage slows down its speed.

By the side, I see a group of paupers along the street begging for alms. They are staring intently at our carriage, which carries the insignia of the Auland Royalty. I can feel a bone-piercing resentment under their expressionless look of calmness.

"Those? They are only some peasants from the Pier District. Princess, there's nothing much to see here. During the enthronement ceremony, the world's top-class musical team and

circus…”

I nod my head subconsciously. I pull down the blinds of the carriage and allow the carriage to proceed on with its previous pace.

Along the road, we have met four to five gatherings of such refugees who were affected by the disaster. As the stalemate with the Seafolks drags on, more and more refugees will appear. Most probably, the Auland nobles who are busy with the enthronement ceremony are just like the uncaring White Wolf Knight, choosing to disregard these unlucky fellows completely.

The carriages who were moving in the opposite direction as us caused a jam. As more and more civilians realise that there is something amiss with the present situation, more and more of them are choosing to escape from the city.

Civilians won’t care about the balance of war or whatsoever. They only know that both their country and their lives are in danger and yet, the nobles and Knights are busy playing around, busying themselves with the enthronement ceremony, neglecting the calls of help from the bottom tier.

This may seem like a small matter at hand, but this clearly shows how tense the current situation is and that internal problems are occurring in Kagersi City. At the very least, the high prestige that the newly-appointed Emperor possesses among his civilians has been mostly lost and this has shaken his foundation as the monarch.

“It is impossible for Darsos not to see it, but he still chooses to not make any actions. It seems like he intends to make use of this enthronement ceremony to throw in all of his stake and gamble a big one. Making such a risky gamble when he doesn’t even have sufficient knowledge of the Seafolks? I don’t hold much confidence in his decision. It looks like we should retreat as soon as possible.”

Chapter 111: The Arrival Of The Storm

The carriages on the road progress slowly. Suddenly, a thunderbolt strikes across the sky. Then, dark clouds start to gather and the sky darkens. A moment later, rain starts to fall.

A storm in the summer occurs rapidly and departs rapidly as well. Just a moment ago, it was still a light drizzle but now, it is already pouring heavily. The raindrops strike on the roof of the carriage, making a tack tack melody. The view outside the carriage turns blurry and the appearance of the dark clouds and the heavy downpour plunges the day into night.

"Summer has just arrived and yet it is the third consecutive day that is raining this week. Recently, the rain has been falling quite frequently. It seems that Darsos's luck is incredibly bad."

Judging from the lowlying and heavy dark clouds, this rain probably won't be stopping anytime soon. The enthronement ceremony would be directly affected. After all, it isn't suitable to conduct a ceremony on such a rainy day.

"Could it be that they didn't prepare in advance? But, the Court Mages aren't the type to claim their salaries without working."

In this world of magic, even though there are many shortcomings to it, there are also many aspects of it which surpass the technological world.

For example, the prediction and control of the weather. Old

veteran hunters and rangers are able to predict the weather just by looking at the shape of the clouds. Druids who are close with nature are also able to smell the scent of a natural disaster from the wind. Mages are also able to use large scale magic to control and choose the weather they want.

Before heading out today, I went to look for Krose to ask her about the weather. I still remember how she replied to me with hesitation on her face.

"...It should be sunny. However, my predictions have been erring recently. I had sensed clearly that it should have been sunny this whole week and yet it has been raining non-stop. I also don't feel the interference of anyone else. So, either my predictions are inaccurate or the ones interfering are much stronger than me."

It is still understandable for other people to predict the weather inaccurately. However, Krose is a Great Druid who specialises in summoning storms. For her to predict the weather wrongly is just as incredulous as a Fire Mage burning himself in the midst of cooking. On other days, it is still fine for the weather to be bad. But when there is a group of Seafolk living just by the river, the bad weather can prove to be lethal.

It has been raining heavily for consecutive days, causing the regions flooded by the river water to expand significantly, increasing the area of movement for the Seafolk. Furthermore, humans would be inconvenienced by the rainy day whereas Seafolk, adapted to fighting in water, would have their fighting prowess increased significantly.

Thus, every time it rains, the atmosphere among the garrison troops along the coast of the river would become very tense as they stand on alert in case of an enemy invasion. Fortunately, from the looks of it, the Seafolk still do not intend on making use of the rainy day to conduct an attack.

"The Mages of the Auland Empire aren't trash. There is no way they would allow the predetermined memorial to be interrupted by a rainy day. If so, there can only be one explanation —— The recent downpour isn't a natural phenomenon. Furthermore, the one interfering in the weather possesses power far superior to the Auland Court Mages. Normally, a powerful existence like that wouldn't be bothered with something minor like that. For him to exert so much energy to change the weather, there must be something he hopes to gain out of this."

The carriage suddenly stops and changes its direction, leaving me a little surprised. It can't be that Darsos would change his predetermined plan just because of a rainy day.

"Why did we change directions? Where are we going now? Are we returning back?"

Hearing my suspicions, the White Wolf Knight leading the team immediately explains.

"We have a contingency plan for the enthronement ceremony if it were to rain on the day itself. In order to deal with the storms, we have prepared two locations. One of them is the open field whereas the other is the royal family sparring field. The sparring field has been sealed to create an indoor hall."

If other people were to hear his reply, they would most probably be impressed by the Auland royalty's preparedness. However, from his words, I could sense the helplessness and feebleness of a certain Emperor. Without doubt, being inaugurated under the spectating and blessings of the citizens of the country while celebrating the event together with them is the ideal choice to earn their support. However, now that the enthronement ceremony has to be held in an indoor location, it could only mean that they have lost some control over the situation.

The road to the royal family sparring field isn't easy to tread on. Other than the looks of dissatisfaction of the crowd along the way, the horses that come from all directions created a blockade. Now, when two carriages were to cross paths, the one to give way isn't determined by their social position but the level of ranking of the guests in the carriage.

It seems that as a 'princess' of a small country, I am not that important compared to the others. Also, spectating the ceremony in my capacity as an individual also means that I am not part of the envoy team who would be joining in the alliance, so there is no need for me to arrive in advance at the ceremony. In the end, we got jammed, not to mention the fact that we still have to give way to others. Just like that, a twenty minute journey took nearly an hour.

When we finally arrived at our destination, the flow of humans and carriages which far exceeds the capacity had the sparring field completely jammed. There isn't any location by the sparring field for the carriage to stop at. Helpless, we could only lift our skirts and tread on the muddy water, causing our feet to be smeared with

mud, resulting in a buildup of frustration and anger.

The only thing that is gladdening about the situation is the performance of the female official who tagged along, Rosemary.

She is one of my masterpieces in recent times. Other than the Royal Knights who keep sneaking peeks at her, the young males who keep walking into walls, through their actions, proved Rosemary's charm.

An exquisite and enchanting oval face with a slim waist. Her curvaceous body fully displays the charm of a mature woman. Despite that, innocence is reflected in her clear eyes. Her short golden hair is combed into a cute small ponytail. The masculine gesture now and then makes her seem youthful and lively, adding a cute tone to her atmosphere.

The contradictions in her beauty gave her a complicated disposition. In the gazes of the males, her actions and her speech cause constant changes in her disposition. Sometimes, she seems like a 28 year old lady and sometimes a 18 year old girl. Sometimes, she seems pure and adolescent and sometimes elegant and seductive. It seems as though every man can find their dream girl within her.

"Arthenya." The true name of the Goddess of Beauty is mentioned time and time again. In the eyes of the crowd, this level of beauty is beyond what mortals could reach.

Compared to a true flower, a fake plastic one carved carefully

looks even more exquisite and perfect. As a masterpiece which I meticulously carved by incorporating the strengths of countless different beauties, Rosemary is definitely the most beautiful woman I have ever met.

Natural creations are an accumulation of chance and accidents. While accidents can bring one surprise, these surprises often carry some kind of flaw along with it. Rosemary's perfect beauty is indeed not something a mortal can possess. That beautiful face is created through matching the most beautiful features of numerous faces to achieve a harmony between all of them, resulting in a perfect creation.

He is indeed a fake flower, but he is a perfect flower who suppresses the beauty of other flowers, a terminal creation unable to be created by natural selection.

Aiyo, at this point, why did I remember a certain country's prided plastic surgery industry? It is said that their idols do not debut if they do not fix their faces. Many of them look totally different from their children, causing quite a controversy.

Back to the topic at hand. Initially, I only wanted to make a woman capable of charming Darsos as a vengeance against him. However, as a Necromancer who is responsible for his own creations, when I set my heart into it, my world destruction level talent started working its wonders once more. The result of my pursuit for perfection is that I have overdone it once again.

"Arthenya? I think she is more like Pandora. There probably isn't a single man who is capable to rejecting a request from a woman

like this. She is truly a troublemaker. However, that bunch of Gentlemen actually totally ignore Rosemary's beauty. Indeed, the sense of aesthetics for Gentlemen are different from the masses."

In my eyes, beauties are always a source of trouble while supreme beauties like this are an endless source of great trouble. Innumerable legends, myths and historical events have also proven my point of view. However, when I realised that I have gone overboard once again, creating a calamity-level perfectly beautiful woman, I had no hesitation whatsoever in keeping him in Auland.

"Anyway, his phylactery is in my hand so I do not fear him playing any tricks. Let’s just send him out like that to harm others. Hehe, Darsos, accept that you will be unable to escape that cursed fate."

I muttered a malicious curse filled with resentment. After which, I looked once more at the new achievement I unlocked before setting off for the enthronement ceremony with tears in my eyes.

【Mummy, why is this elder brother wearing a skirt? Ah! Don't look! Hurry up and go!】

The System jumps out once more. That childlike voice also made my heart stop. I thought that my true identity was revealed.

【Ding. Congratulations for appearing in public places wearing female clothes for the third time. You have unlocked the hidden achievement —— 'Dress-wearing Man' and you have

been awarded the honorary title: 'Tranny Director'. After equipping the title, all living beings who bear resemblance to females, un, this includes trannies, female muscular heroines, transexuals and several other life forms whose genders are unknown, will feel significantly more intimate with you and their wariness against you will be lowered. The possibility of them falling in love with you is also reduced significantly. This title is automatically binded with the title 'King of Gentlemen' and the effect is constantly in an active mode —— "He seems not bad, it feels like I can tell him everything. He is really suitable as a sister and a soulmate. However, it feels weird to see him as a dating partner. Un, this is probably because I don't see him as a male."】

【System Notice: I didn't expect that you would notice such a hidden achievement. As expected of the King of Gentlemen! Come and chant with me. Cross-dressing isn't a crime, only cross-dressing without sufficient beauty is a crime! I am the great King of Male Cross-dressers Lord Roland, oh yeah!】

Actually, for Gentlemen and the like, I am already numb and apathetic to it already. However, that ‘possibility of them falling in love with you is also reduced significantly' is an actual and tangible curse of misfortune. The curse makes a certain man who died inexperienced and who despite having a girlfriend but yet is equivalent to having none due to their ultimate long distance relationship acquire an urge to squat by the corner of the wall and draw circles.

【Ding, allow me to elaborate slightly more on it. Abnormal people, un, that is Gentlemen, would be unaffected by this side effect. Thus, please make sure to enjoy the true and sincere relationship between Gentlemen. Right, if you do not wish to be dissected, as well as for the peace of the world, please make

sure not to be caught committing adultery by the Demon Marquess who is becoming more and more yandere. This is unrelated to the peace of the world? It is very possible for her to send her true body down out of a moment of rage, prompting a war between Gods, causing the direct eruption of a world war. You still dare to say that your relationships have nothing to do with the peace of the world?】

"Lord? Lord Yongye?"

Rosemary questions in a quiet voice, bringing me back from my thoughts. The royal family attendant by her side continues to maintain her smile and her manners even upon seeing me in a daze.

"Lord, our Emperor has invited you for a small discussion in the reception room."

Looks like what has to come will eventually come. I did not think that Darsos would invite me here just to spectate the enthronement ceremony.

Under the guidance of the attendant, I swiftly arrived at the VIP room. Soon, the main character of the day arrives dressed in countless ornaments, just like a Christmas tree ——Emperor of Auland Empire Darsos the First.

"This is Rosemary, my attendant."

I introduced him with vile intentions at heart. Rosemary slightly

lifts her skirt elegantly with a perfect smile. However, she didn't receive a corresponding response. After nodding his head perfunctory, that fellow actually continues to stare fixedly at me.

"You are still as beautiful as always. How have you been? I miss you."

Alright, his first sentence already plants in me an intention to draw my sword and murder him. From a certain viewpoint, this is also quite a remarkable ability.

To say the truth, my current appearance is completely identical with Reyne's. The young Reyne's development seems to be have been delayed, leaving some space for me, who has reverted back to a young boy, to impersonate her.

"This... this fellow can't possibly be a pervert who is into lolis?"

"Puuu!"

Behind my back, after hearing those praises from his nephew, Rosemary bursts into laughter. Although she immediately covers her mouth, it is already too late.

For an attendant to be so disrespectful, it is the same as mocking the Emperor to his face. The Emperor who has been angsty recently instinctively reaches out for his sword. But upon seeing me standing in front of my attendant to shield her, he furls his eyebrows, displaying his displeasure, although his words speak

otherwise.

"What I am talking about is your disposition, the disposition of a conqueror and not your figure... Actually, your figure is also not bad for your age!"

Darsos's voice got quieter and quieter as he displayed what it means to stab oneself in one's own foot means with his own actions. However, as I am not a female, saying that I have no figure made me feel slightly happy instead. However...

"Males should have no figure from the start! Did things go wrong somewhere? Did something go wrong from the very start?"

I could only contain those furious roars in my heart. After a short moment, I suppress my anger and ask.

"Why are you looking for me? You should be really busy now. Just speak of what you want directly."

"Princess Roland. Are you willing to become the empress of Auland Empire? I promise you that I will not interfere in your personal life after the marriage. If you are willing to merge the two countries together, I will even grant the East Mist Communal Country the highest level of autonomy and make it Auland Empire's richest and most peaceful district."

"I reject." I squeezed out these words from the gaps between my teeth. Despite being filled with rage, not being able to lash out at

him made me frustrated.

I am really considering whether I should look for a Priest of the God of Fate to change my fate, even though there is a high probability that they are just scammers bearing the flag of the God of Fate.

"I know that you are worried that the Auland Empire will make use of this opportunity to eat into and annex the East Mist Communal Country. How about this, you can entrust your royal power to someone trustworthy. When our second child is born..."

"Enough! There is a limit to my patience, insult me no further!"

My angry words stuff the rest of Darsos's words back into his throat. He stares furiously at me before eventually shaking his head, signalling for his assistant to back him up.

"Hermit, it is exactly as you said. I can't convince her at all. You give it a try."

"I have already said that your method may be useful in coaxing little girls, but it is meaningless in front of a true conqueror. Your majesty, since we are unable to get through via feelings, why don't we cut to the chase and talk about official business instead."

Hermit seems to understand my temper well and didn't say anything excessive, cutting straight to the chase by listing out their trade and terms.

It seems that due to the changes in the situation and the signing of the contract, the Auland royalty has also changed their original goal. That proposal isn't a simple and innocent one. In their eyes, this isn't a means for them to annex the East Mist but a type of bribery directed towards the princess herself.

"As long as you are willing to become the empress of Auland, you will become the most authoritative person in the Empire, second to only the Emperor. The women in the back palace are free for you to touch. It is sufficient as long as you bear two children of the bloodline of the Auland royalty. Also, Darsos isn't a man who gives into lust, so you don't have to worry about him forcing himself onto you. Rather than saying that you are a couple, it is more like a relationship between collaborators."

"Children?" Enraged to the limit, I even started laughing. However, the other party thought that it was a sign that my determination was wavering, so he steps up his persuasion.

"Military might, wealth, beauties, land, whatever you desire, we are able to fulfill it. Why limit your attention span to just that small country by the border? If you accept our conditions, the whole of Auland will be yours. Our future lies in the whole world. With your assistance, we would be able to dominate the world!"

"Why me? As a countryside princess, how am I deserving of such prestige?"

This time, the one replying is Darsos himself.

"Don't put yourself down. Who dares to underestimate the Twin Stars of the Mist Bloodline. Besides, judging by just how you were able to activate the Scarlet Conqueror's final form proves that you have the quality of a conqueror, not to mention your Angel Bloodline. You are worth us putting our stakes on. What does the East Mist count as? The continent extends far and wide, waiting for our discovery and dominance."

"Besides... Although I might be a little unreliable, my intuition tells me that if I were to want to conquer this continent, you are a factor that I cannot lack. Your true potential and strength is definitely not just limited to the extent you displayed. Alright, I admit that these are all excuses just to convince myself. I have fallen for you and I think that you are the one most suited to be my empress. Marry me. Together, from the Auland Empire, we will rule over the entire world, bringing our own order upon Eich."

Indubitably, this is a kind of bribery. If the one listening to these words here is really the princess of that small country, compared to returning to her poor and weak homeland and struggling for the fate of that country in the ice lands, being the queen of a large country is a much better decision. Not to mention, when the person he is convincing is a 14 year old lass, the probability of success is much higher. However, he has miscalculated right from the start. This option was never one that I would have taken.

"Lord, can I laugh? I really can't take it any longer."

Rosemary who is disguised as an attendant may seem calm on the surface, but I could hear stifled laughter in his voice from his

phylactery.

"Hold it in!"

Should I say, as expected of the legendary King of the Winter Wolves? That incredible intuition of his allowed him to see through part of my disguise. However, the problem is that he has been wrong right from the very start!

"I would still have to reject your offer. I will claim whatever I want for myself. I don't even want to consider such a foolish matrimony. Besides, your proposal today is a mistake in itself. In the future, you, probably, will regret it."

"I, Darsos, never regret my words."

Alright, this time, it is my turn to try my hardest to stifle my laughter. The one who said that he would 'never regret his words' previously was the old Lion King, but he didn't end up well. I estimate that there is a high possibility he probably regretted his actions eventually.

As for Darsos, no matter how I looked at it, it is obviously the plot development that would lead to a tragedy. My mood suddenly lifts and I smile mockingly.

"Hmph, I look forward to the arrival of that day. Who knows, when the contract loses its potency ten years later, we might even end up crossing blows."

Finally comprehending that his proposal and his plan to bribe me have failed utterly, Darsos sighs and shrugs lightly. He seems to be on the verge of saying something when the door to the room suddenly opens.

"Who is it? Didn't I say that no one is allowed to enter?"

The Emperor's furious roar made the man shiver. However, recalling the intelligence he just obtained, the royal attendant rushes to the side of the Emperor's ear and whispers into it.

Although he is speaking silently, my ear which isn't too far away from him has always been sensitive.

"The water level has suddenly risen, the Seafolk have climbed to shore. The defense line along the river has been breached!"

"Lord Bastlar has started fighting with the Nine-headed Dragon!"

Even before the enthronement ceremony had begun, the situation in Auland Empire's capital, Kagersi City, went out of control. War has already erupted.

ps:总算完成了，也四点了....难熬的六月总算结束了....大家月票很给力，又欠了六次爆发，咱慢慢还吧

Chapter 112: City Of Rain

AD1897, the summer of the Year of the Griffin, a year fated to be etched in the hearts of many.

Regardless of whether it is the year of the onset of the eternal Sacred War, the year in which the Seafolk first stepped on the stage of history or the year the City of Rain Feloci was born, this would be a year that would be marked by the later generations. After all, too many events happened in this single year.

From the very start, everyone, including me, has underestimated the ambitions of the Seafolk, as well as the Queen of Storms and the Water Elemental Goddess who are backing them.

The very first prerequisite to make an accurate assessment of a situation is to receive reliable intelligence of the entire situation. However, the surface dwellers know too little about the Seafolk. When the Seafolk first invaded, even the brightest strategists could only make conservative assessments based on previous incidents in the past.

"It should only be a small-scale war. Or perhaps, it can't even be called a war. It is only an attack on the cities along the shore. After all, they are unable to climb onto shore to occupy our territory. This kind of war is meaningless and as intelligent creatures, the Seafolk understands it. They can’t possibly be thinking of killing all of those living on the surface and consider it as a victory. As long as our living spaces cannot be overlapped, they are unable to come onto shore and we are unable to live in the water, then a full-blown war between both of us is pointless and impossible to

happen."

Profits are always involved when it comes to war between countries and races. Regardless of whether it is a fight for living space, resources, settling grudges between top brasses, stabilising the hearts of their people or the common will of the military, there is a possibility of war breaking out. However, if there aren't sufficient profits for one to reap or when the losses far surpass the gains, then the probability of the occurrence of this kind of meaningless war is almost null.

"The Seafolk are unable to stay on the surface for extended periods of time. They are just cannon fodders forced onto the shore by the Malevent Goddess Queen of Storms. As long as we drag it out, they will retreat sooner or later."

In this world, even the will of the Gods aren’t absolute. The Gods above accept the faith of different tribes and races. In exchange, they would protect their worshipers based on their Concept and the territory they rule over. However, if they were to force everyone to devote themselves into a war that would bring about deaths with no profits in exchange, it would already be a positive situation for them to be insulted behind their backs. In fact, even abandoning the faith and looking for a new one is a possibility.

After all, this isn't a world ruled by just a single faith. Many of the Gods were once humans and the distance between humans and Gods aren't that far apart. Gods require the faith of the mortals while the weak mortals require the protection of the Gods.

This is also the basis for the Auland Empire's strategy to drag on

the war. The think tanks of the royal family pat their chests in confidence, putting their lives on the line to guarantee that the attacks of the Seafolk are strong externally but weak internally. They claim that this is only the prelude to the Sacred War and their offensive line will crumble in a matter of time.

Due to the think tanks emphasising that the Seafolk aren’t sufficiently ambitious, the ones most of them are guarded against are the Chaos Malevolent Gods who forced them onto the shore. Most Aulanders neglected this threat right in front of them and instead, they devoted their attention to scheming against their own race (vassals).

In reality, while a portion of the Seafolk are able to climb to shore, nearly no surface life forms are capable of surviving for extended periods of time underwater. This caused the intelligence between both sides to be disproportionate. For one, Tracy who has left for the ocean for more than a few months is totally unaware of the revival of the Water Elemental Goddess, as well as the great change that occurred in the world of Seafolk.

To explain this, I would first have to touch on the living conditions of the Seafolk.

Even though the ocean is incredibly vast and it seems as though there are endless resources and living space, even when the strength of an average Seafolk isn't low, the life of Seafolk is actually much more difficult and tragic compared to the life of the surface dwellers.

The deep sea is an extremely dangerous location. Not mentioning

the low temperature and water pressure which could prove to be fatal, the giant oceanic monsters whose strength cannot be assessed are the true dictators of the ocean. Most Seafolk can only live by the shallower coastal sea areas by the continent to make end’s meet. There is actually a limit to the living space of Seafolk.

In their limited living space, they face a very practical problem —— Food is never sufficient.

There are countless shoals of fishes in the ocean? However, the truth is that living off hunted fishes isn't a reliable plan. There may be many school of fishes around but most of them are owned by someone else. The amount of fish in the shallow waters is extremely limited. After growing agriculture in the ocean became a joke, when depending on simply hunting is insufficient to ensure their survival, in order to ensure that there is sufficient food in their surroundings, rearing fishes became the only option. In fact, fish herders have a long history behind them and is a long-established tradition.

The resources in the fish rearing industry determines the amount of members in a Sea Tribe. The number of members in a Sea Tribe and their strength determine the territory they would possess for the rearing of the fish. Just like herding on the surface, the fishes they are herding would consume plants or hunt other shoals, resulting in the balance of the environment getting destroyed. When there is a negative growth in the herd, it is impossible for them to avoid migration.

The livelihood of the herd and the Seafolk would deplete the resources in the area. The bigger the tribe is, the shorter the

interval between their migrations. From a certain sense, they are just like Centaur nomads, just that the livestock that Centaurs herd are cows and lambs and they seek for areas with grass whereas the ones the Sea Tribes herd are shoals of fish and they seek the tidal currents.

The ability of the Sirens and Mermaids in summoning shoals of fishes to them through their voice may seem mystical and amazing but in reality, it is just a tool for herding. It is no different from the flutes and whistles of the shepherds. Furthermore, the ones who respond to their summoning are only their own herd and their ocean companions.

Herding fishes may seem magical and beautiful but it is actually a tough job. Chasing the current tides and searching for aquatic plants requires a great amount of experience. Furthermore, migrating brings around a whole lot of danger. Who would know if they would meet with a Sea Monster or an opposing Tribe in their next migratory spot? If their luck is bad, they might even meet with great losses in consecutive migrations, resulting in the dissolution of the tribe.

Those of the herding tribes possess an aggressive nature, causing most of the tribes to work as part-time mercenaries or even bandits. On the other hand, their way of survival through herding in tribes has determined that a centralised power of a country will not be born. When a tribe reaches a certain number, in order to compete for limited living space and resources, they would definitely fall apart.

Without a capital or demarcation of territories, how can a feudal

state be born? There are few areas in the shallow waters where resources are concentrated at. However, there are limitations on the numbers who could stay there for extended periods of time. Every period of time, the people staying there would change. Only the strongest tribe can compete over these places and achieve victory to live stable lives.

No one can guarantee that they would not meet with a calamity that they are unable to withstand in the next migration and die tragically. A stable life in a fixed location is the desire of the Seafolk, as well as the main reason why they envy the surface dwellers, viewing them with resentment even.

"Why should those weak surface dwellers possess a blissful and stable daily life when we don't even know where we would be tomorrow?"

At this point, since fighting a war requires profits and reasons, what the Water Elemental Goddess Aylos and the Queen of Storms could offer to those practical Seafolk for them to willingly stake their lives, serving as cannon fodders, is obvious.

A capital, a city to serve as a stepping stone towards a new world, to the sacred lands in the hearts of the Seafolk. After their capital is built, a kingdom will be created. A kingdom that belongs to the Seafolk.

Indubitably, most Seafolk are unable to leave the surface of the water and survive for the shore for extended periods of time. However, what if rain falls continuously on that plot of land and there is always a few meters depth of water on the surface of that

land? This way, the Seafolk would be able to live freely in their water kingdom. They could retain a portion of dry land to serve a farmland and enslave the surface races to serve as farmers. This gives rise to the possibility for the birth of a kingdom belonging to the Seafolk on the surface.

Sounds inconceivable? But in this world of magic and true Gods, everything is possible. Furthermore, storm and rain is the Concept of the Guardian Goddess of the Seafolk, the Queen of Storm. Not to mention, the Water Elemental Goddess Aylos is an expert in water arts. If there was someone who could build a city of rain with an internal cycle of rain, it could only be them.

In the original history, the revival of the Ancient Elemental Gods became the first wave of bosses in this world. Every single one of them are close to the existence of a true God, so they were far beyond the abilities of the 'players'. Thus, the omnipotent 'developer' god planned a series of plots leading to their deaths, causing those unlucky fellows who had barely awaken to die tragically under the hands of the natives and the 'chosen heroes of fate' and turning their servants, the Elementals, into training fodders for the 'heroes'.

There is still a difference between that virtual game world and the real world. In this world, there isn't the existence of the powerful god named 'Game Developer'. Otherwise, if those level ten to twenty rookies were to really meet with the barely awakened and weak Ancient Elemental Gods, they would not have proven their worth by slaying the Gods through their overwhelmingly explosive luck. Probably, they would end up offering their physical bodies and souls as nutrients for them.

Due to this, other than the unlucky Fire Elemental God, the other released Elemental Gods began to recover from their long slumber. As beings who have once lived gloriously, how could they be content with being forgotten by the world? The moment existences of their level make their move, everything will change. They are a few plots written in the walkthrough that are wrong, 'History' and 'Fate' had been on different paths from the very start.

Under the great temptation of completely changing their own lives as well as their descendants', the invasion of the Seafolk is no longer a skirmish as it was in 'history'. It has turned into an all-out war, a destructive invasion. The Auland Empire which has neglected the determination and the strength of the other party is still dreaming of becoming a superpower, not noticing at all the calamity that is on their doorstep.

At this moment, a grand ceremony is being conducted on the surface. Concurrently, another ceremony is also being held underwater at a much larger scale.

At the bottom of Kagersi River, concealed by a magic fog is a bustling sight.

Over hundreds of elites of the Seafolk are serving as guards without any complaints. Countless powerful Seafolk are concentrated at this area. The arrogant and insolent Naga royalties have a smile of humility on their face, the irascible and savage Sea Monsters had helmets that muffles their voices and chains that binds their movement on them and the bloodthirsty Sea Giants have also put down their rusty anchors, trying their best to lower their heads to feign humility.

The only one who could make these powerful beings to lower their head is an even more powerful supreme being.

On the giant altar carved on a Seven-color Coral Rock, there are two thrones, one big and one small, made of jade. Of the two, the smaller one is empty whereas the larger one has an ice beauty with snow-white skin sitting on it. Her form is half-human half-fish, the upper half of her body is human while dragging along a long tail reminiscent of a Sea Dragon in her bottom half.

Although she looks small and beautiful in contrast to the giant altar, she is actually taller than the bulkiest Sea Giant. She looks even more elegant than the royalty of the Seafolk, the Mermaids, who are known for their beauty. If one were to stare closer, the skin of the beauty who possesses scales and tail seems to be a little transparent, as though it was made of water.

"Let's begin."

The cold voice of the Water Elemental Goddess has a faint tinge of weakness to it. Her voice isn’t loud but it resounds by the ears of every single Seafolk. This isn't magic, just the river water conveying the will of their master. This is the world of water, her world. In here, she possesses limitless authority and unmatched prestige.

After Aylos's will is conveyed, the ritual officially begins.

As Aylos's white jade like finger touches into blank space, an

intangible gate opens. The Water Elemental Dimension could be seen on the other end. That is Aylos's home as well as her kingdom.

Countless Water Elemental Fishes swim out and the moment they reach the altar, they turn into pure water in a series of ripples. Nourished, the coral altar emits a faint light.

Middle-tier Water Elementals, Water Elemental Warlords, Water Elemental Elders and Ancient Water Elementals, strong existences appear one after another on their own initiative to become sacrifices for the altar. Elemental life-forms do not fear death. To them, death is just another passageway back to their world.

On the other side, a line of black-robed Seafolk walk onto the altar. Carrying the Crest of Storm, they are the Priests of the Queen of Storms. Capable of bringing about storms and creating gigantic waves capable of swallowing warships, they are of noble standing and possesses great influence in each Tribe.

At this moment, despite their esteemed position, they could only do the same task —— Walking to the altar, picking up the short ritual dagger and stabbing their own hearts before collapsing in satisfaction.

As these respected Storm Priests fall one after another, a faint figure starts to appear on the smaller empty throne. She is only about the size of a regular human, far from the size of Aylos. Even so, any Seafolk who sees her would lower their proud heads trembling.

As a Malevolent Chaos God, she doesn’t possess a resounding reputation on the surface just like her other comrades. The Queen of Storms is delighted to accept the blood tribute from her worshipers and her will has already descended here.

"Your souls will step into my God Realm and your doings will be sung by your descendants."

The words of approval from the avatar of the Goddess made even more black-robed Priests quicken their pace onto the altar, vying for the opportunity to sacrifice themselves in front of their God.

As the tributes fall one after another, the faint figure of the Queen of Storms gradually turns more and more tangible. Along with the descent of the avatar of the true God, a powerful storm and roars of lightning appear in the sky on top of the river.

Just like Aylos, the green-skinned Queen of Storms also possesses traits unique to the Seafolk. The moment she turns corporeal, the impatient Goddess couldn't immediately begin on what would turn out to be a calamity for the surface life-forms.

"Kagersi City? From now on, only the capital of the Seafolk, City of Rain Feloci, will exist. My people, use your own strength to fight for the kingdom you dream of."

The will of the God is conveyed through the storm. The next moment, the imposing avatar of the true God picks up a ritual dagger herself and stabs it into her own heart. By the time the will

on the avatar returns back to the main body, the body of the avatar has already turned into multiple tornadoes under the effect of the black-colored God Power of Storm.

The sacrifice of the avatar of the Storm Goddess would probably cause the strength of her main body to regress significantly. However, sending such a big present in when the Sacred War has just begun, the Order Gods are in for a headache.

At this moment, the numerous tornadoes pierce into the heavens and a new cycle of nature is being constructed. Concurrently, the Water Elemental Goddess conveys her will.

"I will grant that city the name of City of Rain Feloci. In an area around this city, rain will never stop falling. The land will always be accompanied with water and the citizens of the City of Rain will become the subjects of water. "

In the face of countless storms and the great strength of a true God, the boundary between water and the heavens is broken through. Countless billowing waves are pulled into the sky to form new rain water. A new cycle of nature has been created. However, even though the water level of the entire city is rising, the water in the flooded Pier District is slowly retracting.

Very quickly, when the water level is maintained at around a meter tall, the storm diminishes significantly. Under the assistance of Water Elemental Grand Dukes, the pale Aylos passes through the Dimension Gate and returns to the Water Elemental Dimension. Due to her overexerting herself, she is bound to return to a long slumber.

"Following the will of the Queen of Storms, let's fight for our own capital!"

The reticent blue Sea Dragon floats to the surface, the Sea Giants pick up their giant anchor while the Nagas begin to prepare their spells.

"Ha, it seems like it has finally begun."

By the river, the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor Hydra who has restrained himself for a long time became the first one to enter the city, creating tremors throughout the city.

The sudden rising waves crushes through the barriers that were set in place. The falling rain caused the resident's vision to blur while the waist-level water severely limited their motions. The Auland garrison troops who were at a loss from the sudden bizarre phenomenon and the flood will soon face their hardest aquatic battle.

"Evil dragon! Die!"

A silver flash of lightning streaks across the sky. The dragon head at the very front is slashed into two in an instant. Green Dragon blood spills out and corrupts the river water with a pungent smell.

"AHHHHHHHHHHH! Darned Dragon Slayer!!"

While the mortals are gradually falling back from the aggressive Seafolk, the first one to declare war against them is the Heroic Spirit Bastlar

ps:看来还是不能熬夜，写累了闭眼休息下居然睡着了，结果醒来再写还是熬夜了，尽快把更新时间转到白天吧。顺便求下推荐票和保底月票吧.....

Chapter 113: Desperate Situation

The roar of the storm outside the windows could no longer be considered to be just in the background. Along with the onset of the flood came the rage of the oceans.

Humans had conquered the most fertile lands for far too long. As the victors of the previous Sacred War, they do possess the right to be proud. The Seafolk are chased into the dark and cold ocean, the Beastmen lost their grasslands and plains while the Undead disappeared into the marshlands and deserts. Even the Elves who belong to the Order Faction just like the humans was forced into seclusion in one corner of the world under the aggression of the humans.

The losers of the previous Sacred War have been suffering in agony for the past 1700 years. Those surviving with long lifespans still remember how their kin and homelands were destroyed in the war. They hate and fear war, but yet they crave for it. They detest the destructive war which took everything away from them, but yet they can't quench the desire to return to the homeland of their ancestors. They hope that they will be able to vent their resentment and hatred through a war of vengeance and snatch back everything they lost.

In contrast, the short lifespan humans already view themselves as the core of the world, the blessed ones of Eich, the kings of all beings.

Bianluya Plains is the sacred land as well as the land of origin of the Beastmen. The black land is so fertile that it is reputed that a

seedling would even grow from raw rice. Yet, in the endless territories of the Saint Antonio Empire, it is considered one of the land of lesser importance. On the other hand, its original owner, the Beastmen, are slaughtering others mercilessly in the Underground World for the sake of survival or scavenging for food on barren lands.

Back then, when the Seafolk were known as Water Tribe, they could be found in every river, reservoir, sea and lake. However, if a Seafolk were to appear in a lake on the continent now, an army would be mobilised to exterminate it in an instant, not to mention the adventurers who are attracted by the bounty on them. The Elf Kingdom which should have been an ally could always find their own kin in slavery markets. The skirmishes that occur between the Elves and human kingdoms by the borders have never stopped.

The heroic Knights of back then have become slothful. Compared to the other races, the humans have been living too peacefully and their easy life makes them arrogant and egocentric. Being born without longevity, their short-sightedness allows them to forget their ancestors' hard work and glory. They feel that they are the leader of all beings and that the other life-forms should be their servants.

"Beastmen? Aren't those just barbarians who can't even speak properly? In the face of our new technology and war machines, these wild barbarians are not worth mentioning. Elves? Heh, a bunch of foolish antiques. If the Sacred War were to recur, any two of our superpowers would be more than sufficient to sweep through the whole continent. We could probably end up as the easiest victor of the Sacred War."

The victors of the previous Sacred War are still gleeful over their dominance, devoing their body and soul into igniting an internal conflict among their own race. On the other hand, the losers are suffering in agony, bearing all pain as they bided their time for a chance to flip the tables.

The different attitudes of both sides towards war have caused the original victors of the Order Faction to unknowingly descend into an absolutely disadvantageous situation.

On the plains in the South, the Earth Elemental God and the Beastmen had started walking together. On a frigid night, sitting by the bonfire to warm themselves up, the Chieftains point to the homeland of their dreams as they roar and cry. The Beastmen Warriors share a drink of their blood as a symbol of alliance while preparing to set off. On a barren island in the South, there are the Blackwings who have been reduced to a mere pirating tribe. Yet, under the assistance of the Wind Elemental God, they regained their ability to fly. Activating their ancient floating island and picking up their sacred spears, they are ready for the new hunting season.

If it wasn't for Elisa consuming the Fire Elemental God as a tonic, when the four Ancient Elemental Gods move out together, the Elemental Tide of the entire Dimension will rise exponentially. Magic, Divine Arts and supernatural abilities will become easier to learn and use. As the origin of all Elemental Magic, the power of the four main elements will increase explosively

At the same time, it will be easier for guests from other dimensions to traverse over. The Elementals will become a usual

guest in the Main Dimension while the Demons of the Chaos Faction has already embarked on a new bloody battle of elimination. The new warlords will gain the opportunity to lead the Demons to reap the souls of the surface dwellers.

Perhaps, this may just be the prelude to the eternal Sacred War. However, if the humans are unable to even withstand the prelude, then calling it the final battle isn't wrong as well.

Other than the humans, the next strongest faction in the Order Faction should be the Elves, who had fractured into countless kingdoms, race and tribes. However, from a hundred years ago, the Elf kingdoms had begun sealing their territory up. Despite receiving an omen of the onset of the Sacred War, the Elves and their Gods didn’t have the intention to notify their ‘allies’. After all, they know that even if they were to inform them, they will most probably only meet with indifference and sarcasm by the arrogant humans.

You can praise an Elf for their looks, for their kindness and for their intelligence. However, you can never praise them for being forgiving. In the Elf language, forgiveness and short-term memory are synonyms. For those narrow-minded long ears, the resentment they have accumulated for a thousand years ago feels fresh as though it was from yesterday. For them, who had wanted to stay out of the battle, it is already considered kind of them to not put the humans down.

Also, there had been information that the Elf Gods have been in contact with the Malevolent Gods of Chaos all along. It is unsure whether these rumors are true but it is a fact that the Human Gods

have relationships with the other Gods. After all, there would always be some estrangement between an ex-leader and a current leader. It is just like an ex-celebrity looking at an idol that is popular at the moment. Even if they say nothing on the surface, they were bound to have certain complicated emotions in regards to it. It is impossible for their relationship to be good.

Alright, back to the main topic at hand. The current situation is already apparent before us. The Chaos Faction has been sharpening their knives for the past thousand years. In comparison, the human kingdoms are still in a state of peace and expending themselves in an internal struggle. At the very least, the result of the war in the early stages is bound to be disastrous for them.

Afterwards, while I was reflecting on my actions, I realised that I made the same mistake as the Celestial Tower. They were too reliant on prophecies while I was too reliant on my 'history prophecy'. Just because that 'history' is the projection of true events that had occurred and the portion in the beginning was accurate doesn't mean that it would go down the way it was written. Other than my existence that causes a butterfly effect on the world, just the very fact that there isn't any other 'players' existent means that everything would be different.

In a real world without 'players' blessed by the heavens, the three great Elemental Gods can't possibly be killed by some ridiculous plot. The level of the Elemental Calamity far surpasses what was projected in the walkthrough. Perhaps, compared to the entire Sacred War and the continent, it could only be considered as the appetiser before the meal. But, this prelude battle would definitely be much more gruesome than in 'history'.

Alright, even if I predicted the events accurately, even if I wasn't squatting in the prison called Liu Huang Mountain City while studying and refining the laws, I am still helpless in the matters which involves countless powerful Gods.

The current situation has already diverged from 'history'. If things were to go down as projected in the walkthrough, when the four Elemental Gods were eradicated, three of them were sealed and only the Fire Elemental God managed to escape from his seal in the Underground World. He worked together with the Underground Alliance which freed him, causing the conflict between the Underground World and the Surface to escalate. At present, due to my influence, the Fire Elemental God which should have been a big headache is completely gotten rid of. On the other hand, the other three Elemental God found their own helpers, becoming a source of huge trouble.

It is meaningless to debate which history would be better. Assumptions do not hold in history and there are no 'ifs'. It is impossible to debate for sure which side would is better.

At the current moment, I have to face the storm that was created by the wings of the butterfly of fate, the great wave that is stirred by the Water Elemental Goddess.

Right after walking out of the reception room, despite experiencing numerous wars, I was still shocked by the sight before me.

Tornadoes fill the entire sight outside the windows. They seem like a giant dragons pulling water to the sky while the ominous dark clouds continue to rain at a fixed pace. The entire city has already been converted into a City of Rain.

"A phenomenon of God!"This isn't a description but a judgement towards the situation. Only God Power can create such a bizarre sight.

Inside the sparring field, the hall on the first floor is already in a mess. Water floods the interior of the location and on a temporary stage that was built for this event, nobles are communicating urgently with their subordinates.

The moment Darsos walks down, informants rush up and surround him. Innumerable glow of the Mystical Arts flickers. The valuable high-tier Mages have become the only reliable messenger here.

"The defense line along the coast has been broken through, there are too many Seafolk! These Sea Giants cannot be stopped!"

"Head of Court Mages Halso has died in battle. The defense line of Court Mages is collapsing. The White Wolf Guards from different locations are being surrounded and exterminated by the Seafolk. They can't break out of the encirclement!"

"All roads for the movements of troops to assist the defense lines have been blocked by the escaping refugees. Nobles are commanding their private army to kill them to open a way

through."

Bad news come floating down like snowflakes. However, what grips the hearts of the crowd here are the displays sent over by the Mages who are stationed at different streets.

In a certain display, the Auland's prided White Wolf Guards who are equipped with top-tier equipment are blocked by the short Fishmen. It is difficult for the war horses they bred carefully to move even a single step in the flood. In order to move in the flood, a Knight got off his horse and unequips his prided Missilor mythril alloy equipment helplessly.

In the water, it is impossible for them to conduct a fearless charge which they are known for. The indestructible Savage Heavy Sword cannot find its targets. In the heavy rain, it is impossible to throw the exploding Savage Javelin at all. The Knights wading through the water couldn't catch up at all with the Fishmen swimming away. Their heavy armor and weapon became their greatest burden. The powerful White Wolf Guards fought poorly in the water, their performance not even matching up to a fisherman.

"Ahhhh!"

Even though the voice that is sent along with the display isn't loud, the distorted face of the Knight in pain, the spear that is stabbed into his back and the blood flowing out from his wound is clear to see.

"Walalalala!"

Cheering delightfully, the head of the Fishman who killed the Knight pops out from the water surface. Then, he dives back in again and he bides his time for another opportunity to conduct an assault.

The short figures of the Fishmen, which were usually mocked by the other races, have become their strongest weapon in this flood. Mud is mixed into the river water, making it impossible for the Knights to discover the Fishmen hiding in the water.

On the other hand, a sturdy-looking Knight got captured in a net. Then, with a jerk, he is pulled down. He is still wearing his armor as his powerful body is able to carry it. He struggles in the net, unable to climb back up at all. He uses all his might in an attempt to tear apart the net but to no avail. In the end, he could only widen his eyes with his hands clutching onto his neck. Just like that, he drowned to death in front of everyone else.

"...That is little Mickey, the youngest Silver Knight of the guards. His ability to maneuver his horse in a charge is the strongest in the 7th Squadron. For him to die like that to a lowly Fishmen! Hauk, the strongest Knight of the 7th Squadron, for him to drown to death just like that! Lord, please think of a solution. We can't all die like this meaninglessly!"

The furious roar of the White Wolf Guard in the hall makes everyone feel desolate. One of the core values of the Knight is that they do not fear sacrifice. However, there is also a rule that their sacrifice has to hold some meaning. If they were to die in a charge towards a Giant Dragon, then that would be an honor. However,

dying in the hands of the weak Fishmen who don't mean a thing on other days is an insult to the Knights.

Given how the powerful White Wolf Guards are already in such a dire situation, the Aulanders in the other displays are in a worse position.

A beautiful Mermaid dances under the water. The pouring rain reminds her of the waterfall in her hometown. Thus, she fondles the magic seashell in her golden hair and starts to sing.

The singing of the Mermaids is well-known in the world. The beautiful and elegant figure of them dressed in seashells are even more enchanting. However, the Warriors on the battlefield didn't have the leisure to enjoy the performance. That is because along with the song of the Mermaid, threats lurk in the waters.

"AHHHH! A carnivorous fish! There are carnivorous fishes under the water!"

The Warrior who cries in agony falls into the murky water. A few seconds later, a pile of white bones with teeth marks on it floats on top of the red water.

"Jellyfish, there are poisonous jellyfishes! Everyone, leave the water surface!"

The transparent and colorless jellyfishes are undetectable under the water. Their tentacles and skin are filled with deadly venom

that would cause even the strongest Warriors to be numbed to death unknowingly.

"AHHHHHH! Swordfish!"

This Warrior can be considered fortunate. At the very least, he knows who is the one that killed him. The swordfish's long mouth stabs into his waist. Clutching his intestines, he struggles slightly for a bit before falling into the water, dead.

Along the sweet singing of the Mermaid, the delicacies of the sea that were served in the restaurants on previous days turned into deadly predators.

Everyone knows that staying in the water even a moment longer could mean death. However, in the City of Rain blessed by the two Gods using God Power, there isn’t a single part of the city that isn't flooded. There aren't any places for the Warriors to escape to.

Although there are people who abandon everything to climb to the roof, looking at the fins from a group of sharks below, what await them is still their doomsday.

A large amount of Seafolk surge into the city. If the low middle-tier fighting power of the Seafolk made their opponents sigh helplessly, then the strength of the top-tier fighting power made them feel despair.

"Summon Explosion Flames!"

In despair, a battle Mage who specialises in Fire Magic summons the Fire Spell he is the most adept in. However, before the flames could even take shape, a young Naga claps her hands together and a wave of water rushes towards him, extinguishing the flames.

As an incarnation of the Water Snake Spirit, every Naga would at least be capable of a little bit of Water Magic. Perhaps, on the continent, it would be only sufficient to quench their thirst. But in the water, they can raise menacing waves capable of great destruction.

Furthermore, she was only an apprentice. The Seafolk's fighting power has increased exponentially under the blessings of the Water Goddess and Sea Goddess. The shockwaves from the footsteps of the Sea Giants generate gargantuan waves capable of breaking through the sturdiest fortress easily. The Spellcasters of the Seafolk laugh sinisterly as they summon giant waves while hiding under the water to scour everything.

The ones here today are the elites from more than a hundred tribes. The human Warriors who are separated from their groups by the billowing waves are surrounded and killed. Even in terms of the quantity of high-tier fighting power, the human faction aren’t in an advantageous situation.

"Never fight with the Seafolk in water, unless you possess fins and don't need to breath."

It is unsure who is the one to say this ancient adage. The hall in

the sparring field remains eerily silent. Then, faint sobbing could be heard.

Yes, no one is able to defeat the Seafolk in the sea. Just like how I almost died from the encirclement of a group of Fishmen just a few days ago, the fighting prowess of the Seafolk in water is unimaginable. This is also the reason why the two Goddesses can rest peacefully after they finished their blessings on the City of Rain. In their opinion, there is no need for them to interfere in the situation anymore.

The current situation proves that their judgement is accurate. From the moment when the city flooded, the victors have already been decided. The Auland Empire is fated to lose its extravagant City of Pearls.

No one expected that the powerful Empire would meet with a calamity of this level on such a joyous day of celebration. Everyone sets their gaze on Darsos as they wait for his final decision.

A city isn't the only thing an Empire possesses. In their vast lands, they can still form new armies. As long as they remain alive, there will still be hope and the day of their vengeance will come.

It is meaningless for them to give up their lives right now. Everyone knows and understands what they have to do now, but the cruel call has to be made and borne by the inaugurating Emperor.

"...Abandon the defense line. All those who can leave, retreat out

of the city!"

Shouting these words from the gaps between his teeth, Darsos seemed to have aged 10 years.

"NO!! My parents are still at home. Your majesty, please save them!" A son of nobility cries out and this is only the start.

"My precious little son is still fighting, how can we give up now! This is the most despicable betrayal!" An old general roars at the Emperor. His soldiers are dying tragically one after another. The moment a retreat occurs, they will all turn into sacrificial cannon fodders. There will be no possibility for their survival.

"Kagersi is our capital. Losing our capital, how can we still stand with our heads up high in the Eich Continent. We will become the laughingstock of the entire world." The old Duke laughs miserably. What he said is true. The only ones who smile cheerfully at this situation are those envoys of the states who are forced to submit to the Auland Empire. Even though they are worried about their safety, happiness could be seen on their face.

To the envoys, even if they were to die, as long as they do not sign on those clauses which brings shame to their country, as long as their descendants can live with their heads up high, it will all be worth it even if they were to die at this instant.

"I said, retreat!"

The Scarlet Conqueror emits a blood-like glow as the Emperor stabs the sword into the ground.

"Staying in this city to await death? Foolish! So what if we lose our White Wolf Guards? We can build the White Lion Guards and White Tiger Guards. So what if we lose our capital? There are vast lands to our Auland, there are countless cities similar to Kagersi. We can just pick a new one. Indeed, we have lost today. We just have to mark this shame and tomorrow, our great armies will repay everything back to them!"

"I say, we retreat! Take away anything of value and discard those useless monetary objects. Take away all of our nation's treasures. Prioritise our technology, children, women and elderly. Other than that, only those of high standing will be prioritised. All young males whose limbs are intact, pick up your weapons and stand alongside me. My Knights and I will maintain a defense line here until the final moment!"

When his rage escalates past a certain level, the tone of the King of Winter Wolves turns calm instead. Just that, his trembling beard of his displays the rage he is suppressing.

The Emperor's calmness and initiative to stall for time stabilised the situation at an important moment. His declaration to stand guard without second thoughts allowed him to avoid the most tragic ending. As for me, it is time for me to make a decision as well.

"My apologies, I didn't expect for it to turn out like this. You can leave together with the first wave of those retreating. No, I should

say, please leave with them."

"The Goblin Bank of Green Bay. If you fulfill the terms of the contract, you can claim the key from there at any time. However, it would only be there a month later."

I didn't reply directly to his words and as usual, my words do not bear truth. I am still in the midst of making final preparations for my departure, so why would I tell the other party that the key is still on me.

Leaving right now? How can this be possible! Little Reyne, following my requests, is walking around town to recruit talents while Krose is still guarding at the Church. They are definitely in danger at this moment. If I were to take the crucial key and escape now, not only will my comrades on the surface die for certain, even the fellows who are in the underwater base will starve to death.

"You intend to save your comrades? Stop joking around. The entire city is filled with Seafolk. Even if it is you, fighting with a Seafolk in water is suicidal! A pointless sacrifice, that is the shame of a Knight!"

"Heh, suicidal? I don't agree with your words."

There is no point in explaining anything to him. I shake my head and walk down to the main hall. I take out my Dimension Pouch and search through my old items.

Yes, even for me, there is not a chance of victory if I were to cross blows with the Seafolk in the water. Furthermore, the War Angel Form is extremely limited. The moment I enter the water, I won’t be able to escape the pursuit of the Seafolk. If so, there is no way I can achieve my goals. However, as long as I have that item, it isn't entirely impossible."

"There isn't a chance of victory if I were to fight in water. However, things would be differently if it is on ice. Here it is!"

After pouring out a bundle of prune, marbles, handmade poker cards and many other miscellaneous object, I finally found the item I was searching for. It is a hand carved wooden dagger. It is only slightly bigger than my hand. It is obviously a child's toy. The craftsmanship is coarse and there are a few squiggly words carved on it, as though written by a child.

"Karwenz's sword. Roland cannot secretly take and play."

Those few words are really written by a child. That is the signature Karwenz left behind on his treasured wooden sword. Back then, when he was younger, he was unwilling to address me, who was only a few minutes older than him, as his elder brother. Normally, he would just call me by my name.

Fondling the scars on the sword, I feel as though I have returned back to that warm and worry-free childhood. I could almost see that rash and straightforward foolish little brother of mine.

Shaking my head, this isn't the time for me to be reminiscing the

past. What I need now isn't the wooden sword itself but the soul sleeping within it.

"Erebella, I need your help."

Chapter 114: Erebella

Despite the royal family sparring field being built on higher grounds, that icy-cold river water still defies common sense and flows into the interior. This is a distortion of the physical phenomenon of 'water flows towards lower ground' to 'water flows to be of average height'. This is modification of the law of nature and only the highest governor of the Water Element is able to do it.

At every single moment, the situation is worsening. I do not have time to waste.

"Erebella, I need your help. I need your strength."

The water slowly creeps below my feet. Yet, I am still talking patiently to the wooden sword. Perhaps, I am seem like a fool to the eyes of the onlookers. However, I know that this is the only solution.

Erebella, this isn't the name of a human, but a deeply wounded soul. A beautiful lady who has been sleeping for more than 300 years already.

Although my plea for help has been voiced, it seems as though my plea had sunk into the deep ocean, there isn't any response at all. However, I know that she has already awaken, just that she doesn't want to respond to my calls. Or rather, she doesn't know how she should respond to my calls.

"Irene (Erebella's abbreviation), there isn't much time left. We

must sign the Soul Contract as soon as possible. Only with your help can I battle on the surface of the water.”

A weak voice finally echoes by my ear.

"I am already very tired."

Soul beings do not possess physical body, so how can there be the concept of stamina and tiredness? However, I am able to understand what she means.

By saying tired, perhaps she is referring to her erection of a barrier to protect her wounded heart from shattering again.

"Yes, so you have already rested for more than 300 years. If you don't wake up and walk under the sun for a bit, you might disintegrate soon."

This isn't a lie. To humans, excessive depression is a dangerous mental illness but to the soul beings whose souls are their physical bodies, negative emotions are like lethal poison.

"Perhaps, disintegrating might be a good thing... You should know that I don't want to contract with any other Knight again."

"Un, that's why I didn't allow Reyne and the others to interrupt your slumber back then."

"You should still have other options. Even if you have yet to reach Silver-rank, as long as you were to approach them to contract with you, those Frigid Nightmares will not reject you."

Yes, the one sleeping in the wooden sword is a Frigid Nightmare, a companion of a previous Aurora Knight. At this moment, I am trying to poach her to become my mount.

"What I want isn't a chain who would bind me from growing further, but a pair of wings which could make me soar higher. Only you are capable of becoming my wings, and not a pair of manacles that would hinder my development."

There are many paths for one to climb to the pinnacle. However, to reach the pinnacle, just one is enough. Having more powers isn't necessarily a good thing, being too greedy would just result in one’s powers losing its purity.

I have already mapped out a clear plan for my own development. Ice, Death, Law and Holy Light. These four fields are more than enough for me to research for my whole life. The Frigid Nightmare can indeed boost my battle power, but it isn't something necessary.

Of course, becoming an Aurora Knight will boost my fighting power significantly, so it is something that I need right now.

However, the reason why I never considered contracting with Frigid Nightmares is because Frigid Nightmares will grow along with the Knight's soulwave. A mature Frigid Nightmare will have many marks from their previous owners. This would instead my

limit my growth.

As a soul being, newborn Frigid Nightmares are a blank slate. As they grow along with their contracted Knight, their master's memories and emotions will become their nutrients. The desire of their owner to become stronger will become their motivation. They are the most trusted mounts and companion of the Aurora Knights. From a certain viewpoint, as their memories and emotions tend to be extremely similar to their master's, they are like half of their master's soul.

Under normal circumstances, accepting the Frigid Nightmare of others can allow the person to grow swiftly. However, it would be hard for them to climb to the pinnacle. Even so, there are exceptions to everything. The Knight whom Irene contracted with previously has a soulwave similar to mine. Or rather, saying that it is identical isn't a mistake as well. She doesn’t even have to do additional adjustments to adapt to my soul completely. No, if it is the Frigid Nightmare of that person, it would most probably boost my strength instead.

Of course, finding an infant Frigid Nightmare can also fulfill my objective. However, not mentioning how difficult activating the altar will be, even if I were to obtain a Frigid Nightmare, I can't afford to wait that long a period for it to mature. When the Frigid Nightmare finally matures, I probably wouldn't need it anymore.

A long silence follows after my invitation. What I received eventually is still a bitter rejection from Irene.

"I am already very tired and I lack battle will. In my current state,

I would definitely pull you back."

To a Warrior, lacking battle will is equal to death. How could I not know that? A Warrior who seeks death will eventually die. Even though I know that Irene is able to strengthen my current battle prowess, I never tried to awaken her from her slumber. But now, other than her, I can't find any other solution that could help me protect the people I would want to from this desperate situation.

"Help me, will you? I need your strength to save my comrades." To a person whose heart is dead, it would be hard to get logic through them. If so, it is better to try getting through via emotions and reality.

"Without your help, not only will I die. The final inheritor of the Mist Bloodline will also die. If so, the contracts with the Frigid Nightmare will be cut totally. Alright, Irene, regardless of whether it is for our friendship when we were younger or for the future of the Frigid Nightmares, please lend me a hand. The spirit of the Knights dictates for them to save anyone in need."

"As expected, you are still that same despicable Roland."

Yes, very despicable. I know how to say words that the other party is unable to reject. A true Knight is unable to ignore the pleas of others. All along, that person only listens to persuasion and does not submit to force. As half a soul who shares his memories, Irene is unable to ignore my request.

"Besides, that person would probably return to the Main Dimension not too long later. Don't you want to question him why would he make that kind of decision? Why he, despite already making up his mind, chose to abandon you?"

"...I already know. I have already thought it through. In his eyes, the foolish spirit of the Knights cannot give him the strength he needs for vengeance. Betrayed by the humans he trusted plunged him into despair and agony. The sacrifice of his elder brother made him swear to exact vengeance towards this world. Thus, he made his choice. He abandoned everything and responded to the summons of the Chaos Abyss, entering the gates of Hell, in hopes of gaining sufficient strength for vengeance."

"That fool has always been so extreme. However, don't you still want to ask him to his face? Ask him how he has been, whether he was beat up in the Chaos Abyss, whether he misses home or if he regrets abandoning you... Abandoning you, is it because he fears that his fall to depravity would corrupt you!"

"Despicable. Despicable. Despicable. Despicable." It seems that my last question has hit the bullseye on the weakness of the other party. Irene is becoming agitated.

The profanities of an agitated little girl lacks skill. Lacking in vocabulary, she could only repeat 'despicable'. This is probably the vilest phrase that she could recall.

She is considered a little girl even though she is a few centuries old? It was only ten years after hatching from the egg that she fell into slumber again. Even if they shared memories and knowledge,

a person who has less than ten years of experience can only be considered a little girl.

However, I seem to have underestimated the resentment of the little girl.

"Prince Roland, haven't you been mocking the Knight's values of protection and sacrifice? The Spirit of the Mist which Prince Karwenz believes in was treated like a joke by you. Going by your personality, shouldn't you rationally give up those chess pieces to retain your strength? Why are you choosing the path of a protector which you have despised all along now?"

Yes, Irene is Karwenz's Frigid Nightmare. This young soul has been brought up to be dim-witted like him. However, a long slumber left her time still stuck at 300 years ago. She still treats me like that young Paladin Prince.

"Was that what I thought back then? It does sound like something I would say."

There's no need for me to get sentimental now. Since she asked such words, I know that her will is wavering.

"... Back then, I was indeed quite arrogant. In the end, I lost terribly. Now that I have gotten back to the starting point, Karwenz started walking on my old path instead. Therefore, I intend to stop him. Erebella, join me. I have hidden many things from you. After our contract, you can see it all for yourself. If you are dissatisfied then, you can always break the contract."

A white light silently seeps out from the wooden sword. That is Irene's reply. From the moment I invited her, it has all been decided.

The pale white cold light shrouds me as the soulwaves of the two souls approach one another. The benefit of being twins is that Irene doesn't have to match her wavelength to mine to contract with me.

"What kind of joke is this! So many things actually happened that year! So many calamities, how did you get through them!"

"So much hatred, despair and resentment. Why haven't you gone mad yet? Greed, emptiness, slander, envy and pain. You have seen so much evil of the world. The future is so bleak. How? How can you remain so positive? Why haven't you given up hope!"

A contract between souls means exposing everything to the other. The full memory of my 300 years in 3 lifetimes. That could be called a legendary experience. This made the innocent Irene shocked. Those suppressed emotions and memories of the soul became like the most nutritious delicacies to her, causing her to grow rapidly.

"Perhaps, even after Pandora's Box was open, even after all of the calamities have been released, but hope still remains at the bottom of the box. Besides, I am not alone this time..."

"Alright, stop looking at me like that. I know this is very literary,

very chuunibyou. Then, let me use Karwenz's words instead —— You cheated, I refuse to accept it. Let's fight again. I don't believe that there won't be a day which I beat you to the ground!!"

"Pu! Back then, Prince Karwenz really said that."

Irene bursts into laughter. She suddenly recalls the duels between the brothers back then. Despite possessing an advantage in all aspects, that lazy elder brother always managed to claim victory in the end through ploys.

"Hmph, that brat likes to go to the extremes. He refuses to turn back until he hits into a wall, not giving up until he reaches the River Styx. Yet, he is extremely talented and strong, not to mention how blessed with luck he is. If he bumps into a wall, he would probably just bash through it. It also isn't impossible for him to get past the River Styx either. His actions always end in an irreconcilable situation... This time, he really overdid it. When he returns, I will beat some sense into him to show him the prestige of an elder brother."

"Prestige? You have such a thing? He always ends up calling your name straight though, the elder brother who always steals his younger brother's toys and tidbits?"

"Hmph. This is my way of letting him know the cruelty of the world so that he can cultivate a competitive spirit and a strong will to fight on! This is the way an elder brother shows his care and concern to his younger brother. Please call me Boundless Love Elder Brother, the cold on the outside hot on the inside brother."

"... Continue bragging then. You are obviously jealous of your younger brother's luck with women. Hee, Roland, have you forgotten that after the establishment of the Soul Contract, I am able to look into your memories?"

Communication between souls don't need time. While joking about, Irene who has ingested sufficient nutrients recovers swiftly. In a few short seconds, the Frigid Nightmare turns into an ice cocoon. In Darsos’s eyes, I probably just quietly took out a wooden sword and dazed out for a few seconds when a white cocoon suddenly appears in front of me.

After coming back to my senses, I touch the ice cocoon lightly. The giant cocoon starts to crack and following which, an illusory battle horse appears before everyone.

She is shrouded by an ice mist. Stars could be seen twinkling in both her eyes. Her physical body appears vaguely for a moment and disappears in the next, as though it doesn't belong to this dimension. Starlight shines on her physical body. The moment she stands up, with a slight tap with her hoofs, the ground she steps on turns into solid ice. This is a war horse that doesn't belong to the mortal world.

Suddenly, the playful little Irene blows a cold breath towards me.

"Ah choo!"

Covered in cold air, I subconsciously sneeze. Before I could even

react, a layer of white snow stacks on top of me, turning me into a Snowman.

I shake my head helplessly. Lightly shaking my body, the snow falls into the water, creating a thin layer of ice. On the other hand, a silver plate appears on me.

The ice plate created by thin ice isn't very thick, neither is it heavy. It seems like a fragile artwork. Yet, it is firm and durable. On Irene's body, Ice Magic seems to be turning corporeal. A saddle and many different weapons appear on the mount. Javelin, spear, round shield and a long sword. Those exquisite-looking ice weapons are filled with Ice Magic.

"Aurora Knight!!"

Even Darsos who is aware of it beforehand exclaims in shock. As fellow Knights, the White Wolf Guards will never forget the nemesis in their imaginations, that legendary order whose members are said to each possess the strength of a Gold-rank.

"Your majesty, I accept your goodwill but there are things that I still have to do. I will entrust my attendant Rosemary to you. Please bring her to safety."

Throwing my future spy Rosemary behind, I delightfully tear through the annoying clothes I am wearing, allowing the ice plate to come into contact with my skin. Even though there are many worries plaguing my mind, somehow I feel relaxed and happy.

Due to effects of the Soul Contract, the ice armor feels extremely warm. It doesn't have the restraining feeling of the ice armor previously. I also feel my body getting slightly lighter. The ice armor actually improves the mobility of its user.

While Darsos is still intending to say something, the white Knight has already charged to the entrance with his war horse, leaving behind footprints of ice on the water surface his horse steps on.

Darsos shakes his head bitterly. He could only retract his gaze helplessly.

"Begin the retreat..."

At this moment, I rush through the streets on my Frigid Nightmare. I activate my cold barrier, preventing the rain and storm from bothering me.

"Can you turn into a giant Ice Dragon? You used to be able to do it, so you should still be able to do it now. Although it is too striking and thus a little dangerous, it would be much faster if we fly there."

"I can, if you reach Legend."

On certain aspects, establishing a Soul Contract with the Frigid Nightmare is similar to a Mage's Magic Pet Contract. The maximum strength of the servant cannot exceed that of his master.

"Ice Behemoth?"

"...Time works just like a butcher's knife. In the past, Lord Roland wasn't that forgetful."

Under the commands of the Naga officers, the Fishmen before me stretch open several fishnets. It seems that they intend to trip my mount. However. with a light push on the surface, Irene leaps into midair, disregarding the enemy's attempt to intercept us.

"You didn't have such a venomous tongue in the past! Where did that Snow Woman big sister with a gentle smile go to?"

I tossed Ice Javelins while making a jab at her. The Ice Javelin rotates in midair in an arc before pinning the Naga Spellcaster into the water. Following which, a Ring of Ice explodes, freezing the few Naga Guards who dared to step forward to assist her.

"So the previous me had such an image in your heart? I can turn into the form of a Snow Woman if you want, but due to my lack in strength, the form I assume will be slightly younger. Are you sure you want to charge riding on a Snow Woman?"

Imagining it for a moment, a fully equipped Knight riding on a young girl, shouting, "Holy Light, that enemy is worth a fight!" while using a whip on the young girl's bottom, forcing her to charge ahead...

"I want to try... No, that's too immoral! Irene, maintain your current form."

I suddenly thought that if I were to be seen in that form by others, I probably will never be able to shake off my honorable title as the 'King of Gentlemen'.

"Uncle police, that’s the guy! Prince Roland, have you forgotten that our memories are shared? Also, the world that you were in previously is too perverted."

As our souls are connected, my memory from the other world is also shared with her. That familiar retort left me stunned for a moment before I chuckled.

"Actually, you can use the keywords 'Gentlemen Alliance' and 'True Love Siblings' to search in my memories... Right, in order to protect the underage you, please do not search Beifeng."

"...I retract my words. There are indeed perverts in every world. Also, you did it purposely, didn't you. The more you ask me to look, the more curious I would be. I almost turned blind! You must take responsibility!"

"I will take responsibility by introducing you to Beifeng."

"I'm sorry, please do not take responsibility for me!"

Even while joking about, the rapid Aurora war horse didn't stop

her footsteps. Using her ability to turn the water surface she steps on into ice, she is able to easily avoid the encirclement of the Seafolk. Even the fastest Sea Horse is unable to keep up with her pace.

The benefits of our thoughts being connected is that I don't have to be worried about being shaken off the horse, I only have to choose which target to assault and kill. If some powerful offensive magic were to come my way, the protective barrier of the SemiGod Staff is perfectly suited for this situation.

【The Protection of the Dark God: Summon a formless protective barrier which can withstand 200 magic damage/magic equipment damage. Before the protective barrier breaks, the wielder will be immune to all stunning, hexing and any other control-type magic. Duration: 10 seconds. Can be used three times per day.】

By the time I used the final barrier of the day to block off a Chain Frostbolt by a Naga Spellcaster, before the arrival of the enemy's flying troops, we have already arrived at the edge of Pearl District.

"Head to the Church of Law to meet up with everyone else first! They better be alright!"

Chapter 115: Ice Secret Sword

For experts, actual battles are the best way to ascertain one's skills. Even if a skill may seem incredible and high-tier, if it is unable to prove its worth in an actual battle, then it is useless.

The most recent battle I had with Rosemary's (Carlohin) Undead Army is probably the most intense one since my rebirth. As far as I was concerned, it was also the perfect opportunity to test my abilities and determine future routes for development.

There were quite a few problems that were revealed through battle. Among them, the most obvious of them all are that I have too many power systems, the absence of a decisive killing move and the powers and techniques I was using against each and every enemy were a little chaotic.

Cultivating both magic and martial arts is often the exclusive right of long-lived species. This isn't only because of the fact that they have plenty of time to squander, allowing them to climb to the summit with both magic and martial arts. Also, this isn't only because of their Race Talent and stats which allow them to reach a peak unattainable by those short-lived species. The very core of it is that they have an inheritance of a secret art that allows them to overlay the effects of magic with martial arts.

Nightfall Blade and Jade Stab are fearsome top-tier sword skills in the Elf Tribe. Those Warriors don on a light leather armor and brandish their magic swords. They choose the buffs most suited to them and enchant their blades. Years and years of training has ensured that their martial arts would not be inferior to any

opponent, and the magic sword that they conceal in their sleeves would often prove to be lethal to their enemies.

They are adept at enchanting the magic sword against their enemies. As long as they have prepared in advance, the seemingly coarse and wild but cautious and intelligent Nightfall Blade is a slaughtering machine on the battlefield capable of facing a hundred enemies on its own. On the other hand, the Jade Sting specialises in all types of concealment such as removing one's presence and Anti-Detection Magic. Facing them in war, you have to prepared for the bizarre situation of your enemies disappearing multiple times. Of course, the precondition is that you would have to first survive their deadly assassination. They are the top-class Assassins, the bane of all Mages.

The Blood Clan's Corrupted Blood Swordsmen and the Golden-Armored Warriors are forbidden existences, Demon Hunters. On the other hand, the Cursed Spear Dancers of the Blackwings are commonly-seen badly-reputed troops. The Death Knights who inspire fear in all living beings could be considered classical troops who possess the advantage of being skilled in both magic and martial arts.

Different to the humans' high-tier troops who are reliant on equipment and mounts, these special inheritances often arise in the form of a job advancement. Their unique fighting and training methods are the crystallisation of the innumerable eons of the long-lived species. There is basically no chance of an outsider inheriting their legacy.

They may not number much, but their appearance on the

battlefield is definitely the nightmare of their enemies.

Of course, humans have made great efforts on this front. The Gold-rank Mage Knights were the result of their efforts. However, in reality, they were famous for being a useless profession. Not mentioning how it has high requirements on talents, in order to perform magic, the Knights are unable to equip heavy armor. Thus, as a close combatant, they were weaker than Warriors and Paladins who are of the same power rank. The only magic they could produce is —— Fireball.

That's right, the Magic Knight were most adept at using the 3-circle Fire Magic, Fireball. Perhaps, there were results in low level battles. However, in battles between Gold-ranks, who would be afraid of a 3-circle magic?

Proponents of the Mage Knight once argued the 'Five Fireballs overlapping in a specific location can destroy everything, we don't need any other magic' theory with Fire Mages backing them. As a result, the bizarre 'Five Fireball Divine Cult' was born.

Ultimately, their main flaws were that their magic and martial arts didn't complement one another and it did not have a clear role in battle.

In my opinion, the main reason why the Mage Knights were a failure (Even when the personnel who successfully advanced to become Mage Knights didn't exceed 10, the Five Fireball Divine Cult still refused to admit failure), the primary reason is because their attention has been divided between two entirely different fields. They attempt to become both skilled in close-combat and

long-range and as a result, they were incapable of either.

As for the reason why other races were able to successfully advance, is is due to their clear goal and specialisation they want to pursue. After which, they utilised both martial arts and magic to strive towards their specialisation. If it is a skill that doesn't contribute to their goal, even if it proves to be useful, they would choose to not squander time on it.

A result of that is the obvious fact that those who successfully train in the two are either powerful close-combatants or powerful long-range troops. They weren't so ambitious to become like the Mage Knights, capable of crushing Warriors in close-combat and Fireball-flinging Mages in long-range combat. In the end, the Mage Knights would only get crushed by their weaknesses.

To specialise, one has to put their 'specialisation' as the core of everything to realise their own role and position. Then, utilise their strengths to make up for their weaknesses and make their strengths further the might of their 'specialisation'. This is the general theory for Warriors with multiple abilities.

In that case, for a body like mine which contains four kinds of powers, if I were to attempt to create an all-round Warrior, I would only end up like the useless Mage Knights.

"What do I specialise in? How can I use my other abilities to propagate my specialisation and complement my weaknesses?"

Ever since I was revived, I had been thinking about this question.

Then, I found my answer.

“If you have to choose a profession, then a Death Knight who is skilled with soul arts is definitely the most suited for you. If your talent for the Holy Light is ten points, then it would be twenty points for Necromancy and forty points for swordsmanship. Just through Necromancy and swordsmanship, you would surely be able to reach the summit of Death Knights. Didn’t you see how the strongest Death Knight, Lionheart, was willing to become your eternal little brother? In the end, your accomplishments in the field of a Death Knight have exceeded all your predecessors and probably no one capable of surpassing you would appear in the future.”

“Pui! I am a Paladin. Not to mention, I can cast Ice Magic…”

“Cough! Don’t ever tell anyone that your Ice Magic was taught by me, I can’t afford to bear this reputation. If your talent for Holy Light is ten points, then your talent in Ice Magic is at most 0.1 points! Back then, my head must have been caught in some doorway for me to accept you as my disciple to teach you Ice Magic. Let me ask you, ever since you have comprehended the essence of ice, have you learnt any new Ice Magic Spell?”

Of course…not! If I had the time, I might as train in my swordsmanship and study Undead Creation. No matter what, it would be better than investing time in this hopeless Ice Magic.

Just as expected, my straightforward reply caused the furious cat to fly over and bite me.

Harloys is still a passable teacher. Even though the students she taught are mostly backstabbers and perverts, her ability in catering the syllabus to her students is still top-notch. Admittedly, the main reason why the eccentrics among the disciples she have taught are increasing is partly due to this advanced personality education.

Cough, I should stop speaking. Otherwise, that darned cat will use some unorthodox methods to exact vengeance. It feels horrible to awake with milk poured over me in the morning. Also, the previous time a paper with white fluid was glued onto my hand, I had to spend an entire morning explaining the situation to Reyne.

However, on the topic of talents, the darned cat has already revealed my greatest aptitude —— Swordsmanship.

Just like how Adam had once ridiculed me, when the other Paladins were focused on tanking and utilised their Divine Arts to strengthen their defense and support, becoming the leader-like figure in the team, the one I was the most skilled in was offensive swordsmanship. After numerous reincarnations, I even surpassed most of the Sword Saints who prided themselves in their swordsmanship. Without doubt, this is like an ironic joke that left others speechless and left Adam, who is praised for his swordsmanship, aggrieved.

“A Sword Saint who is unable to defeat a Paladin in the domain of swordsmanship? Not to mention, one of the tops in the world in the way of the sword? What kind of joke is this!”

Even as he grew, I also grew along with him. Eventually, I would still stand above him. Perhaps, Adam's greatest regret while he was in the Underground World was his inability to defeat me through swordsmanship at the very end.

However, this is to be expected. Not mentioning how my talent with the sword is not bad, swordsmanship is an art in itself. When the foundations are brought up to the level of an artform, it becomes a form of comprehension towards the world and life. These things could be washed away by the currents of reincarnation, but picking them up again isn't a difficult task.

In a certain sense, I can be considered as a true immortal and a long-lived species. While the other long-lived species are squandering their time to enjoy their 200 years of childhood, I viewed time as precious as life, just like the other short-lived species. I spent day after day pondering to gain something. To date, the battles and experiences I have gone through probably exceeds that of ten Heroic Spirits combined together. When these skills and comprehension settled down, the swordsmanship and profoundness that I have accumulated in three lifetimes finally evolved in terms of quality. I do not believe that any Sword Saint could do the same as me.

In my perspective, Beastman Sword Saints are too violent and lack in sentimentality. Elf Sword Saints, in their pursuit of the utmost of art, neglected the true form of swordsmanship as a cruel killing tool. If the two were to be put together along with their sword skills, perhaps a truly powerful Sword Saint would emerge.

What about the Dwarf Sword Saints and Human Sword Saints?

Those Dwarves actually dare to call themselves Sword Saints by their knee chop, rolling blade and mountain-splitting strikes? Human Sword Saints are an even greater joke. Seventy percent of them have identical abilities, not to mention most of them couldn't even produce sword qi without their equipment. I would normally consider them as jokes.

In that case, the path for my development is clear. I would specialise in close-combat swordsmanship while the other powers of mine would serve as support to supplement me.

In a duel between experts standing on the pinnacle, pure swordsmanship would come to a bottleneck. Not mentioning those who are immune to physical attacks, the great Demons and giant Dragons have enormous bodies with solid defense. It is too difficult to deal with them through the 'small toothpicks' of the Sword Saints. Otherwise, we wouldn't have to go through all the trouble for Adam's Phoenix Inheritance, so that he could utilise the flames of the Phoenix to complement his swordsmanship.

When I had decided to become a close-combatant with swordsmanship at the core while using my other powers to supplement it, the road in front of me widens instead.

"Secret Sword: Flowing Water Rapid Sword"

Ice Magic gathers on the ice sword. Under the will of my sword that depicts a flowing river, the ice forms a beautiful ice river, similar to that in my homeland. Thus, I changed its name.

“Ice Secret Sword: Moment Glacier!”

The transparent and clear ice sword is as beautiful as a sword forged of gems. Along the trajectories of the sword which is reminiscent of a flowing river, the sword qi and Frozen Air that were released forge a beautiful ice river in midair. As reality and illusion overlap, the water surface and the Seafolk before me turn into a part of the river of ice.

In the moment of their freezing, the conceited Naga officers were still commanding the Fishmen and Sea Beasts arrogantly. The army of charging Fishmen became beautiful ice sculptures and the flying fishes and waves solidified. In the face of Moment Glacier, no one life could react. Their minds were still stuck in the moment of their freezing.

Under the augmentation of Ice Magic, the Secret Art which was used to divert the attention of an enemy turns into a powerful AOE skill. As far as the eye could see, the countless enemies stretching for thirty meters ahead of me had been completely cleared. On the other hand, the frozen river water had become the best runway for me.

“Hm?”

The first time combining sword skills with Ice Magic has already created a might of 1+1>3, even I am surprised. After all, when I was testing it out privately, it didn’t have such might.

“Heh, it’s me! If we are competing in the ability of controlling Ice

Magic, even White Dragons aren't our opponent!"

Irene's voice echoes from beneath. Realisation strikes me.

As a Frigid Nightmare who stands at the very peak of the creatures of ice and snow, the Power of Ice and Snow that she brings about is several tens of times greater than what I possess as a Bronze-rank. Also, her control over the Ice Magic isn't as horrible as mine. When I was executing my technique, she wasn't slacking by the side. She was helping me adjust and manipulate the Ice Element to complement with my Secret Sword. This is just like a dual-core CPU working simultaneously, forcibly expanding the might of the skill by multiple folds.

Alright, I know that some people will retort that this comparison is not suitable in this world of magic, and that if Irene is the most advanced CPU, I can probably only be considered as the obsolete i386. Just make do with it, this is just an improvised analogy.

At this moment, I realised that I have underestimated the usefulness of external tools yet again. My talent in Ice Magic is pathetic, but if I were to dump this sector to Erebella to settle for me, won't I be able to make up for this flaw perfectly? Similarly, if I were to dump the Power of Death, Power of Law and Power of Holy Light to other Magic Pets to augment, thus creating a few more processors, my combat power might rise exponentially.

"Harloys!"

Alright, at this moment, I decisively recalled the 'Omniscient

One' Harloys. However, the current Harloys only retained her knowledge and skills, she doesn't possess sufficient strength and a suitable body to complement with the attributes, thus she is unable to fulfil my demands.

"Harloys's 37th patch (regarding the change of colors of her four limbs), Harloys's 38th patch (a revise of her three measurements) must be executed as soon as possible. Right, there's also the Super Meowrio! Hmm, I can still add a few more edits along with it. It should be interesting to see her grow up when she eats a mushroom and throw fireballs after she eats a flower. Hehe!"

However, this isn't the moment for my thoughts to be wandering. I am not too far from my destination. While charging in solo is exhilarating, but at the same time, I am exposing myself to the entire battlefield. If their leaders aren't fools, they would surely send elites in to contain me.

Just as I expected, right after charging past this street corner, two Sea Giants suddenly appear before me.

The enormous Sea Giants are the height of the city walls. Even in the giant family, they could be considered to be of tall stature. Wielding rusty anchors with their extraordinary strength, mature Sea Giants possess at least the strength of a Gold-rank. In the water, when their ability to induce tsunamis come into play, even giant Dragons dare not to compete physically with them.

Their greatest hobby, other than duelling with Sea Dragons, is to sink ships. The ships which had fallen under their hands are innumerable. However, the reason for their attacks is ridiculously

simple. As it is impossible to start a furnace to smith underwater, it is difficult to obtain a metal weapon. In order to obtain a good weapon, the Sea Giants set their eyes on the giant anchors of huge ships. At the same time, they could have an additional meal comprising sailors.

When the other races became aware of this fact, they decided to just bring a giant battle anchor to serve as payment for the road. However, the delighted Sea Giants first accepted the bribe before dismantling their anchor as a spare, then proceeding on to have them as an additional snack.

“The reason why we don’t hold promises? Hah, little thing, do you communicate with barnacles and seaweeds? Un, neither do we.”

This is the lesson a certain ‘intelligent’ navigator learnt with his life after trying to bribe the Sea Giants with a giant anchor for safe passageway.

The thick-skinned Giants aren’t easy to deal with. Not to mention, the Sons of the Sea, Sea Giants, are giants among the Giants. The two Giants stands by one another, blocking the entire street with their giant figures. As they stomp their legs, a furious wave is generated. If one were to be struck by those waves, their body would definitely end up crushed.

On the street behind them, the Church of Law is glowing with a radiant Light of God. Countless corpses of the Seafolk hung on formless gallows. As a Church of a true God under the God’s jurisdiction, until the entire city falls, the Church will not fall. For

them who have piled up the sins of war and genocide to charge into the Church of the God of Law, should I say that they are backwards or that they are heartless?

Going by the rules of the War of Gods, when this city finally change hands, the idol would probably be sullied.

However, I didn't have the leisure to be worried about my idol now. The giants are already before me.

"Little insect, don't move! Let Rabah trample you to death!"

"A Knight? Yet another iron can. Bynes don't like cans. Stuck in teeth!"

Getting obstructed would mean my demise. However, I already had no other alternatives.

"Since there isn't any other road... Upon meeting on a narrow path, the brave will emerge victorious!"

The ice dragon lance rotates vigorously by my side. At the same, Irene picks up speed. I flick my sword up from the water, generating huge waterworks.

"Pointless tricks of an useless insect! Scream miserably for Rabah! Rabah loves watching little insect's final performance!"

Sea Giants are far nimbler in the sea than on land. Rabah lightly grabs and a wall of waves appears before him to block my charge.

Following which, the moment the tip of the lance barely pierces through the wall, the giant has already grabbed the tip of the rapidly rotating dragon lance. Although the rotating lance has cut his left hand, the massive anchor on his right hand immediately comes smashing down on where the Knight is.

“Done already? How boring!”

“Boom!”

An anchor weighing several tons crushes downwards, causing crushed stones and snowflakes to be sent flying. The entire street tremors.

“Yee? Where’s little insect?”

When the giants realise that their target has gone missing, it is already too late. After concealing myself in the waterworks I generated, I threw the dragon lance and right now, I am already by the side of the giants.

“Secret Sword: Blade Storm!”

As I started to rotate, the floating Snow Woman loli augments my skill, thus creating a whirlwind of snow and ice.

【Secret Sword, Blade Storm: Using this skill, you will turn into a fast rotating storm of blades. The rotating swords and sword qi will severely damage all enemy land troops in the surroundings.】

At the beginning, it was merely an ordinary Blade Storm. However, when the Power of Ice and Snow on both of blades start to seep out, the entire world begins to snow.

Under the permeation of snow and ice into the formless sword qi, they became ice blades and ice thorns, thus increasing the might of the Blade Storm explosively.

Even so, this was only the beginning. What that would turn out to be even more lethal was an unexpected surprise.

At this moment, a continuous stream of water is pulled into the whirlwind. Then, under the rapid rotation of the whirlwind of ice, they form ice cubes and ice vectors which were then thrown out violently. Somehow, I have became a top that tosses out ice arrows continuously.

Under the full support of Irene, who is assuming her Snow Woman form in midair, every single ice blade that flings out possesses the strength of an Ice Arrow thrown out by a Silver Ice Mage with his full might. Individually, they may not be powerful. However, when their quantity is sufficient to cloak everyone's vision, the Blade Storm has already evolved from an AOE Legend Secret Sword to a Saint Magic Secret Sword with astonishing destructive might.

The whirlwind of ice continues to turn frenziedly. Be it buildings, thin ice, lampposts or whatever they once were, they were reduced to fragments in an instant.

By the time I stop dizzily, there isn't anything left in my surroundings. The two incomparably powerful Sea Giants have became a hornet's nests; thousands of ice arrows are embedded in their flesh. The Sea Giant farther away is still barely living. However, the closer Sea Giant had innumerable ice arrows lodged into his head. Clearly, he can't be alive.

When the Giants fell onto the ground with a large thump and I was weakly gasping for air on the ground, Krose has already arrived.

"Great, you are unharmed, my lord! Everything is in chaos now, what should we do?!"

Grinding my teeth, I struggled to my feet. At the present moment, every delayed second means greater danger.

"Assemble everyone, bring away all of our luggage and rations. Let's slaughter our way out!"

Chapter 116: Judgement And Assassin

When the Aurora Knight equipped in a white helmet and plate charged out from the sparring field, a large portion of the nobles looked at him as though they were looking at a fool. In their eyes, this Knight Princess who hadn't listened to the warnings of others was already a dead person.

There were only a few people who vaguely felt that the Knight wasn't the type who would die young. The next time they meet, many things would probably change.

As the retreat progressed in an orderly manner, Hermit secretly pulled to one side a White Wolf Guard officer that was in charge of facilitating the retreat.

"...If that female Knight were to bypass the encirclement, find an opportunity to kill her. I will take responsibility for it."

As the trusted advisor of the Auland Emperor Darsos, one of the masterminds in the shadow, Hermit's determination is resolute on this matter.

Despite being in a desperate situation, the female Knight charged out with a smile. This made him recall the legendary Will of the Mist and its previous glory. She was obviously the princess of a small country, which put her in a disadvantageous situation, yet she had gained the upper hand through a series of clashes. He began to suspect that the other party might have the wit and strength to break out of this hopeless situation.

Moreover, the reappearance of the Aurora Knight could be a sign that the various powerful troops of the Mist Country is gradually awakening. It feels as though there is a possibility that the glorious history of the Mist will leap out from the past and appear in the present.

If the Mist Country were to rise up once again and the seven countries of the Northern Lands unite as one, perhaps that sovereign of the Northern Lands would be able to conquer the north once more. Not to mention, his own Emperor is infatuated with her. Ten years of ceasefire made that target an even more crucial one. In Hermit's mind, this kind of unique existence is unneeded from the very start.

Perhaps, he might be doing something excessive, or maybe he is being despicable. Maybe, the Emperor would be enraged and punish him severely, or perhaps the leakage of such news would result in a chain reaction. However, as the subordinate of the Auland Empire's Emperor, he feels that the descendant of the Mist would prove to be a threat in the future. He has to make full use of this opportunity to get rid of this variable. Even if he would be punished as a result, it would be worth it. This is his undying loyalty towards his lord and his country.

"No matter what, I find that woman is simply too dangerous. I am unable to find the slightest bit of goodwill towards her. Killing the beloved woman of the Emperor on my own whim would probably cause him to turn against me. When the scandal that I killed the princess of another country during a disaster spreads, I might have to carry the blame of scheming against our allies right before the Sacred War. Perhaps, I will be thought of as a fool who

can only scheme internally against my own comrades by the people and would be dealt with harshly. However, as long as this is beneficial for the country and Darsos, even if other people are unable to comprehend my actions, what does it count as for me to be sent to the gallows?"

From a certain viewpoint, this Intelligence Head whose eyes are always squinting and carries a scheming smile may look like a playboy, but his loyalty to the Auland Empire and the Emperor has already reached the level where he is willing to die to protect them.

Just because he feels that the person would be a threat to the Auland Empire's ambitions, he decided to get rid of her. This is a very simple and logical thought process. Or perhaps, it might be the conclusion he came up with after analyzing countless intelligence, or maybe it is just intuition. However, when the Intelligence Head Hermit makes up his mind, he would make an immediate move.

"The rest of you will go as well. If the White Wolf Guards aren't in a good position to strike, you all will complete the task in their stead. If you all do not spot the target leaving the city, help the guards to hold the final defence line. If you all don't accomplish this mission, do not return."

Seemingly muttering a few words to himself, a few shadows disappear into the distant. The spies have begun to share intelligence on the target, preparing for their dishonorable assassination.

Then, when he turned around to get on top of the human-

powered carriage to leave, he found Darsos already waiting on it.

By his side, in the hands of a Mage, a display was playing the video recorded by a Mage Eye. As he glances at it, fright paralyzes him and cold sweat drenches his back.

The video that is playing shows the words he spoke just a short moment ago, "...find an opportunity to kill her!"

At this moment, Darsos slumps like a wooden puppet with a stoic face. However, Hermit is aware that this is the expression he displays when he is incensed. He lowers his his head, prepared to face the wrath of his liege, but he only hears a question with suppressed powerful emotions beneath the voice

"'Blood Mage Emperor' Marsolit should have been mobilized already. Help me convey a mission to him in my stead. Ask him to head to my underground chamber through my bedroom to retrieve that old fool who should be on the verge of drowning."

After saying those words, he throws over a Blood Dragon Head Insignia to him. This was the only token of authority that the bloodthirsty SemiGod obeys.

What is this situation? He didn't intend to punish me? Hesitation appeared on Hermit's face.

"This mission has to be completed in utmost secrecy. Thus, if you were to meet anyone on the road, silence them. Right, emphasise

to Marsolit that if the old fool seems like he is scheming something, silence him before he can do anything."

In that instant, Hermit understands. The current situation is chaotic, and only supreme experts are able to move casually in the battlefield. Marsolit, who had participated in the rebellion, is capable of flitting around like an apparition. Even if he were to bring someone along, it is impossible for him to be noticed. This isn’t a mission to save the old Emperor. Rather, he is giving him a chance to kill the princess through the hands of another.

"Hermit, do you still remember what our dreams were? I want to make Auland stand at the peak of the world. Compared to this, what does a woman count as?"

He continues to talk about official matters, not mentioning the least about the assassination on the princess. However, those words that he squeezes out from the gaps of his teeth proves his determination.

The one who signed the contract is Darsos himself. Under the intentional or unintentional 'neglect' of both parties, they only limited the prevention of 'acts of hostility' to countries. They 'forgot' about the safety of themselves as individuals. If a subordinate of theirs were to act on their own whim... If the SemiGod were to accidentally kill someone while in the midst of carrying out his mission... It is impossible for the contract to intervene with such a curved ball.

Thus, in the eyes of the contract and Darsos himself, he isn't the one making the call. It is all the doing of his subordinate.

"Since she is destined not to be mine, then the only thing she could be is my enemy. If I cannot attain her, then nobody else can."

Hermit is unable to hear the voice in the depths of the Emperor's heart, but the trust Darsos holds towards him, his willingness to sacrifice his everything for the 'greater justice' makes the usually dispassionate Hermit to feel moved. That is the reason why he respects and serves him loyally.

"Yes, your majesty! I will not let you down."

【Ding. You have killed a Sea Giant beyond your power rank. 198 Fate Points is awarded. You have received the item Sea Giant's Soul and Sea Giant's Smelly Socks. Sea Giant's Soul: Upon usage, the soul will possess your body. Strength +5, Agility -2. The user will gain the ability to breath underwater and control giant waves. As for the Sea Giant's Smelly Socks... You can try using it as a raincoat, it is definitely waterproof. It can even boost a few of your stats, as long as you don't have a nose or your nose is retarded, so that you won't die from the stench.】

【Ding. Congratulations for creating a Saint Magic Secret Sword: Polar Blade Storm. Your physical body has broken through its limits, Strength +1, Agility +1.】

【General Legend Secret Sword, Blade Storm: Using this skill, you will turn into a fast rotating storm of blades. The rotating swords and sword qi will severely damage all enemy land troops in the surroundings. Prerequisites: 20 Strength, 10

Agility, 15 Stamina】

【Saint Magic Secret Sword, Polar Blade Storm: This skill is an upgrade of Blade Storm. Only a Sword Saint who has fully mastered Blade Storm can try to execute this skill. Using this skill, you will turn into a fast-rotating ice vortex of blades. The rotating swords and sword qi is only the first barrage of attacks. What that would terminate your enemies is the lethal cold air and the ice arrows. This technique is extremely powerful and has a large AOE. Prerequisites: 22 Strength, 15 Agility, 20 Stamina. The complete version of Polar Blade Storm can only be executed with the assistant of Frigid Nightmare Irene.】

The System Notice sounds up numerous time, bringing me great delight. I am more interested in the Race Talent that I had unlocked upon reaching twenty for my Agility. However, I didn't have the time to be admiring it. The strong sense of giddiness and tiredness made it difficult for me to straighten my body.

Although the upgraded Blade Storm holds significantly greater destructive power, the requirements to execute it also increases significantly. I have barely reached the basic prerequisites for it, though there is one hidden prerequisite that I am unable to ignore no matter what —— power rank.

Secret Swords aren't better just because they are stronger, the most important factor is still suitability. As a Bronze-rank, despite my high stats and strong physical body, it is already pushing it for me to execute the Legend Secret Sword. If I were to execute Polar Blade Storm which is a rank higher than Blade Storm, it is as good as suicide in my current state.

Through the quantification of the System, the basic information

of the sword skill is apparent. A strength-type Secret Sword requires the Strength stat to boost its destructive prowess while Agility is used to maintain the attack speed, accuracy and balance of the attack. Stamina mainly deals with the rebound one incurs from the skill, so that they won’t die from executing it. As for Intelligence, that is the requirement on the magic aspect.

Every time my level or power rank increases, it increases in the ‘quantity’ my basic stats. The current me, even though I barely meet the basic requirements in terms of 'quality', from the 'quantity' side, I am still lacking severely.

Thus, my both hands were cut by the sword qi. Even with Irene serving as an external magic power vault, my minute amount of magic power is sapped in an instant. I feel a splitting headache from the lack of stamina as well as an urge to puke. The only reasons why I didn't die is because of Irene dealing with the rebound on the magic side in my stead and my high level of expertise in swordsmanship. Even after sacrificing so much, the Polar Blade Storm still wasn't at its complete might.

Under the limitations of my physical body, the strength of the Blade Storm and its duration is barely a third of the original. Its evolved version, the Saint Magic Secret Sword, probably doesn't hold a tenth of the might of the complete version.

Otherwise, struck by a Saint Secret Sword in close proximity, the result would just not end up with one killed and one wounded even with the unexpected augmentation by the river water. The Sea Giant with the strength of a human Gold-rank would definitely be killed in an instant.

"For the Magic Secret Sword to be truly feasible in battle, I cannot slacken on my swordsmanship and my magic. From the looks of my current situation, I can only wait for my power rank to advance for my swordsmanship to improve. What is troubling is my Ice Magic... When I return, I will immediately activate Harloys's patches!"

However, what is most important now is not the future or the potential strength of the complete Polar Blade Storm. If I am unable to get by this situation, there probably would not be any future for me.

Under Krose's assistance... Alright, it is an assistance at proximity, let us ignore the mysterious furious glares in the distant.

"Krose, can you allow me to walk on my own?"

"That won't do, Lord. Don't push yourself."

I am not pushing myself! Your clothes are already wet, please consider your current identity as a female! You coming to me at such proximity is what that is called pushing yourself!

Despite being an Elf, to possess such an explosive figure, is this scientific? Some unscientific parts of yours are in contact with me, not to mention how your clothes are clinging to them, you are tempting me to commit a crime, do you understand that? The smell of the natural herbs in your hair causes my will to waver

even more, do you believe it? Not far away, Diyer and Muse is already crying from envy, have you noticed it yet? Most importantly, upon recalling that your soul is a male, I really feel like finding a pillar to know on it, can you comprehend that?

Alright, before the resentments became corporeal, we arrived at the Church of Law.

The Church is emitting a faint silvery light. That seemingly gentle glow blocks away the river water carrying God Power that floods every inch of the city.

Krose informs me that the Sea Giants aren't there to intercept me. Rather, they are obeying orders to stop all living beings who intend to enter the Church to seek asylum. Before I came here, they had already crossed blows with Krose multiple times.

There are many small groups like this among the Seafolk. Their goal is to prevent important figures from hiding in the Church to catch their breath. Actually, the Seafolk do not intend to attack the Church forcibly, and there isn't a need for them to as well.

A Church is a territory of God and the territory of God is immune to all invasions. This is the authority of a true God. However, following the fall of the city and the death of the God's worshipers, the Kagersi Branch Church would soon find itself lacking sufficient worshiper to be considered as a Church. If so, they don't even have to strike with their own hands. As soon as that happens, they just have to drown the Church with the river water. The idol would also serve as an excellent tribute to the Malevolent Gods of Chaos.

Even though the numerous Seafolk who invaded the Church on their own whim are hung on formless gallows, the interior of the Church is still a mess. However, what that reassured me is the numerous carts placed in the main hall.

Those aren't God Equipment or monetary wealth. They are the most important things we require right now —— ration, medicine and other necessary supplies.

It is impossible for us to bring a lot rations to a fight. The rations left in the underwater base are those we brought along in our personal inventory. Those are insufficient to sustain the engineers and the rest. Thus, after returning to the surface, I had Krose gather food rations secretly.

If contracts are perfect and laws can stop every single crime, this world would have long become a land of peace. On a territory where many are hostile to us, how could we sleep in peace? From the very beginning, I had already made preparations for our retreat.

Now that the rations are packed neatly in the carts, as long as we are able to bring it to the underwater base, it would give us the option of attacking and defending. It would be a strategic victory.

"Are you all ready?"

"Yes, my Lord. We can set forth at any time. If it wasn't for you insisting for me to change my clothes, we could have set off ten

minutes earlier! Hmph, Lord is such a conservative man."

Alright, ignoring the cute complains which induces an urge to bash my head on the wall, if I didn't force you to change out of those dripping wet clothes, even if those Gentlemen with unique tastes won't do anything to you, it is hard to say the same about the resentful Reyne and the others.

"Reyne, her figure is just slightly better than yours. Do you have to look at her so enviously? You should be worried about you back. Look, Kelly is already jotting something on her little notebook. A new remedial lesson is in the midst of being born."

Anyway, it isn't the time to be thinking about such things. Looking at the elites of the Seafolk gathering outside once again, I made up my mind.

"Then, let's begin the Great Judgement."

Krose holds up the SemiGod Equipment Codex in her hands and declares loudly.

"I, the Archbishop of the Church of Law Auland Branch Krose.Ainta (Her full name which has been forgotten by everyone else) declares that there are sinners running rampant, a genocide is taking place and a war of injustice is occurring before me. I swear upon the name of my God, Wumianzhe, that I will judge all sins in this city!"

【Scattered Page of Codex (A clone of the God Equipment, has

been strengthened significantly after the Ascension of the God of Law)

Faith in Law: 169/2000 (The belief from 1000 people in a week allows it to increase by 1 point every week, and the cap is 50 points every month. When the points reach 1000, 1000 points can be expended to replicate a Scattered Page)

Effect 1,3: Negligible

Effect 2: Great Judgement (Active): Requires 100 Faith in Law to activate, and consumes 1 point every minute after activation. After its activation, everyone in the city will be cast with a Legend-rank level Judgement Spell and they will be judged based on their actions in the last 3 hours. If guilty, their freedom will be restricted and debuffs such as intangible cuffs and weapon seal will be inflicted on them. Under the effects of Great Judgement, the effectiveness of Incantation of Law will be multiplied several folds and the power rank of Law Enforcers will be increased by 1. (The requirements for usage: The laws in the city are in chaos, criminals are doing as they please and the city is on the verge of destruction)】

Following her declaration, the silver light of Order turns into a pillar of light and expands. Countless shouts of astonishment overwhelm the city. Apparently, the Seafolk are distressed by this spell which they had never seen before.

"...Although we are unable to save most of them, if we restrain the enemies like this, perhaps more civilians would be able to escape. There is a limit to the duration of Great Judgement. Let's set off now. We have to reach the underwater base before its effects run out!"

At this moment, two Frigid Nightmares have already turned into

heavyweight Ice Boars suited for charges. The escape team assumes a formation of an arrow with Reyne and I standing at the very forefront.

With my power rank raised by the effects of Great Judgement, I regained a little bit of my stamina and mana. Smacking my mount, I rush forward to break through the encirclement.

"There are still 68 Faith points, so we should have 68 minutes. Normally, the journey would take around 40 minutes. I'm not sure whether we have enough time... Forget it, rather than dwelling on it, let's leave it to fate instead."

It is impossible for me to fathom that many obstacles would stand in our way. Other than the Auland SemiGod Mage who is in the midst of carrying out his secret mission in the rain, at our destination, the battle between the SemiGod Hydra and the Heroic Spirit is getting more and more heated and savage. The sky has been torn asunder and the river is parted into two, water flowing back in before it is parted yet again. The Seafolk caught in the battle disintegrates instantaneously, leaving no corpses behind.

On the path the ration carts have to pass through to reach the underwater base, the nine-headed giant blocks the path!

"Hurry up! We would be safe once we get to the base!" Breaking through the encirclement around the Church, we didn’t expect that the giant creature would be standing in our path.

"Somehow, I feel that things won't go that smoothly."

"Touchwood, darned cat. Shut up. Otherwise, I will learn from those witches and turn you into a crow so that you can only caw all day long. Hmmm? It sounds like a good idea. Triple transformation pet Elf! That will be you, Harloys!"

Chapter 117: Dragon Hunting

A sacred silver light engulfs the entire city. In the Great Judgement, the Seafolk who are busy annihilating the remaining Auland forces finally meet with trouble.

Along with Krose's declaration to judge, a silver pillar of light emits rays of light that represent Order. Every invader who had turned red from the Judgement would be struck by a ray of light and restrictions would be forced upon them by the Power of Law.

Depending on their crimes, some of them would have their area of movement restricted, some of them would have their weapons confiscated, some of them would be shackled and some of them would find themselves sanctioned by all three.

There are multiple kinds of shackles. The most commonly seen one is the handcuffs. For those whose crimes are severe, leg irons would be added. For those who went too far, it isn't impossible for their entire body to be laden with heavy metal balls.

As this is an AOE Judgement by a replica SemiGod Equipment and the only thing that is expended is the stored up Faith in it, the restraints on each individual target isn't really drastic. Also, the material for the handcuffs isn't not stronger than unrefined iron, so any Beastman Warrior should be able to break out of it easily.

Perhaps, to true experts, this may not mean much. However, to the low-tier Fishmen, this could prove to be deadly. In every army, the pawns always number the most. In the invading army of the

Seafolk, there is an astronomical number of low-tier Fishmen. In this kind of situation, they are the main power that causes the greatest destruction to the city. However, when their weak bodies are bound by metal chains, handcuffs and metal balls, not many of them retain the ability to move.

An estimation after the event shows that the hour of restraint allowed at least seventy to eighty thousand civilians to escape. To the Warriors, the significance of the Great Judgement is even greater.

In the crossing of blows between two Warriors, if one of them were to be restrained suddenly, even just for 0.1 of a second, it could be a determining factor to their duel.

This is the might of an army-level strategic Forbidden Spell (The spell contains both Magic and Divine Arts). Perhaps, it might be completely ineffective against SemiGod and Myth experts. However, if it were to appear on a battlefield, it would be able to turn the tides of it. What the two Chaos Gods did was a country-level (permanent type) strategic Forbidden Spell —— The Blessing of the Sea God: City of Rain Feloci.

Army-level and country-level are just a type of classification towards extreme magic, it doesn't show which is superior to which. For example, the 'Ice Aeon' of Emperor Yongye might only be army-level, but it is capable of wiping away an entire city and convert the land a hundreds of miles around the city into an ice field. This is much stronger than most of the country-level Forbidden Spells.

The greatest difference between the two is probably its duration and AOE. An army-level Forbidden Spell normally has a short period of effectiveness. On the other hand, the ‘City of Rain’, despite only changing the environment and not causing any direct damage, its duration of effectiveness is probably eternal. However, this is also the reason why heavy prices and sacrifices has to be made to cast a country-level Forbidden Spell, thus causing it to not be commonly seen in history.

This time, the Seafolk and the Gods have put so much on stake, so their ultimate goal definitely won’t just be a plot of land. The dark clouds in the sky will slowly spread and the City of Rain will gradually expand as time passes. In the area under the effects of the Forbidden Spell, other than the dry areas designated by the caster of the spell, all land will become new territory for the City of Rain.

Although the rate of expansion is slow, as long as the spellcaster and the source of power for the spell, the Water Elemental Goddess, doesn’t die, the expansion will not stop. This will prove to be a major source of trouble for Auland.

It is very probable that countless Seafolk are on their way here now. As their territory continues to expand and new tribes settle here, the City of Rain will eventually become the country of the Seafolk. This is just like the cancer cells on a cancer patient. The longer you wait, the more deadly it would be when it strikes.

Thus, when I noticed the interference from Gods and the effects of the Forbidden Spell/Divine Art, I immediately gave up on the idea of turning the tables against them. The only way to turn the

tables right now is to kill the spellcaster of the Forbidden Spell. Not mentioning how the spellcaster wouldn't be so silly as to not escape to a location where she would be absolutely safe, even if she were to appear before us now, the Goddess spellcaster is not someone I could deal with now.

The 'Great Judgement' of the Law Faction may be powerful, but it is more of a support army-level Forbidden Spell. Its effects against the enemies aren't really considerable. Rather, its most powerful effect is its ability to pull up the strength of Law Enforcers by one power rank as well as multiplying the effectiveness of Law Incantations. However, without sufficient Law Jobs here, the true might of the Forbidden Spell cannot be displayed.

This was also the main model in mind when it was being designed. Perhaps, it might mean nothing now, but the fact that this Forbidden Spell, which has strict requirements for usage, could be activated through a replica of the God Equipment means that as long as every city has some Law Jobs in the future, all empires and races would have to re-evaluate the risks and losses they would incur before starting a war.

When this fact becomes acknowledged by the world, there would be a surge in Law Jobs in small and weak countries, thus propagating the rise of the Law Faction from another direction. When the Law Faction finally rises up and the fact that it is effective on Order lifeforms who have overstepped the boundaries of law and that Chaos lifeforms are capable of wielding the Power of Law are revealed, perhaps it would be time for this new rising power in the Order Faction to reveal its intention to become a neutral faction.

Due to this, in order to obtain the best results in my ‘advertisement’, I have intended to find an ideal opportunity for it to display its might rather than using it on this battlefield on the faction which is destined for loss, turning it into an additional glory on the crown of the victors.

However, I didn’t expect that the usage of the Forbidden Spell, which is fated to contribute little to our goal, would bring about unexpected gains.

“AOOOOOOOOOO!”

The nine heads of the roaring SemiGod Hydra roars. He is frenziedly spitting venom, flames, ice and lightning but yet, he is unable to strike the agile opponent before him.

The ‘Dragon Slayer’ Bastlar flits in and out of existence in midair. Every time he appears, the floating Dragon Slaying Spear would crush one of the Dragon heads. Even though a new one would quickly grow out due to the Hydra’s incredible regeneration ability, the blind spot created by the loss of a head allows the Dragon Slaying Sword to destroy another one.

Even though the the Hydra would regenerate a new one within seconds as well, Bastlar would seek his next target without second thoughts. He knows that when his Dragon Sealing abilities take effect, the Hydra’s regeneration ability will no longer be limitless.

The Hydra roars angrily, but he is unable to escape from his

shackles. That bizarre shackles that tightens around him prevents him from transmogrifying and severs the connection between him and the river water. If he were to expend himself at this rate, his regeneration ability would be sapped dry in a matter of time.

The Hydra roars angrily, as well as fearfully. As an Ancient Sea Monster, he could vaguely see his end.

For the scale of the battle between two equal opponents to fall towards one side, credit has to be attributed to the Great Judgement which was activated forty to fifty minutes ago.

Actually, at the start of the battle, the Hydra held the upper hand. Due to the activation of the Forbidden Spell by the Malevolent Gods of Chaos, Bastlar was forced to strike in advance, thus losing the advantage to initiate a sneak attack on his prey. Naturally, he fell into a disadvantageous position.

However, when that silver light of Order descends, the situation reverses.

Currently, massive chains bind the body of the Nine-headed Dragon. Surprisingly, its gigantic body is unable to break through those chains which are supposed to be incredibly weak. The chains are radiating a dark gold light. Runes and magic formations that repress Dragons could be be seen vaguely appearing on it. It is clear that the chains have become a top-tier Dragon Slaying tool.

Looking at that bizarre sight before me, I was stunned for a moment before coming to a realisation. I coincidentally discovered

the reason why ‘Dragon Slayer’ Bastlar is nearly invincible against Dragons.

Even the tallest buildings are built from the lowest foundations. Before Bastlar became a Heroic Spirit, he was a normal Wood Elf Ranger, but he advanced to become a ‘Nightfall Blader’. Nightfall Bladers are adept at enchanting their equipment to counteract their opponent’s strengths and attribute.

It seems that even now, Bastlar still remains as a Nightfall Blader. He still specialises in enchanting his own equipment, just that the enchantment he uses possesses Dragon Slaying effects, an enchantment normal Nightfall Bladers are unable to wield. That is also the reason why he always has a large bunch of Dragon Slaying equipment with him.

If so, the reason why the situation developed to its current state is apparent.

When the giant chains and shackles fall from the sky, Bastlar, who has overcame innumerable hopeless situations, didn’t let this golden opportunity slip by. He immediately used his abilities to enchant ‘Dragon Sealing’, ‘Dragon Binding’ and ‘Dragon Slaying’ effects on it, thus forcibly converting the giant chains which the Hydra could easily disintegrate into a godly weapon that could bind a SemiGod Dragon, not to mention the fact that the chains are already around the Hydra’s massive body.

“No matter who he is, I, Bastlar, thank him.”

The scales of the battle falls completely towards one side. Bastlar made use of this opportunity to conduct a series of savage assaults against him and it seems that the Hydra is already on the verge of dying. Charging all the way here, our group managed to witness such an incredible sight.

Even when bound tightly, the savage Nine-headed Dragon before us should not be underestimated. This mountain-like giant beast occupies half of the entire river by himself. Every time a Dragon head fails to break free of its shackles and crashes onto the ground, a powerful shockwave would cause the surroundings to tremor. Also, the Dragon Breaths from the Dragon heads travel far and wide, easily devastating the green mountains in the distance.

Bastlar, who holds the upper hand, is even more impressive. With a casual wave of his hand, the sword by his waist floats in midair for a moment before enlarging into a massive Dragon Slaying Blade. Magic runes that represent ‘Dragon Slaying’ flash on the sword. As the gigantic blade comes surging down, venomous blood spurts out of the gigantic Dragon head as it falls into the river.

Honestly, in the face of such a battle, I really want to just turn around and leave. Given our current strength, if we were thrown into such a fight between top-tier powers, we would end up dead from from the shockwaves alone. However, the Hydra’s gigantic body is blocking the road to the underwater base. There is nowhere we could retreat to now.

Wait for Bastlar to emerge victorious? It is too hard to tell who would win. There are only 20 minutes left to the Great Judgement

and when the time runs out, all of the ‘sinner-binding shackles’ will disappear immediately. Regardless of what Bastlar does, when the enchanted weapon disappears, the effects of the enchantment will also dissipate. Thus, the Hydra would regain his freedom.

Hope that 20 minutes would be sufficient for him to end this battle? For a battle between SemiGods, if their strength are around the same level, it is possible for them to fight for several years straight. If the Hydra was so easy to deal with, forty to fifty minutes should have been more than sufficient for Bastlar to kill him. Due to his powerful regeneration Race Talent, the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor had been dubbed by many as the Master of Prolonged Battle.

Staring at the carts behind, I silently pull out my sword. However, I didn’t have the intention of allowing any of the others to join in the battle.

Under such circumstances, even though the classical saying depicts that the brave one would emerge victorious when two people meet on a narrow path, in reality, the both of them have to be at least around the same strength. Otherwise, the sacrifice of the brave would just end up meaningless.

Getting involved in a battle of this level would mean certain death. Thus, I could only think of a way to avoid it. This is a demanding trial on my eye for discernment, battle experience and flexibility. Currently, our strongest fighting force is Krose, who is Saint-rank under the augmentation of the Forbidden Spell. However, this isn’t something he, who has never undergone a fight between SemiGods, can interfere in.

“Charge! Let’s get rid of that evil Dragon! That enemy is worthy of a battle!”

Just when I was still thinking of a solution, someone seems to have misunderstood my action of drawing my sword. The action seems to have given her courage. Reyne smacks her horse and rushes forward!

“Damn it! Stop creating death flags! Hurry up and return!”

There is a reason for Reyne’s overconfidence. Reyne has risen to Silver-rank under the effects of the System’s gold fingers. After receiving her Frigid Nightmare, she barely crosses the boundaries to become a Gold-rank. Then, under the Forbidden Spell, she gains the strength of a Legend and the overwhelming power within her that she has never felt before made her feel invincible. Not to mention, slaughtering those powerful Seafolk on the way here built up her confidence.

However, in my opinion, any Silver veteran would be capable to dealing with this inexperienced ‘Legend’ easily.

Just as I rush forward to stop her, a blood-red figure blocks my path. He is a red-robed Mage. Despite the silver hair, his face is red like an infant’s. There is a kind and warm smile on his face and he looks like an amiable elderly.

“A courageous and mighty Legend Aurora Knight, as expected of the great Knight Princess! I am Auland Empire Advisor Marsolit.

Under the orders of the Emperor, I have came to protect the Princess. Allow me to lend her my strength! Also, I could make use of this opportunity to avenge Deimos!”

Raising his staff, crimson-red light shines on both us and the enemy. Under the effects of ‘Bloodthirst’, Reyne charges with greater speed and might towards the Nine-headed Dragon. On the other hand, the attack directed towards the Nine-headed Dragon is a vile Blood Drain Curse. The Dragon head which the Hydra is trying to regrow spurts out a large amount of blood and the regeneration fails.

“Blood Mage Emperor Marsolit? Why would he be here?”

Any other person would think that he is a kind person. However, I instinctively felt guarded and alarmed by his actions. This Auland Empire Advisor has always kept a low profile and maintained the image of a good person before others. However, ‘history’ has exposed his true face as an uncontrollable bloodthirsty maniac.

Just as mentioned previously, Mages who train in the art of unorthodox Water Magic, Blood Magic, would become bloodthirsty. Marsolit is already at the stage of viewing other lifeforms as living mobile blood bank. Personally, he favors the blood of females and infants. The crimes he has committed are innumerable and unpardonable, even sentencing him to death a hundred times would be insufficient for him to pay for his sins.

As for his claim to avenge Deimos, that is even greater bullshit. Indeed, when the Hydra first appeared here, he killed the ‘Dragon Hunter’ Deimos and severely wounded Marsolit, who was

attacking the Seafolk from the fleet. However, in ‘history, they were both mortal enemies. The reason why Marsolit was willing to cultivate in the art of the depraved Blood Magic was to exact vengeance on Deimos. He should have been happy over his demise.

For a bloodthirsty demon to suddenly spout a bunch of lies, it immediately heightens my wariness against him. At this moment, Reyne is already at the edge of the battlefield between the SemiGods.

“Darn it! Scram!”

PS: Previously, when he said he is using close-combat Magic Sword as his primary choice of offense, it doesn’t mean that he is giving up on the others. The King of Undead Lich, the Envoy of the God of Law, the Winter Knight of the Northern Country and the legendary Paladin Prince Roland. Every one of these jobs are a source of power, his identity as well as the companions beside him. In order to realise their ultimate aim of reversing fate, every single one of this identity is important, so naturally, he cannot give up on any one of them.

Chapter 118: Two Liars

"The Guardian of the Forest? Those fellows popped out from nowhere and said that they would protect your family's forest. If you chase them away, not only will you lose your forest, you will also lose your villa and your old horse. What kind of protector is this? They are obviously bandits —— A certain unfortunate fellow who lost his family's forest and villa."

As a nature conservation extremists, the reputation of the Druids has always been bad. As the ex-member of the Guardian of the Forest (An extremist Druid organisation which propagates for the protection of nature), although she has been trying to conceal and escape from her past, I could still deduce a lot of things from her.

From her intentional heavy make up, she is probably a wanted criminal on the Surface. Not to mention, she does seem to behave a little guiltily. Also, judging by her skills, the bounty on her is probably quite high. However, I could only thank her for her rich battle experience which forged her intuitive reaction speed.

"Krose!!"

Under the buff of the Blood Mage, the rascal has already charged to the edge of the battle between the SemiGods. My subconscious shouting of Krose's name became the only straw of hope left for her survival.

Fortunately, Krose didn't let me down. Just by calling her name, she knew what to do.

"Lightning Prison!!"

As an extension of one of the four great basic elements Wind Magic, Lightning Magic has been known for its high offensive capabilities. Along with Fire Magic, they have been dubbed as the two great cannon towers. However, different from Fire Magic's destructive abilities and great AOE, Lightning Magic is able to strike with high speed at high frequencies and is well-known for its sudden attacks.

Different from Elemental Mages who directly control the Power of Elements, Druids have two different ways to controlling lightning. One of it is to directly control it just like the other Elemental Mages while the other one is to communicate with nature and use it as a medium to adjust the weather to summon lightning. Although the usage of the latter may be inconvenient, not to mention the numerous weaknesses such as requiring pre-calculation and such, the lightning cast tend to be much stronger with greater range. Furthermore, the unpredictability and suddenness of the attacks make it difficult for people to guard against it. Thus, this method became the primary choice for Storm Druids.

As a Great Druid who specialises in summoning Lightning, the current stormy weather causes her powers to soar. The temporary Saint-rank Krose gives up on her incantations and uses her will to guide the fall of the lightning. The moment she calls out the name of the Divine Art, seventeen consecutive lightning come striking down violently, forming a lightning barrier. Its target isn't the enemy but the Knight who is blindly charging...

【6-circle Storm Druid Divine Art, Summon Lightning Barrier: Seal and hinder the movements of an enemy. In its primary form, six lightning rods are summoned. The amount will increase accordingly to the spellcaster's strength. The moment the barrier is touched, the lightning rods would explode. —— "In a lightning storm, what you want isn't an umbrella but a lightning rod. Why? You would be struck if you carry a lightning rod instead? Fine, let me just say it directly. That 'lightning rod' refers to the foolish soldiers who carry their spears to charge on a rainy day. Remember to hire spearmen with high wages and purchase insurance for them. Everyone has a part to play in caring for the spearmen. Please support the law which dictates compulsory insurance for spearmen."】

"Tzzzzzzzzzzz!"

Under the augmentation from being a temporary Saint, the original six rods of lightning increase to seventeen rods. Of which, fifteen of them served as barrier to seal Reyne's movements. The remaining two, which are the weakest two as well, strike on her head, warning the rascal through the running currents that she is on the edge of crossing into dangerous boundaries.

However, even though Aurora Knights are the rare few who possess top-class Magic Pets who are able to communicate telepathically with their Knights, Reyne is one of the rare few who doesn't influence her pet positively. Rather, she caused her mount to correctly determine and execute the movements of a super rookie Knight.

"Tzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz!"

"AHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

After noticing the Lightning Barrier, the Frigid Nightmare Seva stops hurriedly. However, Reyne, who has yet to react, chooses to charge on. Under the clash of the two wills, even though the furious charge had successfully come to a stop, the duo take a step further and crash into the lightning barrier, causing the lightning rods to explode. Lightning currents run through Reyne and Seva's body and gauging from the decibel of their screams of agony, they seem to be at least medium rare.

However, the events that happen a second later prove that our efforts were not futile.

Not too far away, a ball of green-ink venom suddenly falls to the ground, corroding it. Without any sound, a 5 meter radius hollow is created on the spot.

There are no blind angles to the Nine-headed Dragon who possesses eighteen eyes. Even when his physical body is bound tightly, it is impossible to him to not notice our arrival and Reyne's charge. Thus, he casually sends a Dragon Breath through the Dragon head which spits venom to deal with us.

If Reyne didn't stop due to the Lightning Barrier, under the precise calculation of the Nine-headed Dragon, she would collide straight into the ball of venom. Then, she would be corroded to the point that not a trace of her would remain.

If it wasn't for Krose's timely reaction, it would be about time for

me to consider what I should carve on the rascal's grave.

"This foolish Princess actually dreams of charging towards a giant Dragon just like the protagonists in knight novels. However, it is a pity that she only met with windmills throughout her life, that is until the day she finally saw a SemiGod Nine-headed Dragon. She could finally fulfill her wish to prove her courage. Then... Since she charged towards a SemiGod, how could she still have any then! Just like that: Reyne.Qin.Mist, died in AD1897, 14 year old. Cause of death: Heavily poisoned by knight novels!"

However, I didn't have the leisure to discipline her right now. There are many troublesome things to deal with.

After realising that Reyne has escaped from death, a look of pity appears on the face of the Auland Empire Advisor Marsolit's face. A ‘why didn’t she die’ face of regret hangs on his face.

"This is such a pity. If only the charge were successful, you could have dealt fatal damage to the evil Dragon."

Fatal damage? A rookie Knight whose total strength barely reaches Gold-rank against a SemiGod Hydra? Even if she manages to land a square blow, it would probably just be disregarded. This kind of lousy excuse which obviously was thought without using one's brain and that incredibly fake look of worry is completely insulting my intelligence as 'the one being lied to'.

However, there is no need for me to speculate his reason for being here. He is obviously here to kill us.

The proof? This entire city is currently under the effect of Great Judgement. Previously, when he just appeared, he was still normal. However, the moment he cast 'Bloodthirst' on Reyne, his body is dyed in red light, the color of a criminal. This is the verdict of the Judgement Spell on his attempted murder.

Why did he go for Reyne and not Roland? After tearing away my clothes, I was almost nude when I returned to the Church in my ice armor. Afterwards, I naturally put on a male's knight armor, not to mention the full body ice armor concealing my face. Furthermore, the person under the heavy armor is obviously a male, so he couldn't have possibly inferred that I was the one. Besides, Marsolit's mission is to 'Kill away the Shadow Princess of the Mist Royalty. She is an Aurora Knight with the strength of a Gold-rank or so."

In the earlier periods, Reyne couldn't conceal her strength of not even being of Bronze-rank from true experts, so how could it be possible for her to become an Aurora Knight which requires one to be of at least Silver-rank? From the very start, Marsolit thought that Reyne is the 'Shadow Princess Roland'.

At this moment, Marsolit still thinks that he isn't exposed given his covert schemes and his esteemed position. To add on, he is a Mage cloaked in a red mantle, not to mention that he trains in the way of Blood Magic, causing his entire body to be shrouded by a mist of blood, thus causing the red light from the Judgement Spell to be barely visible. Also, the debuffs which the 'Great Judgement' send towards him couldn't even break his defense magic.

"However, it is great that you are safe." He is still trying to defend his actions.

However, I don't intend to reveal his intentions. On the other hand, I nod my head in agreement at his words.

"Indeed, just a little bit more, Ro... Princess Reyne would be able to make a name for herself, it is really such a pity! That would have been a true legend."

Carrying an ice helmet, I played the part of a foolish brutish Knight vividly. That 'accidentally' leaked news verifies Marsolit's conjecture. He strokes his lower jaw in satisfaction, as though delighted over his intelligence and acting skills.

At the same time, I communicate through the Lich's phylactery to pressure Rosemary on the intelligence and weakness of this Advisor.

After all, he is a SemiGod and the strongest power we have in our hand is Krose, who only has ten minutes left as a fake Saint. No matter what, facing him straight on doesn't seem like a wise plan. Even though he is said to be severely injured, a SemiGod is still a SemiGod. He would definitely be hard to deal with. Even in his death throes, he is more than sufficient to pull us down together with him.

"...Weakness? How could someone like him have a weakness! Fine, fine, stop pulling my phylactery. I am thinking!"

"He really doesn't have any weakness. Even when he is heavily injured, he is able to extract the fresh blood of others to recover from his wounds, forcefully maintaining his body's condition. His ability to survive is extremely strong. If one is unable to kill him, his revenge would prove to be fatal..."

"Wait, did you say that he depends on sucking blood to maintain his ability to move? That means the blood in his body doesn't belong to him?"

After receiving an affirmative answer, a thought comes to my mind.

"Since there isn't any loss, let's just give it a try."

Thus, I remove my helmet to reveal a bright smile unique to only pure Paladins.

"Auland Empire Advisor Lord Magrint, we have killed a Seafolk commander on the way here and picked up a bottle. Some of them confessed that it is a God Equipment. Since you are knowledgeable, can you help us take a look at it?"

Not far away, the pale-faced Reyne is rushing back on her horse. Marsolit retracts his gaze of a predator from her upon hearing my words and smiles.

"Not Magrint, it is Marsolit. Do you muscle-brained Knights know what a God Equipment... Un? Something seems to be off

about it. Let me take a look!"

The ancient copper bottle smells deeply of history. Even though there isn't a ripple of magic on it, the brand new material shows that the concept of time is meaningless before it and even more so, how extraordinary the bottle is for being able to transcend history.

"It is truly a treasure. It is a pity that the original God of the God Equipment has fallen, causing the God Power of this God Equipment to dry out. Right now, its only remaining use is to serve as a toy with unique effects... Let me study it for a moment. When I am done with it, I will send you all generous rewards."

From those twinkling eyes and the eerie ill-intentioned laughter, I could tell that we are already dead people in Marsolit's eyes. The generous rewards he spoke of probably means to allow us to die comfortably.

"Then, I shall thank Lord Mabier! Hehe, I am lacking the money to get myself a wife. My old family's Xiao Fang has been waiting for me for many years."

"It is not Mabier... Forget it, anything that pleases you."

Then, the Blood Mage focuses his full attention on the ancient bottle.

The charm of a God Equipment to a Mage is indescribable through words. Even though it is already useless at this point, if he

is able to dig out a secret or two of the Gods, Marsolit's strength could still increase exponentially.

This is even more so when the God Equipment originates from an Ancient Sea God. The art which Marsolit trains in, Blood Magic, is an extension of Water Magic, thus making the God Equipment even more attractive to him.

When his efforts finally bear fruits, I smiled.

"So this is how it is. Let me try activating it... AHHHHHHHHHH!!"

When the God Equipment is activated, the blue God Light twirls around the SemiGod Blood Mage. Then, fresh blood spurts continuously from his body and shoots into the distance like a red arrow.

Due to excessive blood loss, Marsolit, who was already severely injured, lies unconscious in the water.

Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle, the God Equipment of the legendary Ancient Sea God. It is said that in ancient times, it could stir endless tsunamis. Sidunwar is the husband of the Water Elemental Goddess Aylos, the one who forced this desperate situation upon us. Even though this ancient God Equipment has lost a large portion of its strength due to the passing of the Ancient God, it still retains a single ability.

【Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle: After activation, it causes the user's

blood to return back to its most basic and pure form.】

This is the result I got after identifying it through the System.

Its description may sound a little confusing but after using it twice, I have a rough idea of how it works. Actually, this God Equipment doesn't hold much use. It is only capable of separating a mixture into individual components. For example, if you were to mix seawater and river water into a single bottle, under normal circumstances, it would be impossible to separate them. However, when this God Equipment is activated, it would be separated into a bottle of river water and a bottle of seawater.

After losing the support of the God Power from a true God, it became the most useless God Equipment in history. However, this history's most useless God Equipment has contributed greatly to us. It has destroyed a SemiGod.

Marsolit's entire body is composed the fresh blood of others. Since Blood Magic is considered a divergence of Water Magic, then naturally blood would be considered as a type of fluid. In the end, under the effects of the God Equipment, the foreign blood in his body returns back to where they belong, returning Marsolit back into his immobile form.

Furthermore, under the rebound of the magic and his excessive loss of blood, his injuries are even more severe than the ones inflicted by the Nine-headed Dragon from before.

Sometimes, the retributions on those wrongdoers come so fast

and the expression of justice can be so simple. Sending a violent punch towards the paralysed vile criminal who tried to murder us, I smile satisfactorily.

Following which, I stare blankly at the bottle which fell into the water.

In the surroundings of the bottle, the flood water scatters away. It seems that even this City of Rain which was created by a Forbidden Spell infused with God Power could be returned back to its original state under the effects of this God Equipment.

"Didn't they say that due to the existence of the two Goddesses of Creation, the ancient era is a feminist society? It seems that the Water Elemental Goddess Aylos is a 'husband-control freak'."

Of course, that is a joke. However, it shows that from a certain aspect, the God Power of the Ancient Sea God Sidunwar is able to suppress the Water Elemental Goddess Aylos.

Somehow, I feel that the God Equipment left by the ex-husband of the Water Elemental Goddess is the key to releasing this country-level strategic Forbidden Spell City of Rain.

"Hmph, ignoring how that fellow has turned against us, the 'Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle' which has lost its God Power can only maintain a meter water vacuum, so how could it be sufficient to deal with an entire Forbidden Spell of the Gods?"

However, it is indeed a convenient tool to use at this moment. I retrieve the bottle and keep it in my embrace. Under the effect of the God Equipment, the surroundings clear to form a clean space.

Even though I unexpectedly cleared away the unfortunate Blood Mage easily, there is still a massive problem before me. If we don't deal with him in the remaining five minutes, under the rage of the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor, even our option of escaping is nullified."

"Heh, since we don't have sufficient strength, then let's just try my tricks. Harloys, can you help me contact Dragon Slayer Bastlar?"

Chapter 119: Unexpected Rewards

"You picked up an old man? Why didn't you try asking whether he is able to forge pills? Or whether he possesses several decades of internal strength and is currently looking for a successor? At the very least, you have to ask whether he has godly weapons or if he has a rich, beautiful and young daughter who he left behind."

After defeating Marsolit, the first thing I did was to send Harloys out in her bat form along with the 'Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle' to shelter her from the rain so that she could become our air reconnaissance.

Since Marsolit is able to find us, it is possible for the other assassins to track us down as well. However, even if it is the spies of the royal family following behind us, I do not think that they are able to avoid Harloys's detection.

After all, in such a heavy rain and flood, even if a high-tier Shadower is able to remain invisible, it is impossible for his physical body to disappear. If he is concealing himself in the water, there would probably be a bizarre giant hole appearing in the water. The same goes for the Mage's Invisibility Spell. All kinds of concealing and transformation techniques are rendered significantly less effective in water.

"Disappearing under my sight? What is that, your wet footprints are still there. Color concealment? I'm sorry, the dye on your body has already faded. Next time, remember to purchase high-class waterproof paint. That one using Conceal Magic... Water is already splashing on you, do you intend to cosplay a Water Elemental?"

However, what is gratifying is that Harloys did not spot any other scouts. This means that there are probably none of them left.

But when she reports that there is a white-bearded old man on a tree not too far away, I can't help but recall the classical lines in the knight novels. Thus, I said those words on top right away.

After all, in knight novels, if one were to find a white-bearded old man out of a blue, half of the time, it is the start of the protagonist's road to achieving great heights. They would always turn out to be some elder, some god or some great expert.

"...Such destiny. He even has an incredibly rich child who is interested in you."

"What?"

"Darsos.Menon! This old man is Crowe.Menon, the previous emperor of the Auland Empire as well as the brother of your cute junior. Why? Hurry up and pay respect to your father-in-law!"

"...Your tidbits for tomorrow are confiscated. If you don't shut up, I will turn you into a dog who salivates everywhere it goes. Or perhaps, I should turn all your little fish tidbits into dog biscuit, un, all of those would be expired!"

This threat which is very likely to be carried out causes Harloys to instantly fall silent.

Even though I said such words, I am actually very delighted. Finding the previous emperor, Crowe, is a big reward. Looks like Marsolit had originally intended to take away this previous emperor. As long as we are able to escape from Kagersi, just the news of this old Emperor being alive would allow us to carry out many different kinds of schemes.

"This is really just like a knight novel, dropping treasures upon killing the monster. For a SemiGod to end like this, it could be considered a tragedy."

I have already thrown the SemiGod Blood Mage Emperor Marsolit to the Knights following us to keep an eye on. Under the verification of the System, he doesn't possess even a single SemiGod Equipment. Also, the several powerful looking equipment on him aren't of Epic-tier. Other than those, the Blood Dragon Head Token he was carrying looks familiar.

【The Blood Dragon Insignia of the Royal Family, the Seal of Authority of the Emperor: Although it represents the utmost authority of the Auland Empire, it is a useless tool in your hands. However, a certain Emperor would definitely look forward to regaining it. Other than serving as an evidence, this token made of special metal contains many undiscovered secrets.】

While lamenting how poor the boss is, I turn my attention to the entrance of our escape route which is firmly blocked by the Nine-headed Dragon not too far away. That should be our main goal at the moment.

"Darn it, of the entire stretch of the coast, why must he come to shore here?"

However, I know that this isn't a coincidence. Perhaps, my horrible luck is working its wonders again or the overlapping of certain reasons resulted in this inevitability.

A month ago, the Auland Empire had a large amount of garrison forces here along with a SemiGod. However, due to those unlucky fellows posing a great threat to the Seafolk, the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor chose this location as his primary target.

Although they are both SemiGod, the Nine-headed Dragon who has evolved into a SemiGod Nine-headed Dragon Emperor isn't a being whom a human SemiGod is capable of handling. Back then, the human SemiGod was slayed in an instant. Following which, the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor went back and roamed about freely in the river.

Now that he is required for the battle, he naturally chose this location to come to shore at. Yet, the moment he climbs up, Bastlar blocked his advance. Thus, after a series of inevitables, he blocks our path like a mountain, leaving us helpless and frustrated.

That battle is still being fought intensely and Bastlar still holds the upper hand. All kinds of Dragon Slaying and Dragon Sealing godly weapons appear, slicing the heads of the immobile Nine-headed Dragon Emperor, spraying blood all over his head.

However, the problem is this Nine-headed Snake is known for its

resilient life force and its regenerative capabilities. It is said that even with a single head left, the Nine-headed Snake is able to fully recover within three days. If its body is torn into two, it is able to split into two smaller individuals. An existence at the level of the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor is able to regenerate indefinitely when in contact with water. It is difficult for him to die even if he is willing to.

Bastlar is a Heroic Spirit who doesn't know the meaning of fatigue. He intends to continuously destroy the enemy's Dragon heads and drain it of its regenerative abilities to fight an attrition fight. He does have the time to spare and ability to drag the battle on, but we don't.

I know that once the Great Judgement ends, the Nine-headed Dragon would immediately flip the tables around. At that point, we would be goners.

There is no difference from charging to the Hydra from committing suicide. However, is there no solution for us to achieve a victory without having to fight the Hydra face on? After squeezing my brain juice dry, I found a very unorthodox solution to the problem.

“Dragon Slayer Bastlar, I am the God Envoy of the God of Law. The caster of the Forbidden Spell is someone on our side. I have to tell you an unfortunate news. The duration of the Forbidden Spell is coming to an end and in five minutes, the chains will disappear. If I’m not wrong, the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor will regenerate and the battle would go back to a standstill. Very quickly, this entire city will fall and the Seafolk will all come to shore. You

probably don't have much time left to squander on it."

The bat-form Harloys flies to a location not too far away from Bastlar. Under my coercion, she fulfills the basic role of a Magic Pet, transmission of messages.

"I have a plan here, though it is an obvious breaking of the rules, so it would depend on your decision. If you are willing to carry it out, nod your head. The plan goes like this. We will help you store that dumb snake for a short period of time, during which, you will..."

After explaining the plan, Bastlar hesitates for a moment. However, he is unwilling to let go of the prey before him. Thus, he nods his fierce furiously, agreeing to my plan.

The next moment, with both of his hands raised up, he gathers lightning on his hands. After which, the Dragon Spear behind him expands to the size of a small boat. Then, enchanting lightning on it, it turns into an indestructible lightning spear.

Then, summoning with his full strength, the clouds scatter and a sliver of moonlight falls.

As a Heroic Spirit of the Goddess of Moonlight, Bastlar is only able to exert his full strength under the moonlight. A pale white energy is infused on top of the lightning spear. The layer of silver light on the spear tip may seem inconspicuous, but it is the power granted from a true God.

After enchanting Moonlight Blade on the spear and obtaining the blessing of the Goddess of Hunting, the might of the lightning spear surges.

“Ain Spear of Destruction!”

The Nine-headed Dragon struggles furiously, creating gigantic waves from the river water. At the moment, waves after waves of tsunamis billows as flashes of lightning appears here and there. It really looks like the sight of the end of the world. However, no matter how much the Hydra struggles, the Anti-Dragon enchantments which Bastlar keeps recasting on the chains leaves him unable to move in the least.

“AOOOOOOOOOOOOO!”

Even when his roar fills the heavens and shakes the ground, that seemingly slow but fast Dragon Slaying Spear strikes the Nine-headed Dragon brutally.

“AOOOOOOOOO! I curse you, I curse that you will never obtain redemption and release, that you will always be plagued with nightmares of your loved ones, that you will never sleep soundly! Darn you, Dragon Slayer!”

Under the furious roars and curse of the Dragon Emperor, two of his Dragon heads immediately severs and a massive amount of venomous green blood spurts out, turning the surrounding water body into a lethal venom that corrodes one’s body and soul.

“Heh, your screams of agony and curses would become my lullaby at night.”

Following which, without even looking at the results of his attack, Bastlar floats towards us. On the other hand, I prompt Erebella to charge forward to replace the position of the Heroic Spirit.

“Sigh, 19 seconds is sufficient for it to regrow its Dragon head. This Nine-headed Dragon is really difficult to deal with.”

The moment I step into the Nine-headed Dragon’s area of vigilance, lightning, flames, venom and ice awls all come shooting towards me.

Even as the Nine-headed Dragon screams agonisingly in pain and two of its Dragon heads are still spurting venomous blood as he curses the Dragon Slayer to meet with misfortune, the other seven heads had already regained their combat ability.

“…This is the benefit from possessing multiple heads. Should I go and modify Ah Bas when I return? The times are changing and a Three-headed Cerberus seems to be outdated. Twelve heads shouldn’t be too much for a hellhound. However, it is a pity that Ah Bas is in his rebellious phase and probably won’t agree to my modifications. The last time, not only did he reject the beloved nickname I came up for him, he even declared that ‘even if the world ends, I won’t let you modify me ever again’. However, the upgrades I did for him the last time was obviously great.”

“Hmph, he even forced me to cancel the automated function to crow at six in the morning everyday. As a captain, it is important for him to supervise his subordinates to go for morning trainings punctually. Have you never heard of the saying ‘dancing with the chickens’? You actually backed down after hearing someone call you ‘Demonic Spatial Rooster’? Don’t I also suffer from being labelled as having a screw loose by others as well? Useless. Right, should I implement some wheels on him? It seems that Transformers is quite popular nowadays.”

TL: Dancing with the chickens -> Originally, it is referring to people who train in swordsmanship early in the morning. Then, it became used to refer to people who are motivated to improve themselves for a good cause.

Four destructive Dragon breath is already right before me, yet I am still thinking about other matters.

This isn’t because I am belittling my opponent. The Nine-headed Dragon Emperor who has undergone countless battlefields is experienced, so the locations he chose for his Dragon Breaths are not bad. The four Dragon Breaths strikes accurately from my front, back, left and right simultaneously and intersects towards me. If nothing goes wrong, I would have died no matter how I choose to dodge it.

However, since I didn’t die, something still went wrong.

The charging ice war horse suddenly disappears and turns into the young Snow Woman who then sits on my shoulder. Golden wings sprout from my back and with a leap, I turn the momentum into a driving force upwards. In my War Angel Form, I soar into the skies.

As a War Angel, my Race Talent consists of controlling the sacred inferno of Order. At this moment, the sacred inferno has boils countless falling raindrops. The rain doesn't really affect me much. However, I don't dare to stop and continue to soar upwards so as to dodge the Nine-headed Dragon's consecutive attacks in advance.

My decision is proven to be the right one. A few seconds later, the position where I was previously at is overlaid by storm and a sudden tsunami.

This is one of the basic knowledge in a top-tier battle. To deal with an agile opponent who is adept at concealment and hard to hit, the easiest is to not get tangled up with him and instead, use large AOE spells to destroy him and wherever he could possibly hide.

If Reyne was here, she would have probably died even if she possesses my skills. Outstanding battle experience is a requirement to predict the enemy's moves in advance. While turning around in midair to dodge all kinds of breaths, I send Ice Magic attacks on the Nine-headed Dragon.

Yes, Ice Magic. Furthermore, they are Bronze-rank magic spells which are below 3-circles, Ice Magic which the Nine-headed Dragon is able to disregard. Of course, with my temporary Silver-rank, I am capable of using 5-circle magic spells as well. However, as I am not willing to waste my skill points on them, I don't know a single Silver-rank (4-circle, 5-circle) magic spell.

Since the quality is insufficient, I choose to make it up with my quantity. The ice residue which I casually create can also be used to create a manmade hail when falling down from the sky. However, what stands below the hail isn't some weak windscreen of a car or some tearful car owners who are regretting their choice to not get insurance.

That Water Magic of the ancient Sea Monster below is not inferior in any ways to a top-class Water Mage. Water Magic and Ice Magic is connected in many minute ways. Not to mention, the Nine-headed Dragon's Ice Dragon Head specialises in rapid freezing magic. That little ice residues of mine pales too much in comparison.

However, the Ice Dragon Head simply disregards my attacks and a scornful look appears on his face. However, the main body of the Nine-headed Dragon meets with a little trouble.

His body permeates a crystal blue color as a thin layer of ice start to form on the Dragon's body. He has been afflicted with a Frozen status.

"His skin really thick. Even though the System never said that it is impossible to resist the Frozen Air, to think he resisted more than half of its effect for it to take effect only now."

I never do meaningless tasks. From the very start, the seemingly meaningless attack is actually an attempt to propagate the effects of Frozen Air.

【Frozen Air: A kind of deadly cold air that is without sound or presence. It can be enchanted onto one's physical body and weapon, as well as paired together with Ice Magic as an attack. Those who are touched by the Frozen Air will have all movements slowed by 1% and suffer 1 point of frost damage per second. This debuff can be stacked. If the target's movement speed is reduced by more than 20%, a frozen effect will be inflicted. Many negative statuses will be inflicted, such as the freezing of one's thought. If the target's movement speed is reduced by more than 50%, then there is a chance that the target might die at any moment due to massive loss of heat.】

The strength of this ability isn't exceptionally strong but it has the advantage of that no living things can be completely immune to it. Of course, I wouldn't dream to trying to freeze this terminal lifeform, a Nine-headed Dragon, to death. However, the disgusting negative effects of slowed thinking process and reaction speed would help me in accomplishing the dangerous mission of drawing his aggression.

On the other side, they have already reached the final stages of it as well.

"Are you willing to follow by the will of the God of Law and fight for law and justice..."

Krose's voice trembles with agitation as he conducts the Job Change Ritual for the SemiGod Heroic Spirit. This isn't something an ordinary Archbishop could meet with.

Yes, from the very start, my goal is clear. Since the only being on

our side who could pose a threat to the Nine-headed Dragon is Bastlar, then pulling up Bastlar's strength would be the most ideal decision at the moment.

As long as we add a halo of a Law Job on top of him, his power rank would be pulled up a level by the 'Great Judgement' and the rank higher than a SemiGod is... Alright, it is impossible for him to attain the strength of a true God. However, he would still gain the strength to easily subdue the Nine-headed Dragon.

However, I estimate his overwhelming power will cause the Great Judgement to end earlier. Also, the strength he would possess is most probably not something his body of a Heroic Spirit would be able to withstand. In the best possible scenario, he would go down after the Hydra with a single blow. However, Bastlar is already a dead person, so how could he be bothered over this? What he is worried about is whether he is able to get the Dragon down with him in that single blow.

At this moment, even with the assistance of the SemiGod Equipment Scattered Page, procedures still have to be followed to grant Bastlar a Law Job. Krose has to finish chanting the long prayer. Furthermore, the ritual is sacred, so they are unable to move in the midst of it.

The Nine-headed Dragon isn't a fool either. The ice master in the sky who, astonishingly, was able to freeze him is obviously stalling for time. While he doesn't know what the Dragon Slayer is doing, it definitely isn't a good thing for him.

Thus, he lifts all nine of his heads without hesitation and starts

charging up his Dragon Breath on every single one of his heads. If he were to release it, not mentioning how Krose and the others would die for certain, the entire pier would disappear from existence.

"No matter what the situation is, no matter what schemes they are up to, first shoot a blast at them before thinking about it? I like that thought process, because I am the same as well. Harloys, plan C! Give him a big one!"

Chapter 120: The Decisive Battle (1)

The storm didn't seem like it would end anytime soon. The slaughter and screams of agony in the distance seems to be dying down. In the moment when the Seafolk are about to successfully claim ownership of their new capital, our journey to escape is also nearing its end.

The Nine-headed Dragon before us opens his mouth and the remaining seven dragon heads vomit seven-colored dragon's blood. At the same time, different types of magic are gathered together and under the careful control of the Nine-headed Dragon, the seven Dragon Breaths form a colorful floating ball. The result is a lethal Ball of Elements.

This is the specialty of multi-headed Dragons. When multiple Elemental Magics are combined into one body and the seven-colored ball of light becomes pure, a light that can destroy everything will be born.

That is the way of the battle for a top-tier Magic Beast. Abandoning all of the useless flowery tricks and instead, try their best to strengthen their physical body and Race Talent. From the looks of it, the Dragon Breath which combines multiple attributes will eventually become an attribute-less shockwave.

Given the strength of the Nine-headed Dragon, even though he is without two heads at the moment, the might of this attack can rival even that of Forbidden Spells.

A powerful physical body and a simple, yet powerful, Race Talent attack—this is the basis for top-tier beings, like giant Dragons, in suppressing everything else. When fighting with such unreasonable beings, one’s strength is required to do the talking.

From the look of those ripples of magic, if he were to successfully cast it, forget about the others, even the entire pier will be eradicated.

"Hmph, did you think that I would allow you to do as you please? Harloys, plan C! Give him a big one!"

"Niang niang, I am afraid that this concubine is unable to do so."TL: Niang niang -> How concubines in China address the queen.

"What?"

"Reporting to the queen, this concubine would like to blast a big one as well, but do you think that it takes no time to prepare? I need at least five minutes! Can't you spare some thoughts for the rescue troops who need to arrive late? How can rescue troops arrive at the crucial period for a hero, so do it yourself! Don't hold expectations for supporting roles like us, I believe in you!"

Listening to her retort, which has the flavor of modern times, I decided to never say such messy stuff to the darned cat anymore. On the other hand, I am really put into a helpless position.

I could understand the lack of time for Harloys to prepare sufficiently. However, if this Dragon Breath were to really shoot out, then I wouldn't need any more plans because nothing would be left.

"Darn it! Giant fellow, look at this!"

Taking a deep breath, I don't intend to charge at the Hydra. I fly towards the stone cliff in the opposite direction from Krose and the rest. I won't need wings for what I’m about to do.

"Sinful Devil God."

Folding in my wings, the fatigue from releasing the War Angel form embraces me. However, I didn't have the time to complain about it. Light of Chaos shrouds me and turns me into another form——Sinful Devil God.

The angle of view increases by quite a bit due to the enlargement of my physical body. My breathing carries along the smell of sulfur. That is the mark of a Demon.

My white and smooth skin assume a layer of ugly, light-blue lava. Along with the rhythm of my breathing, my bizarre magic tattoos start to shine, reminiscent to the Elemental lifeforms.

The Chaos Bloodline causes the blue lightning in my veins to explode, before pouring out from the magic tattoos. The emitted power can make the rain in the air to evaporate. Lightning shines

in both of my eyes. When my form has been fixed, it looks as though a Devil God has descended onto the mortal world.

I don't like this transformation at all. Other than the fact that the Power of Chaos brings about trouble just from its bad reputation, this form which looks like the boss of the villainous faction is really ugly. It reminds me of my dark history back when I was the Lich when I scared myself just looking into the mirror in the middle of the night.

However, at this moment, I need this ugly transformation. Although this form is hideous, the strength it provides me isn't at all cozy.

"The spirits of the snow, the snowstorms of the extreme lands, listen to my command...

If the War Angel Form is a form which allows me to move at great speed, making it suited for close-combat battle, then the Sinful Devil God Form would be one that boosts my control over magic, my will, intelligence and several attributes and stats that are related to magic, making it a typical magic-based transformation.

"...Under my will, the old era of decay and the end of the terminal will arrive..."

The long incantation carries along with it the ripples of a destructive magic. The spirits of the snow are singing along in the air. The top-tier Ice Forbidden Spell—Ice Aeon, is about to descend

on the battlefield.

It’s different from Magaret's pirated version, while the copied Ice Aeon probably doesn't even hold a third of the original’s strength, I, as the original creator of the Forbidden Spell, am able to raise its power to 200%.

The concept behind this Forbidden Spell is simple. Crystallizing the purest Power of Ice and Snow and after compressing it multiple times, blast it outwards. This is no different from the concept of a Fireball.

However, Harloys once made an evaluation on it. Due to its simplicity, it is pure and suits the very nature of ice and snow, thus making it powerful.

【SemiGod Equipment, the Dark God's Breath of Death: Soul Conversion: Siphon the soul of the dead and convert it into pure Power of Death】

The Power of Death passes through me and converts into the purest ice mana. Should I be thankful for the great slaughter that Carlohin carried out and his years of accumulation? Countless souls have created a massive mana vault in this SemiGod Equipment, and this happens to be what I lack the most at this moment.

"...the winter's hibernation is destruction as well as rebirth..."

With me at the very core, while mana frenziedly surges out from

the raised black staff, and as the chanting grew louder, the blue magic inscriptions that represent ice and snow extends on the ground while the snow spirits sing in chorus.

Even before the spell is released, the entire cliff turns into a land of frost. The rainwater falling from the sky freezes into snow. The humid and warm summer wind blowing over becomes a bone-chilling storm of the extreme lands.

Even more so, due to the rapid fall in temperature, a thin layer of ice starts to form over the flood, and so the endless flood seems to have met its nemesis for the first time.

In the end, the two newly-regenerated dragon heads raise themselves upwards and stare fixedly at me, their giant eyes about the size of an adult man emitting the furious red light. That is truly a bare intent to kill.

In the short distance between us, the snow is insufficient to block his sight. He is measuring whether my magic could threaten him.

In the mind of the Nine-headed Dragon, as long as he is able to destroy the Dragon Slayer and the hateful chains in one blow, what does getting struck by a Forbidden Spell count as? Anyway, it isn't the first time the Hydra has been struck by a Forbidden Spell. Since it’s resilient and wouldn't die from it, he would fully regenerate in just a few days.

However, taking just one look, he knows that this is a situation unlike any he has undergone.

His regeneration ability is a Race Talent as well as an extension of his Water Magic. Fioros is confident that as long there's water, he would not die. However, what if his supply of water were to be stopped.

Water Mage often cultivates Ice Magic to strengthen their own magic's destructive power and adaptability. However, this doesn't mean that these two types of magic don't contradict one another. On the other hand, the most hated opponents of pure Water Mages are Ice Mages.

Water Magic often presents itself in the form of water arrows and giant waves. Basically, it is the control over the shape and use of fluid. Thus, it has two nemeses. The high-temperature Fire Magic, which evaporates fluid, and Ice Magic, which freezes water into a solid form.

Regardless of whether the water is evaporated or frozen, when it is no longer in its fluid form, it doesn't fulfill the concept of 'water', thus destroying the Mage's basic ability to control it.

Nine-headed Dragon Fioras is contemplating, but the more he thinks about it, the more he feels that something is amiss with the situation.

The magic before him is obviously an Ice Magic Forbidden Spell. From the looks of the natural phenomenon and the resonance with the elemental spirit, it is obviously an extremely powerful Forbidden Spell.

Although there is no magic ripple coming from the caster before of him (Bronze-rank Magic means nothing in his eyes), the black stick is releasing unlimited amounts of magic. Furthermore, the Ice Mage who just froze him has proven his extraordinary talent in Ice Magic. If this Forbidden Magic were to successfully freeze him...

Enjoying his life in an ice cube that would never melt? His regeneration abilities wouldn't be useful under such circumstances.

"A Hydra who went into a refrigerator and forgot to come out? We can still earn a bit of money from selling the tickets to this exhibit." This joke isn't funny to him at all.

If Roland were to be allowed to go a step further and freeze all the river water, rainwater, and his bodily fluids, his regeneration abilities would be annulled. It’s quite possible for him to freeze into an ice cube and die upon breaking into ice fragments.

Usually, the Nine-headed Emperor Fioras doesn't think anything of the Forbidden Spells of humans. However, at this moment, he didn't have the confidence to face it head on.

"Pah!"

Beneath the feet of the Mage, the frozen earth cleaves apart and the boundary between illusion and reality disintegrates. A large hole opens.

After which, a giant, black skeletal hand reaches out from the hole, its claw stabbing into the firm ground. Every single finger of it is as though the size of a grown man and this is only the beginning. The true nightmare is returning back to the surface.

"AHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

As that pitch-black giant skeleton head returns to the mortal world from the Underworld and the crowned skeleton head releases a peculiar 'kakaka' laughter, all life that sets its gaze upon it instinctively screams, as though they have caught sight of the grim reaper who reaps all souls.

"...We will bring about equal end and death to all life..."

The incantation continues on. On top of the laughing skeleton king's head, the Mage who is standing on the ice crown continues to chant as the ice crystal crown becomes his throne.

The mountains have already been converted into snow lands. On top of the snow, the king of ice laughs maniacally. Just his very existence is sufficient to bring termination to all lifeforms.

On top of the cliff, the endless ice has started to freeze the flood. Even the air is starting to freeze. Upon the descent of the king of eternal night, all life will face its end.

Even though the ice has yet to creep onto the Nine-headed

Dragon, fear appears in its blood-red eyes.

Under the gaze of the skeleton king, the Nine-headed Dragon Fioras has never felt so close to death. Even though his Seven-colored Dragon Breath is in the midst of gathering, his instinctive fear of death causes the ancient, vile beast to shiver uncontrollably.

This isn't determined by the difference in strength, but the fear that results from the hierarchy of the food chain. The one before him is the black skeleton king, the hunter of all lives.

The Nine-headed Dragon understands that the skeleton king before him, who is taller than him, is just an illusion, that it’s just a divine apparition similar to a Soul World upon releasing the Forbidden Spell. Although this is the unique privilege of experts who had once approached the realm of true Gods and are rarities in this era, it all means nothing to him, who is ancient himself.

However, the divine apparition that is projected is that person, that God's true form. He has seen before the divine apparition of the Queen of Storms, the furious projection of the God who creates storms that can destroy cities. Yet, her might is lacking too far behind this black skeleton. The only one who can compare to it would probably be the Ancient Death God Ayer's apparition.

"Ayer? God of Death... The same skeletal body and a black SemiGod staff, could he really be that person of the legends? I have heard of rumors that he has appeared in the Underground World and destroyed a Demon Count. Is it possible that it is the legendary... The ultimate Forbidden Spell, one which destroyed

countless Elf Kingdoms——Ice Aeon!"

"...Under my will, the aeon of frost will return back to the mortal world and the world belonging to the dead will once again..."

At this point, the Forbidden Spell cannot be stopped at one's whim anymore. Even if the spellcaster stops the incantation, the snow spirits in midair will still continue the incantation.

At this moment, the bizarre choral incantation echoes throughout the entire battlefield. Even though this is the language of a foreign world, everyone can comprehend the true meaning behind this bizarre language.

It isn't like some malevolent curse. Rather, it sounds just like a historian recounting the history he has compiled. There is a possibility that the spellcaster is illustrating the future which he thinks would happen——When the Ice Aeon descends and all life freezes, the Gods and the living beings will either die or go into a long slumber. Then, the Undead who do not fear the cold will become the conqueror of the new era.

Although this is just a simple description, it carries with it endless death and despair. This is Emperor Yongye's doomsday poem——Ice Aeon.

It’s a kind of inconceivable distortion, but based on natural history, it’s definitely a plausible doomsday that could happen in the future.

In order to bring this doomsday to the living, the Emperor Yongye of back then created history's most dangerous and lunatic Forbidden Spell. The most ludicrous part about it is that he succeeded. From the day this Forbidden Spell was created, 'Ice Aeon' is fated to become the nightmare of all living beings.

Upon realizing that his opponent could be that person, Fioras feels despair.

When he was at his pinnacle, even a 2nd-tier God would have to avoid his path. His army had once hunted countless existences of his level and was well-known in the circle of top-tier Magic Beasts. His memory of him is very distinct. It would be too foolish of him to be unable to recognize him when the incantation has gotten to such a point.

"Emperor Yongye!!"

The terrified Nine-headed Dragon Emperor shouts that forbidden name and his roar tremors the entire village. Countless eyes dart over and the entire world shakes in fear.

At this moment, Fioras doesn't doubt in the least that this Forbidden Spell would take his life. If the complete Ice Aeon were to be released, the one who should be worried on whether an entire corpse would be left behind is this city, not himself.

In reality, it would be like that too. If the complete version of Ice Aeon were to be released, the effects of the City of Rain could be disregarded. Within a century, this land would become an extreme

land of only ice and nothing else.

At the final countdown of the Seven-colored Dragon Breath, knowing his nemesis who views slaughtering Dragons as his ultimate goal is before him, he chooses not to exact vengeance when his life is ticking away before him.

"AH!" "Kacha!"

The two newly regenerated Dragon heads bite away the other six Dragon heads. The pitiful terminal lifeform Nine-headed Dragon Emperor becomes a three-headed snake. Losing six of the energy source, the remaining head is finally able to freely control the rampaging ball of Dragon Breath.

Thus, he releases the Dragon Breath with his full strength towards Emperor Yongye without any hesitation.

At this moment, I may look impressive, but in reality, I am already on the verge of tears.

I am just a Bronze-rank rookie Ice Mage and the entire mana that my body contains is not even sufficient to put together a hailstorm. Ice Aeon or whatever, it’s just a faraway dream for me.

However, just like how I re-'comprehended' Blade Storm, given how I am aware of the theory behind it, re-comprehending the 'Ice Aeon' that I have created isn't a difficult task. However, without the foundations to support it, there is no way I would be able to

release it.

【Ding, congratulations for comprehending the SemiGod-tier destructive Forbidden Spell Ice Aeon. ——System Tip: What? You want further explanations? Since you can't possibly execute it, why bother wasting my saliva. Besides, if you were to really release it, remember to buy a coffin beforehand. What? You think that you should use this rare luck to buy a lottery ticket? Are you dumb? How can the dead buy lottery tickets? Right, you can try to bet on soccer and I can earn some money meanwhile. Un, it is a definite win as long as I stand on the side opposite to you.】

As usual, I ignore the retort of the noisy system. At this moment, in order to distract the Nine-headed Dragon who is disregarding me, I intend to take out Ice Aeon to scare him, even using the mana stored in 'Dark God's Breath of Death' just for it.

However, the moment it speaks, I know that the situation is dire. I have went too far again.

"Darn it! Stop!!"

Chapter 121: Decisive Battle (2)

"Darn it! I can't stop!!"

Around me, the snow spirits dance and sing. The incantation is mouthed through me, but amplified through their chorus, resonating with the entire world.

It’s just like how an experienced Knight is capable of performing several tricks through manipulating the movements of his horse whereas a rookie Knight often ends up falling from his horse and then dragged along with it. At this current moment, I am the unlucky rookie Knight who is being dragged along.

Furthermore, the more stubborn the horse, the harder it is to tame. Once you start chanting out a top-tier Forbidden Spell, it's very difficult to stop, like a rocket that can’t be interrupted once it’s been launched. My previous experiences and the urgency of the present circumstances caused me to miscalculate the entire situation. The differences between the living and the dead have caused a significant difference in the spell from the very start.

When I started to chant the supreme Forbidden Spell—a spell way beyond my level—and used the black staff as my source of mana, I became that rookie Knight being dragged along by his horse. I became a part of the Forbidden Spell.

The delighted dancing snow spirits are granting me their blessings of the snow. The re-usage of the Forbidden Spell has significantly improved my comprehension towards the Power of

Ice and Snow.

And at this moment, the Soul Imprint 'Ice Treader' on my System panel is being regenerated at a rapid pace.

"7%...14%...30%, what kind of joke is this! Normally, none of you would be this helpful. Yet, at a crucial period like this, all of you are popping out and bringing me trouble!"

In order to prevent the Forbidden Spell—which I've lost control of—from exploding at any moment, I pump all of my skill points into the Ice Magic skill tree without hesitation.

'Ice Control', 'Bone-chilling Freeze' and other related skills are being enhanced altogether. So long as they were skills that would lead to Ice Aeon in the skill tree, I would frantically pump skill points into them.

Devoting my skill points in such a way resulted in immediate effects. Although my position on the skill tree is still far from reaching Ice Aeon, the control over Ice Magic that I derived from the skill points I pumped in grant me a certain level of control over the Forbidden Spell. At the very least, I don't have to worry about it exploding all of a sudden.

However, fortune is always paired with misfortune. After I solved the problem of an implosion occurring, a new form of trouble lays itself before me.

In my eyes, the entire world has turned into ice rivers and glaciers. Other than frost, nothing else can be seen on this ice plain. All living beings are asleep under the frost. This isn't an illusion, but a sign that the Forbidden Spell is about to be released. The snow spirits are jubilantly informing me the beautiful future of their wishes.

However, what the snow spirits like may not be the same for living beings.

Just as the System says, if I were to throw the Forbidden Spell, I could even spare myself the coffin. It is very probable that my body and soul will be frozen here. My endless reincarnations will come to a halt as well.

"Erebella! Knock me out!"

Hearing my orders, my cute Frigid Nightmare Snow Woman turns into a Frost Ghoul. But before she can land a blow, the giant hands of the black skeleton grab her and then hesitates for a moment before throwing her far away.

The divine apparition automatically carries out its defensive mechanism. If it weren't for the fact that I instinctively view Erebella as a trustworthy companion, that giant hand would have crushed her to death instead of throwing her away.

"82%...89%...91%."

The reparation of my Soul Imprint is almost at its end. What should have been an event worth celebrating has instead become the countdown to my death. I can vaguely feel the moment the Ice Treader is repaired completely. That would be the moment Ice Aeon will be released, and thus, my life will have come to an end.

Even my life force will be used as a propellant for the release of the Forbidden Spell. It would be unbelievable for me not to die after that.

Just as I await my final judgment in despair, the Nine-headed Dragon actually bites away its other six heads, then changes the target of that deadly Dragon Breath towards me.

In that instant, I am so overjoyed that I almost run up to the ugly dragon head just to hug it and give it two kisses.

Yes, joy—not fear or anger. My Forbidden Spell has already reached the stage where it will automatically release itself. Just like how the spell expelled Erebella from my side, it instinctively makes its own judgments and will try to destroy any obstacle preventing the successful release of the Forbidden Spell.

At that moment, an equally threatening offensive magic spell has been thrown its way, and if I'm not wrong, there is only one possible reaction to it.

"...let me bring the living their eternal end! Ice Aeon!"

As expected, the breath of ice is released in advance and collides with the ball of Dragon Breath.

Collisions between two Forbidden Spells are always bizarre. The collision between the ice breath and the Dragon's Breath whip up a hurricane of death. All living beings caught in the midst of it would first freeze before shattering into fragments.

The river water also falls victim. Presently, the river has been frozen into fragmented ice shards.

The blinding white light robs mortals of their sight. When I finally regain my strength, only rubble remains before me.

Should I be thankful to the flood for evacuating all civilians living in the Pier District? After all, the collision between the two Forbidden Spells has completely wrecked that area. The result of the clash is that I held the upper hand, despite the Forbidden Spell being incomplete.

I am still panting on the mountain cliff, whereas half of the Hydra's body has been frozen in solid ice. Two of the dragon heads have turned into ice fragments amidst howls of agony. This is the best proof of my victory.

If the Hydra hadn’t used all of its life force to protect the remaining main head, this ancient Magic Beast might have met its end in that previous blow.

The Forbidden Spell didn't go through the final few stages of suppression, refining, melding, resonating as well as several more processes, and therefore it hadn’t been completed. It was due to its incompleteness that I was spared.

I lie paralyzed on the floor, with my body’s stamina and mana sapped dry. My transformation was released, and I don't even have the strength to get up.

However, I know that we should have already won.

"...I, in the name of my Lord Wumianzhe, grant you the job of Justice Knight!"

The inheritance ceremony has come to an end. Those difficult four minutes that I had to vie for, finally come to an end.

"AOOOOOOOOOO!"

Even though only one head remains, Fioras still releases furious howls. He is unwilling to fall just like that. He has already noticed the surge of strength within Bastlar and can vaguely guess what is about to happen. The remaining dragon head of the Hydra realizes that the end is ticking closer for him.

However, something occurs that leaves the others speechless. As Bastlar’s strength and power rank furiously increases, his Heroic Spirit body—which can only hold the power of a SemiGod (as written in the Dragon Hunting chapter)—begins to dissipate.

Golden light particles enshroud him as Bastlar calmly watches his body dissolve. He knows that it’s about time for him to return. However, he doesn't know what will await him, especially after accepting a Law Job.

"Although it’s a pity that I won’t be able to view the end of this little snake with my own eyes, it was worth being able to experience strength at this level, even for just a moment."

His two legs have already been reduced to golden light. Yet, the Heroic Spirit still calmly draws his sword and spear. After hesitating for a moment, he throws the spear to a young female Knight who has been looking at him with eyes filled with respect.

"Keep it as a souvenir. He’s called 'Dragon Massacre'. I admire the courage you possessed when charging towards an evil Dragon. There should be a day when you will be in need of him."

Bastlar then takes a longing look at the scenery of the mortal world, before throwing his treasured sword into the air.

This time, his golden sword didn't change forms or flash bolts of lightning. Even the very hilt starts to dissipate in the golden light. However, in everyone's eyes, they somehow feel that the sword cannot be blocked, as though fate decreed for it to seal the end of the Dragon.

In fact, Bastlar didn't even aim properly for this attack. He knew that the sword would land on the Dragon's body.

In that instant, he touches the boundaries of a true God and infuses the unique God Power known as 'Dragon Death' within the sword. This is the God Power which he’s just grasped. However, the price for using such forbidden power: he slowly dissipates into a golden light, to be banished back to the Heavenly Realm.

Just as the disappearing Heroic Spirit Dragon Slayer said, his only remaining regret was not being able to view the end of the Nine-headed Dragon with his own eyes. However, in his mind, he knows that the moment this strike—which has reached the level of a God—is thrown out, Fioras is bound for death.

Meanwhile, the savage Hydra is still unable to accept its doom. Even at the very end, he continues to struggle and defy fate.

The temporary disappearance of Great Judgement granted him his freedom. However, his frozen body also sealed his ability to move. He wants to tear apart his main head so that it can survive independently. However, he doesn't have the strength or a dragon head to carry out the act.

"It's the end." Finally, a giant teardrop falls from the despaired Hydra. He knows that his demise is approaching.

"It's the end! ... We've finally won! We've survived!" This show of delight is from me and the others.

"Hm?"

Suddenly, an inconceivable plot-twist occurs. A red figure crashes violently into the sword in midair.

"AHHHHHHHH! I curse you!! Damned Celestial Tower! Darned Lamos's Eye! I'll make sure you all accompany me in hell!"

Without a doubt, the red figure who 'sacrificed' himself to save the Nine-headed Dragon is the Marsolit who had just fallen. Naturally, he isn't the kind of person who would use his life to save others. He was thrown by someone else to take the bullet!

The Knight who was keeping watch on Marsolit is currently lying unconscious in the water.

Under the guidance of the remaining God Power, the weakened Dragon Slaying Sword still stabs into the body of the Hydra. However, the SemiGod shield was exceptionally effective. Although the body of the Nine-headed Dragon has been reduced to ashes, the main dragon head still survives and is now starting to regenerate!

"Ya-ya! Fool, fool!" The crow's malicious calls echo in midair. Then, with a twist, it turns into a familiar figure—Auland branch head of the Celestial Tower, Lamos's Eye!

Although colluding with the Seafolk, he has treated their invasion as an opportunity to exact his vengeance. He has been staring outside the Church for a gap in their defenses to appear.

After waiting patiently all this time, he manages to reverse the situation by striking at the crucial moment. Seeing that his vengeance is exacted, Lamos's Eye laughs happily.

Behind him, the Nine-headed Dragon is already regenerating once more. Without the Dragon Sealing Chains binding him, even if a mere dragon head remains, as long he is granted sufficient time and water, he will be able to recover back to his complete form.

Unless we destroy the main head before his second head is regenerated, we'll just end up as his food. It's really disappointing that we were taken advantage of after fighting to this point.

Yet, the shivering Reyne, who was battling with her fear, stood up.

Without a second word, she jumps on Seva, who has transformed into a wild boar and holds up high the 'Dragon Massacre' she just obtained, charging towards the unbeatable evil Dragon.

"I didn't expect to use this spear so quickly... Everyone! Now isn't the time to despair! As long as we do not give up, there is still hope!"

The Frigid Nightmare creates for her a set of standard Knight equipment of the Mist Country. At the very back of the mount, the Mist War Flag unfolds. It stands strong and unwavering in the midst of strong gales to protect their territory. The sight of the King of the Mist Country leading the charge feels reminiscent of

the past.

The white-armored Knights charge atop the surface of the ice. Carrying their silver spears and the determination within them to slay the giant Dragon, a silver inferno shrouds their nation-guarding sacred swords. The Silver Princess Knight, just like her ancestors, charges forth towards an insurmountable challenge.

“If I am destined to die, then rather than dying as a coward who doesn't dare to do anything on her deathbed, I would rather die valiantly in the midst of a charge.”

For the very first time, the Princess seems to understand the seemingly obstinate family motto recorded in her family and clan’s records. Perhaps, her ancestors charged to their own deaths laughing heartily like that as well.

Even if the evil Dragon before them is formidable and the Princess knows that the difference in their strength would be the cause of her death, for the sake of this momentary honor, she had no regrets!

Hopeless situation? That's probably about right. At this moment, the Hydra is almost done regenerating. By the time he stands up again, it will be doomsday for all life on the surface.

"Hah, interesting. To not know when to give up, you have indeed inherited the nasty temper passed down in the Mist Bloodline. Reyne, if you survive this trial, I will acknowledge you as the true King of Mist."

At this moment, I can't allow the younger generations to look down on me. Thus, using my sword as a crutch, I stand up once more and stagger to Irene, who charges forth alongside me as my wings.

"What? I will lead the charge!"

At my side, there is only myself, whereas following behind Princess Reyne is a group of the Mist Country’s Royal Knights.

They know that they collectively don't mean a thing to the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor who is about to recover his full strength. However, isn't a valiant charge in the midst of despair the kind of glorious death that every Knight seeks?

"No wonder my Lord always says that Knights are a bunch of fools. They are truly a bunch of cute fools... Then, we, as the Law Faction, mustn't allow others to underestimate us as well!"

Behind the group of Knights, Krose, who is already fatigued from casting consecutive spells, is charging along on a streak of lightning, whereas her two 'Flower Guardians'—Diyer and Muse—aren't lagging far behind. One of them stands on her left, while the other stands behind her to guard her.

"In the end, Lord Krose, there are a few words which we’ve suppressed within our hearts for a long time. If we don't say them now, we might never get a chance."

"Then, continue suppressing those words! Cough, Lord Archbishop, I also have some words that I would like to say..."

Let us forget those living treasures, who are still pulling each other back even at the very last moment. At the very least, they fulfilled the vow they made to their comrades and are using their very lives to protect the most beautiful 'fresh flower' in their minds.

However, from the look of astonishment on the face of the flower, she isn't aware of it. It might be better for them to be unable to speak of their intentions. After all, it would definitely end with rejection.

Shaking my head, my mind whirls about to generate ideas on how I could block their advances. Suddenly, a voice sounds by my ear.

"Niang niang, preparation for Plan C is ready. Do we activate it now?"

TL: The way concubines address the queen.

Do you still need to ask! This is regarding the world, what are you playing at! Quickly do it!

"I am waiting for you to save me! Why the hell are you asking for permission? Quickly activate it!"

"Save you? Then my tidbits for the year..."

"I will be paying for your tidbits next year, as well! No matter what conditions you have, I accept them all!!"

Alright, motivation indeed comes with potential profits. The next moment, I hear the sound that I had been waiting for a long time.

"Deng deng deng!"

"Kacha kacha!"

That is the sound of the lock mechanism being unlocked and a gate being opened The stone wall suddenly splits apart, revealing the secret base hidden within. The warships are floating in mid-air, well-prepared and ready to strike at any time. When their bombardment begins, he has already begun his charge.

The supposed Plan C is actually very simple. It only requires Harloys to bring the key down to the underwater base and open it during the crucial moment to launch a two-pronged attack.

Without a doubt, this is the crucial moment. The next moment, under the encirclement of three parties, is a besieging battle of the majority against the minority.

In the secret base, the remaining Mage Tower shoots a dazzling Fireball. In just the first encounter and already the foolishly dozing-away-Lamos's Eye is shot down.

After which, the Mage Tower shoots multiple Fireballs consecutively, whereas the defensive cannons of the secret base blasts over lethal lead cannonballs! At the same moment, the rapid Eagle Assault Warship has already begun its assault on the enemy.

"Shoot the enemy's dragon head! That's its only weakness!!"

My reminder didn't go to waste. In the next moment, after the hoarse shouting of a few Dwarves, the main cannons of all the ships are shifted accordingly.

"Ha? I found some prey!"

After hearing the familiar catchphrase, the main cannon on the warship shoots a perfect arc towards the unguarded final dragon head, exploding it.

Just like in the legends, as long as all of the dragon heads are destroyed at the same moment, the Nine-headed Dragon would truly die for good. Seeing his body, which had regenerated by more than half, dissipating into ashes, I feel the burden in my heart has lifted.

"We've won! We've finally won!"

Chapter 122: Old Friend

In the old movies, the police would always arrive late. The plays and novels about the knight orders in charge of security were the same as well.

In the epics of these legendary heroes, the allies of justice would always only arrive after a battle. It is doubtful whether they had been squatting by the corner of a wall and rushed out to bootlick the victor only after the battle had concluded. Or perhaps, they could have been waiting for an ideal moment to pop out for the spoils of war.

At this moment, the Seafolk army who arrived late had been met with some trouble.

Interfering in a battle between two normal SemiGods would lead to one's death, let alone that the both of them weren't normal SemiGods. Even those who were spectating were at risk and had to remain vigilant at all times. After a few Sea Giants who tried to help had perished to the sharp wind created by the sword and Dragon Breaths, no one was foolish enough to enter the fray and help (commit suicide).

The clash between the Forbidden Spells was earth-shattering. The voice of 'Emperor Yongye' which resounded through the entire city; the mountain-like Hydra who fell to the ground; the apparition of the black skeleton king who covers the sky; the snow and ice of the surroundings; and the radiance from the Dragon Breath. If one could miss the sight and sound of all these, they could very well be deaf and blind.

The fall of the Hydra struck fear in the hearts of the Seafolk. Strictly speaking, this leader of the Seafolk wasn’t considered as a Seafolk. Rather, he was a Sea Monster of the deep sea as well as the beloved pet of the Queen of the Storms.

He only came to help under the will of the Gods. He was caught in the battle out of sheer coincidence and died in it unexpectedly. This was beyond the expectation of the Goddess. This was bound to result in a series of chain reactions. First and foremost, it would be difficult to appease the rage of the Queen of the Storms.

This ambitious Queen of the Storms may not be well-known on the continent, but her reputation had spread far and wide in the ocean and among the fishermen. She is famous for her violent temper, being irrational, her fickle-mindedness and unforgiving nature.

The Queen of the Storms had been eyeing the Avenger Obligation for a long time. Her propensity to hold grudges made her a troublesome foe to deal with. If it wasn't for the fact that she just took a heavy blow from destroying her own avatar, she might have already sent down another avatar to seek vengeance.

For the Seafolk who would then become victims of her rage, capturing the offender and offering him as a blood tribute would be a wise decision. However, it was a pity that due to the clash of the Forbidden Spell, the flow of the river had been stopped. The surrounding flood had been reduced to ice, causing the Seafolk distress, given that most of them were unable to leave the water.

After all, they are the sons and daughters of the sea, not children of the snow. Those who were in proximity to the clash had been sealed solid in the water, while those who were a distance away found it unbearable to step foot onto the layer of ice.

In response to the current summer season of Auland, the Seafolk who came are mainly those from warmer regions. Being cold-blooded and thinly-clothed, they were exceptionally sensitive to the weather. On the other hand, the Water Elementals were capable of passing through the frozen river. However, the moment they came into contact with the core regions of the clash, they were frozen solid in large groups from the overwhelmingly low temperature.

This is the result of a Forbidden Spell which had a low level of completion. If the complete Ice Aeon were to show itself to the world, the City of Rain would immediately go to waste, leaving a mark in history. After all, the previous few appearances of the Ice Aeon had caused the destruction of some certain cities or a certain kingdom, all having been recorded as important historical events.

Even though it is only to this extent this time, I still feel a splitting headache from it. The re-emergence of this trademark Forbidden Spell means that the news of the reappearance of Emperor Yongye would soon spread across the entire world. Perhaps, the only thing that could be refuted would be that it wasn't Emperor Yongye himself but his successor. However, one thing for sure was that the words of the Hydra were bound to bring about new trouble.

Of course, it was also thanks to this incomplete Ice Forbidden

Spell that I didn't freeze myself over and am not bathing in the River Styx at this moment.

【Your contribution for the hunt of the SemiGod Nine-headed Dragon Emperor Fioras is 89%, above the 80% basic requisite. Given the vast difference between the Hydra and you and the perfect elimination of the other party, you have been awarded with 16489 Fate Points, rankless Nine-headed Dragon Heart x1, Legend-tier Nine-colored Tear Stone x1, Legend-tier material Hydra Perfect Dragon Scale x4, Epic-tier material Hydra Superior Scales x32, Epic-tier material Hydra Tendon x7...】

【Due to the successful hunting of a SemiGod giant Dragon, you have been awarded with the honorary title 'Dragon Slayer'. After equipping the title, your damage against all Dragons and the descendants of Dragons will be increased by 10%, the effectiveness of the Race Talent of Dragons will be reduced by 20% and your noteworthiness to the Dragon Tribe will be increased by 200%. This title can be upgraded. —— System Notice: To upgrade the title, the weakest Dragon you would have to hunt is Myth-tier Dragons. However, there would be additional bonuses if you hunt Immemorial Dragons.】

I ignore the vile advice of the System. Immemorial Dragons are capable of easily subduing Ancient Dragons like Molly. I would think twice before letting myself be in their bad graces even back then, when I was at my pinnacle. Although this is a hard-to-come-by title that comes with buffs, the difficulty in upgrading it is much too high.

Looking at the numerous rewards I obtained via the System Notice, I am quite satisfied with the gains.

As expected of an ancient being who had lived through countless ages, the Hydra was indeed filled with treasures. As for the 89% contribution, I was initially taken aback upon seeing it. However, when I thought about it, it did make sense. If I didn't contribute to the battle, this dragon hunt could not have ended in a victory in any other way.

Before the clash between Forbidden Spell, the Hydra, who was adept in regeneration, was already in his complete state. If it wasn't for my Ice Aeon, the Hydra would not have tore away six of its heads to gain control of his Dragon Breaths to counter it. The clash between the Forbidden Spells had severely wounded him, destroying another two of his heads. Only then was it possible for the Hydra, who only had a single head left, to be killed.

The negative debuffs as a result of the aftermath of having his source of water frozen proved much more effective than the Dragon Sealing Chains, locking the Hydra's regeneration ability directly. He was then forced to use the final remaining bit of his life force to forcefully regrow his physical body, which revealed the chance for the Dwarves to destroy him in the end.

While the risks were great, the rewards were incredible as well. Previously, I was on the verge of tears while looking at the zero skill points remaining on the System panel, as well as the messy Ice Magic skill tree which had skill points thrown into it. However, the rewards that I have reaped were sufficient to make up for my losses.

The System might be unreliable, but it still obeys the basic principle of hard work being proportional to reward. It is

impossible for the Sea Monster who doesn't don armor to drop any equipment, thus the System made up for it with a large sum of Fate Points and precious materials.

With these points, I am able to pull myself up into the thirties (Bronze-rank). On the other hand, it seems possible for Reyne to reach Gold-rank... Now that I slightly calculate it, I realised that I have been scammed once again. The difficulty of growth for Reyne is probably a few dozen times easier than me. By the time I reach Gold-rank, she would already be Myth-rank.

【System Notice: The regeneration ability of a Nine-headed Dragon could already cause you so much trouble despite fighting in a non-oceanic battlefield, where it is unable to exert his full prowess, and that after he is fatigued after getting thrashed for more than an hour by the Dragon Slayer. Are you sure that you want to challenge these immortals using your human form? If you're sure, please enable physical body exchange. The System will offer you a great bargain, just 2000 points.】

Of course not, how silly would I have to be to give up the Double Diamond physical body that I worked hard to attain in exchange for a mere unranked human physical body which has significantly lower upper limits.

"Denied, absolutely denied. So what if my growth rate is slow? It is all worth it as long as I grow powerful in the end."

【Warning: The Queen of the Storms has marked you. If there isn't a need, please do not approach coastal areas and, even more so, do not enter the sea. ——Of course, if you insist, you

can try to kill other Sea Monsters and true God's avatars. As long as you are in the sea, I can guarantee you that the rewards will be better than this.】

The Queen of the Storms marking me as a target for vengeance is within my expectations. To tell the truth, given my understanding of that person, it is bizarre for her not to send an avatar now at this very instant. As for challenging the massive Sea Monsters and the Storm Goddess in the sea? My suicide tendencies are not that advanced yet.

【Warning: The reappearance of Emperor Yongye has piqued the attention of the Elven Gods. Please do not draw anymore attention to yourself or enter the Elven Churches. Otherwise, you get it. ——To those vindictive long-ears, the destruction of the Elf Kingdoms seem as though it had just happened yesterday. I wonder if you feel a chill down your back occasionally, as though you have been cursed. Truthfully, your name has been carved on voodoo straw dolls, and they are selling like hotcakes.】

【Warning: The God of Holy Light has decreed for his worshipers to investigate the existence of the Undead Emperor. Once his existence has been verified, God Envoys and Heroic Spirits will be sent to the mortal world to pursue them. ——Due to the onset of the Sacred War, the God of Holy Light has heightened his awareness. It seems that this God Power Regulation System is still in good working condition. However, I believe that you wouldn't really think of challenging the Heroic Spirit Paladins. Don't think that Dragon Slayers are the very pinnacle of Heroic Spirits. In the long annals of history, there are countless heroes. Among them, there are a couple of them whom even true Gods fear.】

【Warning: The War God whom the Beastmen worship, to

your existence, is...

【Warning: The Smiling Sisters, to your existence is...

Should I say that I have had my fair share of radiance? Given my notoriety, the moment I reveal some signs of my existence, the attention of a bunch of big bosses appear on my System Notice, leaving me stunned.

"Darn it, the Sacred War has just barely started and their attention is focused on us? This will be troublesome."

【Notice: The Goddess of Moonlight has expressed some goodwill towards you and gifted Bastlar to the Heroic Spirit Hall of the God of Law. Due to your hard work, Wumianzhe has gained his first Heroic Spirit. Wumianzhe will probably reward you soon. Please work harder in poaching personnel.】

The God of Law Wumianzhe has already became a God Power Regulation System. Going by normal logic, there is a need to reward worshipers who made great contributions to the faith. The rationale behind his action is easy to comprehend. On the other hand, the Goddess of Moonlight didn't get angry at losing a Heroic Spirit. On the other hand, she expressed her goodwill through Heroic Spirit Bastlar. That makes me at a loss.

However, this isn't the moment to be thinking about such stuff. The Ice Aeon that I cast isn't complete and the ground will soon thaw. When the army of Seafolk comes charging in, I would have to start considering what I should inscribe on my tombstone.

We should make use of this opportunity when they had yet to

catch a clear view of us to hide in the secret base. That would be wisest decision at the moment.

When the remaining Eagle Assault Warships landed, the others quickly rushed up the ships. On the other hand, Reyne seems to have some other plans. She rides her mount into the distance and her destination seems to be the fragmented dragon head.

"What is that lass doing?"

Helpless, I could only follow her to take a look. However, the moment I close in on her, I got the shock of my life.

Reyne had rushed to the open wound of the dragon head and was just about to touch the flowing dragon blood.

"You idiot, that cannot be touched! Are you seeking death?"

Frightened by my furious roar, Reyne felt indignant.

"But the knight novels always say that bathing in the dragon's blood would allow one to become impenetrable by any weapons? Furthermore, one would gain absolute strength. It can't be that those books would lie?"

I am a little speechless. I immediately erase the thoughts of allowing her to rapidly advance into Gold-rank. I thought that her performance previously was not bad, but it seems that she is still the same rascal who lacks common sense. The stronger a rascal

becomes, the more trouble they bring you. I better slow down her growth a bit.

"Have you ever thought if those who wrote those novels have seen a true dragon before? That is poisonous blood! It can corrode stones! Do you think you are tougher than a stone?"

"But that person survived! Even now, he is still absorbing dragon blood."

"That person?"

Following the direction where Reyne's finger is pointing towards, a mortally wounded person lied in the midst of the poisonous blood. His current state is terrible, but from the look of the rhythmic motion of his diaphragm, he seems to still be alive.

"Marsolit?"

Yes, that is the Blood Mage Emperor Marsolit, who was treated as a shield for the Hydra. That attack of the Dragon Slayer had attained the very pinnacle of the Concept of Dragon Slaying. Yet, in the midst of doing so, it didn’t pose any additional threat towards targets who were non-dragon. Marsolit, whose chest was pierced through, didn't die on the spot.

Hovering between life and death due to excessive loss of blood, he could only instinctively absorb blood for his survival. At this very moment, the only blood present in this battlefield was the

poisonous blood of the Hydra.

Marsolit is no longer in the form of a human. The right of his body has been corroded by the poisonous blood into disgusting lumps of flesh while the left of his body is frozen in ice. If it wasn't for the frost on his left protecting his heart and various important organs, he would be long dead. Even so, the condition of the left of the face is completely different from the right, creating a sight that compelled one to avert one’s gaze.

If we leave him here like this, he would die eventually. Even if we choose to save him, his body is filled with poisonous blood such that even the best Priest in the whole of Auland would probably be unable to treat him. He would still die in the end. After hesitating for a moment, I make my decision.

"Bring him along. I am probably the only one in the entire world who can save him."

A few minutes later, in the midst of the strong wind and rain, the Eagle Warship flies into the secret base. By the time the Seafolk rush to the scene, the only thing that is left is the gigantic corpse of the Hydra.

Arlodante is a very small neutral country on the continent's southwest. The country consists of only around a dozen cities and most of its population is concentrated in its capital, Arlo. However, no one would think of it as a small country.

The Mages' Country, Country of Magic and Superpower Without City Walls. These are the more well-known titles of Arlodante, as well as facts commonly agreed upon throughout the continent.

This is a heaven for Mages. Not just for the commonly seen Elemental Mages in the continent, but Mages of Divine Art, Seers, Warlocks and Dark Mages are also gathered here. There are also private research facilities for Necromancers and Blood Mages, who are the public enemy of the continent. As long as they don't overdo it, the country's governing body would simply turn a blind eye to them.

Around 1% of its entire population are spellcasters. Even though 90% of them are rookies who can't even be considered as a disciples of magic, compared to the other countries, they have a more than 100 times ratio of Mages that become useful assets.

It is the sacred land of all Mages. By the way, the 2nd generation Roland also trained here previously and even went to school. This is where he met Harloys.

There are nobles in this country, but the nobles do not hold privileges as compared to the civilians. In this country, true authority is held in the hands of the spellcasters.

The atmosphere of academics is very strong here. Countless spellcasters study and grow here and the number of Mage Organisations here are innumerable. Only the wisest and strongest Mage are allowed to possess their personal experiment lab in the

Floating City 'Cloud Tower'.

The true authority over the decision-making of this country belongs to the 18 strongest Mage Organisations in the Cloud Tower. The individual masterminds of these organisations then created a council termed as the 'Truth Symposium'. The name may not sound authoritative, but even the small kids in Arlodante know that the members of the Symposium are the ones who hold true power over the governance of the country.

At his moment, in a hotel in Cloud City, a young man and woman, seemingly a couple, are complaining to one another. Of the two of them, the female is one of the hottest new stars in Arlodante.

"The previous time, it was Battle Mage Hilton from the 'Sword of Order', and this time, it is one of the top ten Mage Mentor of the Red Sea Conference. This is the sixth time this month. Adam, do you intend to bash every single spellcaster in the Cloud Tower at least once?"

"Magaret, it was really an accident. The fool said right in front of me that those who came from the Underground World are a group of barbarians. Thus, I showed him the wrath of barbarians."

"Wait, it's a him? I am talking about Mage Mentor Amelia, she is a female."

"Oh oh oh, I recall now. Yesterday, I drank too much and accidentally kicked a horned Wyrm. To think that little bastard

would dare to bite me... In the end, after I was done thrashing it, I realised that it was someone's Magic Pet. Thus, I got into an argument with its owner."

The expressionless Magaret props up her glasses as a cold glint flashes on it. This was a habitual movement of hers when she was enraged. It is often a premonition that someone is going to meet with misfortune. And so, Adam, who got into trouble, immediately takes a step backwards in fright.

"There is only one person with a Horned Scorpion Dragon in the entirety of Arlo, and that is Great Summoner Fendi from Blue Tower. His mentor is my friend. Adam, tell me the truth, how many fights have you got into this month?"

Facing Magaret's interrogation, Adam seems like a grade schooler who feels embarrassed getting reprimanded after committing a mistake. Adam lowers his head solemnly as Magaret shakes her head in response.

"Silence won't solve the problem. Tell it to me straight, some things would have to be settled sooner or later. I still hold quite a bit of seniority here, so they should probably let it slip on my account. Hmph, given how you would feel embarrassed by this, it seems like you are maturing."

"Wait, I am almost done counting. The one in the bar two nights ago, forty-seven. The one in the restaurant two days ago, forty-eight..."

So, it seems that he didn't lower his head due to embarrassment. He was busy counting with his fingers the number of fights he had got into. Magaret realises that she has underestimated the thickness of Adam's skin once again.

Even though she is almost numb to this after being tortured by the unreliable nature of Roland and Adam in the long period of time they had been together, the Magaret who usually deals with trouble calmly begins choking in anger.

"It has only been seven days this month and you have already fought almost fifty battles! Are you really intending to bash the face of every single spellcaster?! How do you expect me to walk with my head held high like that?"

"Aren't you going to be promoted to a Truth Overseer? It has been spreading furiously throughout the streets and alleys. That is the highest executive of the country, and I am still intending on using your name to feed myself. The man of a Truth Overseer, how impressive it would be when I boast about it to the others."

Truth Overseer is the non-official title for members of the 'Truth Symposium'. Becoming one of the members of the symposium means to become one of the few who holds ultimate authority in Arlodante.

At this moment, the Great Saint who is about to wield ultimate authority has a face of helplessness. She stares fixedly at the man who claims to want to rely on her for his own image, wanting to lash out at him but has no idea where she should start from.

"I refused."

"Ah? Why did you refuse? That is such a pity. I won't be able to eat for free like that."

Despite his words indicating overt regret, Adam's face has a smile which said that he expected it. From the very start, he knew that Magaret would make such a choice.

"In the end, I was dragged down by you bastards. Roland might not be reliable, but the words that he speaks of earnestly has to be taken seriously and carefully. If so many things are to happen in the future, what meaning would there be for me to stay here? Besides, I have already said that which should be said to my old friends. I am already tired of dealing with those petty little problems."

Rejecting the position of ultimate authority in a country is almost equivalent to dumping away a source of trouble. To Magaret, authority is only an obstruction and burden. She would have to spend a large portion of her time on administrative affairs. A Truth Overseer may seem to be a position of great glory, but there isn't too much of a difference between a Truth Overseer and a busy administrative official.

"Three hours ago, the latest information has arrived from east Eich, saying that they have found traces of Emperor Yongye's Forbidden Spell, Ice Aeon, and that they hope for specialists to be sent to ascertain it. There are a few Truth Overseers who view this

information with utmost concern and have sent their trusted aides to investigate the matter."

"Less than half a year has passed and Roland has already stirred up trouble. That is quick. Then, is it considered as my victory?"

Magaret nods her head in frustration. Who would have expected that he would be revealed so swiftly.

On their way here, Magaret made a bet with Adam on whether Roland would be able to stay out of trouble for a year. Apparently, the victory went to Adam, who knew Roland better.

"Un? You have already packed your luggage? Where did you get your news from?"

"Two days ago, I received a letter from that fellow. It contains a bunch of nonsense about how he has been well recently, and how he has been popular among females recently, even finding quite a few beautiful girlfriends. Judging from how the fellow only talked about nonsense, how there isn't even an iota of realism in his bragging, he has obviously met with some trouble lately and requires help. It is rare to see that fellow lowering his head to seek help. Thus, I had been happy these few days and celebrated for a bit."

"Your way of celebration is to beat up passers-by? Forget it, it is all my fault. Bringing you here was a mistake of mine. Anyway, I have finished conveying my messages and it is about time to leave. Right, the one to lead the team to east Eich is Mage Mentor Amelia,

un, the one whom you beat up. We will be travelling along with them."

"That... Can you find another crew? That woman is a little scary."

"You have indeed recalled her, but yet you chose to pretend that you aren't aware of it. What did you do? How did you make the kind Amelia get so angry?"

"... I mocked her pet, saying that it is too weak, incomparable to Roland's. In the end, she said that she wanted to use me as an ingredient for her new creation. Thus, I beat her up."

"If you just mocked her, she probably wouldn’t have been provoked. Even as an ex-Truth Overseer, she is well-known for her amiable temper. As for using you as an experiment ingredient, I can't imagine such words coming from her."

"That... I only mocked her after trying my hands on those little fellows of hers. Who knew that those little fellows are so brittle, falling apart instantly. They are much inferior in comparison to those fellows in the Undead District."

"That is to say, you ruined Amelia's experimental creations? No wonder she is so furious. However, even if just on my account, she wouldn't say such vicious words. Although her field of expertise is a little hard for normal humans to accept, she is third in the 'Mage who I want as my girlfriend' poll. Furthermore, she was already a teacher even when I was still an apprentice. Back then, she was

already well-known for her cordial disposition. No matter what, she doesn't seem like a crazy Mage who would say such words."

After pondering for a moment, a look of realisation appears on Adam's face.

"...Back then, the moment I mentioned that Roland's creations are much stronger than hers, she became very agitated. Afterwards, she immediately started hurling insults. She even shrieked 'Roland? You mean that useless fool who can't even cast Snowstorm? The thief who stole all my research data? The scamming bastard whom I insult ten thousand times every single day?'."

"That Roland? Could it be an overlap in their names?"

"I don't think that there is anyone other than that Roland who can turn a smiling and gentle lady into a frenzied shrieking woman with just his name. Furthermore, I looked through the graduation portraits of that year and I can confirm that it is that Roland."

"Why didn't you say so earlier? If so, it would be hard to reject her. Aren't we bringing Roland trouble this way? As an ex-Truth Overseer, Amelia isn't easy to deal with."

"Heh, how difficult can rejection be? We can just sneak off. Besides, judging from how happily you are smiling, you are probably waiting for him to make a fool of himself."

"Aren't you smiling as well? Are you that happy that you can pull one over on him?"

The two people chat as they walk along the street. Under the setting sun, their shadows extend for a very long distance. In the alley by the side, a female cloaked in a mantle is leaning against the wall, staring at the two of them.

"Indeed, you all know the whereabouts of Roland. I definitely won't let you all get away. This time, I will get my revenge! Darned Roland, darned Roland, darned Roland..."

The stalker-like lady bites on her finger while frenziedly cursing Roland. She is oblivious to the fact that the skin on her finger had torn from the biting and fresh blood is flowing out from the wound. The look of her cursing frenziedly bore no resemblance to what an idol of the crowd would look like. Even the most dangerous and vicious of the witches probably wouldn't be as deranged as her.

"Lord Amelia?"

Amelia pauses for a moment before turning around. At this very moment, her face is one of a gentle and kind mentor.

"Good evening, students. Are you all here for a walk as well?"

From a certain viewpoint, her skill in changing faces has already reached the pinnacle. When the male students left happily with

her signatures, she turns around and her face contorts back into resembling a frenzied witch once again.

"Darned Roland, darned Roland, darned Roland..."

Chapter 123: Competition

Even though the secret base was locked down, its interior was still bright as though it were daytime. In addition to the activation of the illumination tools, the Mage Towers were also in operation, brightening everything in their surroundings.

At this moment, an anachronistic event is occurring on a stretch of flat land.

"Handball, handball in the restricted area! Referee, this is a penalty kick. It is definitely a penalty kick! Hell, ignoring me. Did you accept a bribe again?!"

Diyer is full of resentment. If the referee is not going to call a foul on such an obvious handball in the restricted area, how could this match go on?

"Ha, you actually dare to howl at the referee, red handkerchief (Substitute for the red card)!"

The gleeful Yingou whips out an old handkerchief that’s painted red and waves it towards Diyer.

"Friendship comes before victory. Such obnoxious players and such a fair referee. I praise you, the fair Goblin referee," Beifeng declares with a calm expression. However, if he wasn't the one who committed the handball foul in the first place, perhaps his words would be much more convincing.

Enraged by Beifeng's words, Diyer whips out his staff in preparation to start a battle against him. However, his teammates swiftly stop him.

"It is normal for Goblins to accept bribes. On the contrary, it would be abnormal for them to not accept bribes. It’s because we already know that he’s been bribed that we don't have to worry about him extorting us. Furthermore, it's not like you don't know how greedy that lad, Yingou, is. Since he accepted the money, he’s obviously already thrown his pride away. If you get into an argument with him, he would only make use of this opportunity to expel more of our players out. If that happens, we will lose for sure."

"Yesterday, didn't you all say that we were going to send in money too? Why is that fellow even more against us today?"

"That’s because we only sent in 2,000 gold coins. But the Gentlemen National Football Team (Simplified as National Team) sent in 6,000. Given that his eyes twinkle at the mere sight of money, how else would that Goblin referee?”

"Then why did our lord allow that Goblin to referee? Can't we swap him out for an impartial one?"

"I have also asked our lord. Lord Roland said that Goblins have short legs, making them unable to play the game properly, so neither team was interested in employing them into their lineup. It is possible to swap the referee, but that’s as long as we have

sufficient players. Are you willing to accept players whose knees don't even reach the height of the ball?"

"...Actually, they can try becoming the goalkeeper. Oh, let's just forget it. We'd just be laughingstocks."

"Hehe, indeed. That'd be even more ridiculous. Even if they jumped, they probably wouldn't be able to touch the ball.'

Anyway, it was only for entertainment. The price for losing was just some household chores. The two people chuckle without thinking too deeply into the matter. To the side, Yingou, Kabala, and the other Goblins' faces darken upon hearing their words, as rage well up within them.

"Insulting the referee, foul! Red handkerchief!"

"Red handkerchief your head, we're already off-field! Are there any football rules that make it possible to foul someone for chatting?"

Un, you're not seeing things. This is a football competition between an allied union of the Law Faction and the East Mist Communal Country (Simplified as France National Team) and the Gentlemen National Football Team (Simplified as National Team). Again, you're not seeing things. These simplifications were my brainchildren. I only wanted to make use of this opportunity to vent the frustration I had been piling up in the depths of my heart for many years.

TL: Law (律法)| National/ Country (国)| Thus, when simplified, 法国 -> France.

It’s been a month since we started hiding in the secret base. There's sufficient food and potable water here, but staying a long period of time in the restricted space of this chamber made the group, which was used to being carefree, uncomfortable. The morale of the group was low, and thus, it was time for a sports event that could be used to vent one’s excessive vigor.

Thus, I 'invented' football, basketball, badminton and similar ball-related sports. However, the only sport accepted by the group is football, which has the highest level of difficulty. After all, basketball and such are too dependent on one's innate talent. Furthermore, the various races are much too different, making it impossible for them to play on the same field.

For example, in basketball, there would inevitably be physical clashes between the players. In such cases, then the races blessed with strong, physical bodies had the greater advantage. Furthermore, even the Giants would be dunking with their heads lowered, as well as the Goblins and Dwarves who can’t even see the net even with their heads raised. The reason why football is accepted by the masses is because everyone isn't used to kicking with their foot. Thus, they were all on the same level.

Even so, there many kinds of messy scenarios that still kept on happening.

"The heck, Beifeng. You’re really getting too hooked on it! Can't you just follow the rules and use your legs to kick the ball!"

The seemingly honest man smiles faintly.

"Excluding the hands, the rules allow players to use their other body parts to hit the ball. Tails fit such a description. How about you try using your tail as well?"

With an honest smile, Beifeng's face is full of astonishment, seemingly doubtful as to why the opponents weren't using their tails.

"I’m a human, why would I x have a tail! You #%……%￥%!" I have no idea how many unlucky fellows have been provoked into hurling abuse at the captain of the National Football Team, Beifeng.Herault.

Alright, this here is the crux of the problem. The rules for football played between humans aren't suitable for foreign races. Thus all kinds of bugs crop up during the game.

However, should I say that the simplified name, National Football Team, was used very aptly? Leading the National Football Team, Beifeng and his crew are experts at searching for bugs and loopholes. All kinds of messy tricks continuously appear on the field, as they cross the limits of decency over and over again.

The two teams have exchanged blows for more than thirty matches, but the France National Team has only won five. The remaining ones were won by the National Football Team through their schemes.

Of course, bugs that appear on the field will be fixed when the game ends. In a sense, this is also a way of forcing the National Football Team, who is lacking in players, to search for new loopholes in the rules.

"Insulting the opponent, red handkerchief!"

After accepting their money, the Goblins diligently fulfill their responsibility and immediately calls a foul towards their opponent.

Alright, at least he’s the third unlucky fellow to have been sent out today. The current situation turns into an 11v19 match.

What, the number of players isn't correct? Initially, we played 11v11, but that group of Gentlemen was simply much too savage. It’s impossible to play without an additional ten players or so in the other team. Even then, under all kinds of underhanded tricks, the France National Team was only able to win a handful of matches, while the National Football Team continues their winning streak.

What? This is open corruption? After so many years, watching the competition of the National Football Team is just like a penalty game. Since we’re at a foreign world now, let's just continue on with the open corruption for a while longer.

Sigh, when can the National Football Team get into the world cup competition again? I don't expect them to win, but it should at least end in a draw so that we can celebrate it a little.

"You want to win? In the afterlife!"

Just when I’m drifting off into wonderland, the Dwarf Lowens's hoarse voice pulls me back to cruel reality.

Thus, I start my revenge without any hesitation.

"Ice Wall!"

My ice sword stabs into the ground, and an ice wall rises up in front of Lowens, who is dribbling the ball. Pang dang, he crashes into the wall, and the dragon-skin football smashes into his face before he falls violently onto the ground.

In the rules that I came up with, direct aggression or any hindering of opponents is off-limits. However, the creation of a wall on the ground isn't. Furthermore, the one I’m dealing with isn't an opponent.

"Bastard Roland, we’re from the same side! Why the heck are you blocking me!"

Perhaps it’s due to Lowens's incredibly buff body that allows the Dwarf to surpass the disadvantage of having short limbs and thus, become a member of the team.

Furthermore, the words that he shouted are the very same,

making me both distressed and depressed.

I originally intended to join the human's faction, yet why did they insist that I join the Gentlemen's side? Furthermore, they even restricted my actions, preventing me from using underhanded methods and forcing me to become a goalkeeper who’s unable to move freely. Does this mean that rather than a human, I am more of a Gentleman?

"That, I didn't do that. Look at Reyne on the opposite side, she’s also an Aurora Knight. She must be the one responsible for it."

"What are you going on about! How could that lass, Reyne, be so despicable? She’s even using a three-tier wall that caters to one's height. Knocking on the knees first, before the abdomen and finally the head! My waist..."

While the teammates of the National Football Team are busy arguing, the ball has been picked up by Casio, who is playing the role of a forward. In an instant, tension can be seen on the faces of the France Football Team members.

Recently, the rules have undergone a series of changes, limiting all kinds of supernatural abilities and race talents. However, one thing that cannot be limited is Casio's four legs.

That agile Centaur is a true sharpshooter and a nomad. Previously, in order to limit him, the France National Team came onto the field with a Knight order, forcefully turning football into polo.

However, this kind of play is unfair to the other players. Thus, after that single victory, horse riding has been added to the list of banned actions in the rule book.

Of course, absolute fairness is impossible to achieve. Regardless of whether Casio is able to run faster than a war horse, it’s highly improbable to expect a Centaur to be able to walk on two legs.

At this moment, Casio fully expresses his ability as a fantasista. After a few feints, he manages to get past the defenders through a series of high-speed maneuvers and soon, he approaches the scoring region, about to earn another easy goal.

"AHHHHHHHHHH!"

Indeed, young men do get complacent after being praised a few times. The moment I finish my words, he trips on his front hooves and falls to the floor.

"That bastard dug a pit to trap horses! To think that he even prepared a rope to trip me, you all are too vile! Do you all think that this is a battlefield? Where is your sportsmanship?"

At the back of the field, I fondle my nose, not saying a single word. It was something I thought of when chatting with Reyne yesterday night, but I didn't expect that they would really carry it out.

"Looks like rule number 643 is also confirmed—the banning of any tampering of the football field beforehand."

Around forty to fifty new ways to cheat would appear in every single game. Presently, our football rule book is already as thick as a telephone directory. I reckon that if they continue on this way, by the time the final edition of the rule book has been confirmed, it would probably be large enough to fill a whole bookshelf by itself.

"Heh, by then, when new players join the game, we'd first have a written examination, banning all players who score less than 60 points from entering the field. After the written examination, we'll test them on their ability to dribble, making turns and carrying out underhanded tricks, one item at a time. Before they can even pass the examination, they'd probably be so pissed off that they'd be tempted to murder the examiner. After passing the examination, a C-class license will be given. If you're able to survive on the football field for ten years, you'll be promoted and given a B-class license. Additionally, football stars will be able to exchange it for an A-class license."

Of course, I can limit the rules to state what can be done rather than what cannot be done. However, there isn't much point to it. Anyway, this is for entertainment purposes, and it's much more interesting this way.

Furthermore, it seems that they've already treated football as a battle of wits. The true way of winning is to come up with underhanded methods to trip their opponents. What used to be a pure battle of physical prowess has become an integrated sport in which players compete over both physical prowess and

intelligence. I can't wait to see how football will evolve in this foreign world.

"No matter what it becomes, at least it’ll be much better than homicide tennis and table tennis."

Cold sweat drenches my back the moment I recall the past two failures. I had already limited what the players were able to do in those two sports, thus sealing a large portion of the loopholes that could be exploited. However, the sports apparently evolved in a bizarre direction.

"Since I can only serve in the way the rules dictate, I will put my full strength into it. Prepare yourself—White Whale Serve!"

The female Aurora Knight’s serve is elegant, and the Snow Giant transformation adds great force to it. However, after seeing the shattered metal tennis ball, it seemed that if her serve hadn't been off, someone might have died on the spot.

"Hmph, it’s time for me to show you what true skills are. Look, Disappearing Magic Ball! There is only one true ball in the midst of thousands of golden balls!"

Golden balls, your head! Those are obviously countless arrows shot by a golden bow. What do you mean by there’s a true one in its midst? The main problem here is the countless tennis balls on the tennis court! You disappear, Casio!

"Prepare yourself! The saber severs the physical body, the heart splits the soul. Razor Serve!"

Do you think that it’s a razor just because you said that it’s a razor? Where is your ball? I can only see sword qi! Do you think that other people won't notice it just because you’re using a racket to create jian qi? I know that move, too. Look, Whirlwind Cut Serve, let's see if you can survive this!

It’s fortunate that it’s a special ball created using dragon skin. Otherwise, it would have been reduced to powder just from their brute strength. Very quickly, no one played these two games anymore. After all, other than the few perverts, everyone cherished their own lives.

I learned from this lesson. If the rules dictate everything too rigidly, the players would only be able to increase the force behind their serves and returns. In the end, each return would be even more bizarre and heavier than the previous one. It’d just be a matter of time before someone died.

"Homicide tennis or whatever, let's just drop it and focus our attention on cheating. This should be safer for the players and the audience."

However, reality has already proven that safety is relative. When forced into a corner, Giant's Leg Bone and Nashor's Tooth will start appearing on the battlefield. Suarez's fang and Suarez's claws are also common visitors on the field. Nevertheless, everyone is still interested in the game, which shows that this bizarre version of football still has room for development.

"Perhaps it might even make it to the Country of Mages and a bunch of Mages could ride brooms in midair to play the game. Then, there can be someone responsible for smacking opponents off their brooms. Un? Somehow, it seems familiar. I think a foreign wizard has already invented it. I think it's called... Quidditch!"

While I'm busy recalling the memories of the past, a France National Team member has dribbled the ball forward, and a knight shoots with great force.

"Ice Wall!"

My ice sword stabs into the ground once more, and the entire goal is blocked by an ice wall. The enemy's kick is unable to send the ball through, and it's deflected back.

This is clearly an act of cheating. Naturally, this method of creating objects in front of the goalpost to hinder the ball will be banned afterward and can only be used once.

"Rule number 644. The banning of the tampering of the football field's geography. Damn it, one less loophole to exploit."

Although I'm internally depressed due to the fewer loopholes to exploit, I smile brightly at the opponents so as to suppress their morale and confidence. However, in the next moment, a lightning strike destroys my ice wall.

"Ice Wall is a 4-circle magic spell. He doesn't have much mana, so it’s impossible for him to cast it too many times. Don't give up, push on!"

Krose's voice invigorates the morale of the entire team. However, I frown. Naturally, it’s not because of the youths who are cheering loudly before me.

"Rule number 645. The banning of off-field members from interfering with the field. To get your cheering squad to help, this is too much."

Wearing a short skirt, Krose is pushed onto the position of the cheering team. However, all along, she has been hoping to get on the field.

At this moment, Reyne has already dribbled the ball to my front. However, I had no intention of blocking her advance.

"Aiyo! I’m in pain! My tail has been bent from the impact!"

Yes, the reason why I’m not at all worried is because of my golden defender—Beifeng.Herault.

With him around, scoring is no longer a competition of one's physical abilities. The first thing you have to deal with is his endless, thick-skinned underhanded tricks.

This time, just by having his tail stepped on (I realized that he intentionally placed his tail under the person's foot), the fellow lies down on the field, puts on an act, then...

"Red handkerchief!" How could the bribed Yingou miss out on such an opportunity? A red handkerchief once again changes the entire situation.

The presence of this referee is simply too strong. The boos from each side of the field pierce into the heavens.

"Rule number 646, if the other party strongly objects, the spectators can vote to enable the substitution of referees."

After a series of messing around with one another, the football match finally reaches its last moments. The National Football Team is leading by 30:9 (You didn't see wrongly, it’s much easier to score in this messy game than in conventional football games.)

"It’s time to end it. If we don't, the France National Team's goals will reach the double digits."

"Referee, we want to change players! I’ll be going off-field for Clint's entry!"

The moment those words are said, the hyped up crowd immediately turns silent. When the giant figure enters the field, the surrounding crowd collectively takes a few steps back.

After all, he caused quite an impact when he walked onto the field a week ago.

Back then, when I shouted, 'The crucial moment is here. Everyone, charge! Kill them!', that fellow just presses a button and boom boom, the entire field and all the players on it were sent flying.

Although he did control the quantity of gunpowder properly and no one was injured by the explosions, the chili powder, and pepper that were mixed in it still brought about excruciating pain to those caught in it.

After the smoke clears, most people were plagued with red eyes and coughed for two to three days. At the time, Clint was beaten up to the point his face swelled up like a pig’s head. He is also demoted from a key player to a substitute.

I only found out after the matter that it was because of me saying that the football field is like a battlefield and that we have to prepare in advance. That fellow took my words seriously and actually made preparations as though it were a battlefield.

A night before, he dug several holes in the field and filled it with over nine hundred miniature Goblin explosives. Fortunately, he designed the explosions in a such a profound way that no one was severely injured. Even so, the competition was placed on hiatus for three days, and quite a few spectators were caught in it.

Even though explosives have been clearly banned from the field,

his hulking figure undoubtedly reminds everyone of the tragedy that happened.

"Clint, I will leave it to you. Destroy them!"

The person Clint substitutes is me. His hulking figure makes him suitable to be a goalkeeper. However, the truth is that Clint doesn't know how to defend the goalpost. The reason I substituted him in isn't for him to defend the goalpost either. At this moment, my primary goal is to quickly escape and find a safe spot.

"Don't worry. This time, I didn't bring any explosives..."

"Boom!"

His lie is exposed in two seconds. The unlucky Diyer was sent flying.

"Boom!"

The second bomb was in the spectator stands. How could the spectators remain interested in watching the match after that? All of them, including the players, scatter and run in all directions. Under the multiple sounds of explosions, with various players being blasted around in the background, the football match ends prematurely as usual.

The next day, the drama-like ending of the football match is still the hottest topic of conversation. The figure of the sinner who

hangs upside down on the football field becomes the target of contempt for the masses.

"Hmph, it’s all thanks to that bastard that I lost all my money."

"What did you bet? The victory of the France National Team? Then, you really deserve to lose."

"No, the National Football Team is too shameless. As long as underhanded tricks are still allowed, the France National Team, even with their overwhelming numbers, can't possibly win. I only bet that the France National Team would score ten or more goals."

"I also bet on that. It was so close, just one more goal. It’s such a pity! However, it seems that there are a lot of people who chose to bet that as well. The results made them so enraged, they’re on the verge of exploding."

"You all don't get it. This time, my bet is on Clint blasting away the entire field. In the end, I was spot on! It’s a ten times payout!"

"The heck, to think you would even get that spot on. You’re really incredible. However, is such a bet allowed as well?"

"You don't say. There’s even a 'Suarez's fang' option. As long as a biting incident occurs on the field, it’s considered as a win. Previously, someone won quite a sum betting on it. This time, I also chose to bet on this one. It is a pity that I was off."

"Impressive, to think someone would dare to bet on such a minuscule possibility and even win. However, that ten times payout for an explosion on the football field seems to be unexpectedly low."

"Indeed, it seems like there's a fellow who placed great stakes on this option. If I'm not wrong, he seems to have also bet on the 'An explosion closure before the France National Team can score 10 goals'. He single-handedly won 90% of the stakes, which caused the payout rate to be lowered..."

In a certain pitch black room, the fortunate ones who won the majority of the stakes, stare at the mountain of gold coins before them and laugh maniacally.

"Stop laughing, it's time to split the spoils!"

I survey the surroundings. My accomplices, Yingou, Beifeng, and Reyne, are all here. Their eyes are filled with a thirst for the profits.

"Yingou, here is your portion. A fifth of it. You've worked hard for the referee work and the preparations for the explosives."

Yingou happily collects the money pouches. To a Goblin, nothing brings greater happiness than counting gold coins.

"Let's continue working together. We will make big money together!"

I nod my head with a smile. I didn't intend to tell him that due to him going overboard on the field, his rights as a referee have been stripped from him. The next time, the one sitting beside me to split the spoils may very well be the Goblin Prince Kabala.

"Beifeng, here's yours. A fifth of the lump-sum. You did well on the field, but..."

"I understand. I won't forget Brother Clint, who took the blame. As the elder brother, I have to value our brotherhood, otherwise, how else can I convince the crowds. Leave the aftermath to me, I will make sure that Brother Clint will be satisfied with the ending."

Although I had no idea when this person had become the publicly recognized leader of the Gentlemen, I still nod my head at his words. In a sense, so long as it’s something that doesn't concern his hobbies, the cunning Beifeng is a reliable ally. His actions are swift and nimble, and he is much more trustworthy than anyone else.

"Reyne, a twentieth. Be more serious the next time you kick. Your expressions and actions are much too fake. We almost got exposed, did you know that?"

"Brother Roland, didn't we agree on a fifth?"

"You fool, what use is there for a kid to have her hands on so much money? I will help you take care of it and pass it to you when you grow up."

"Oh, alright."

Perhaps the princess was just joining in for the fun of it. Despite being exploited, she didn't get angry in the slightest.

"Oh right, Brother Roland, do you know that Big Sister Kelly made a bet with me as well?"

"Hm?"

"She said that you would definitely confiscate my portion through the reason that children should not spend money extravagantly."

"Heh, she sure understands me well... No, that's not right. Do you think that your Big Brother Roland is such a person?"

Suddenly, I realize that something is amiss.

"Wait, how did Kelly know about this?"

"Hehe, it’s as you’ve said. My expression was too fake, and I got exposed." Knocking a fist on her head, Reyne playfully sticks out her tongue.

The moment she finishes her words, Beifeng and Yingou grab their money and prepare to sneak off. But before they can leave,

the door suddenly opens.

"As I expected! Lord, you, you are really unbelievable! When I first heard of it, I thought that someone was framing you. How can you call yourself an oracle of the God of Law like this!"

Krose's face is filled with sorrow and shock, as though seeing her own child walking down a twisted path.

"The fortune that Momo saved up with much difficulty... It’s you again, you evil Roland! But as long as Momo is allowed to hug little Rolo to sleep tonight, I will let it slide. Hehe, Momo promises that she won't do anything. Really! At most, I will only remove his clothes a little..."

Momo, wipe your saliva before you continue speaking! What do you mean by doing nothing? I would be truly foolish if I trusted your words.

"Little Roland. Hehe, to think you would dare to lead Reyne astray. Did you forget the ways of your Big Sister Kelly? Big Sister Kelly definitely isn't angry just because she lost money."

That, Big Sister Kelly, I will refund you the amount you have lost. Don't smile at me in that manner, you are scaring me.

"My armor. The Missilor mithril alloy full body armor that I almost lost my life to obtain. Lord, can you return it to me?"

The door has been blocked by angry debtors. There are familiar looks of anger on familiar faces. After lowering my head in contemplation for a moment, I make a declaration.

"One must remain rational when watching football. Gambling will ruin one's entire life, and I mean it! Furthermore, humans live to fulfill their greed, so it is impossible for me to refund you all. Right, Yingou and Beifeng are about to leave, do not let them escape. Finally, please do not hit my face, I still have to meet someone tomorrow."

【Rule number 647. The personnel related to the football competition aren't allowed to place bets on it. Rule number 648. The greedy Goblins are not allowed to serve as referees, and the cunning Roland is not allowed to join in the competition! Goblins and Roland are permanently banned from gambling in football competitions!】

Chapter 124: Envy

After playing around, what comes next is the urgent daily work. There is an even more important reason for us to stay in the enclosed and small secret base.

This is the cradle of the future super weapon of the Auland Empire, Air Fleet. Just from the facilities, their technology, and the expertise of the craftsmen and engineers, they are the pinnacle of the entire continent.

Based on the initial plan, the Borealis should be capable of floating within two weeks. However, it would only be capable of flying then.

Even though there is a large difference between the completed product and the semi-completed product, due to the existence of the contract, we could only quickly find other spare parts to finish the work on time. Of course, due to the difference in the foundations of the industries between both countries, it would be best if the construction of the ship is completed here.

Due to the invasion of the Seafolk, a variable popped up in the building phase of the contract which unexpectedly gave us the sufficient time we need. If we don't make full use of it, it would be too much of a pity. Thus, the moment we entered the secret base, I made an order to complete the construction of the Borealis in full scale and to the highest possible quality seeing as we have the time to do that.

"Poor working conditions will only cause the workers to feel resentment and hatred to their employers. They will think of ways to circumvent their responsibilities. On the other hand, a joyful working condition is not only beneficial to the worker's morale and efficiency, it can also bring about inspiration that could possibly improve the end product in ways you never expected.

Thus, in order to allow everyone to work and live here in ease, I thought of ways to improve the working conditions here. For example, I raised the standards of the food and drinks here. I organised cultural performances, football, other conditions and such. In fact, for the food, I even secretly sneaked out to fish.

With Tracy's Song of the Tides, the Seafolk are probably confused over where their fish schools are. Even if they were able to deduce that someone was hunting down their fish, they would only think of the culprit as one of the other tribes.

The effects of these entertainment activities are excellent. After all, to the residents of this world, entertainment is something that is sorely lacking. The only flaw of my plan is that I seem to have gone overboard. The engineers are drowning in those entertainment opportunities and are unable to focus their attention to the work at hand.

However, soon with a large group of Undead beings under the command of the recovered engineer, as well as the assistance of the Gentlemen and Knights, our progress went faster than we have planned.

I didn't make many changes to the original ship design. After all,

this isn't my field of expertise. However, towards the weapons system on the ship, I stated my intentions.

"8 Mage Towers and 33 cannons? How is that enough? Give me 16 Mage Towers and 64 cannons! No, I want 32 Mage Towers and 100 cannons!"

"There isn't sufficient resources? Rest easy, I have my own plans. There isn't sufficient space? Don't you know how to add a cannon on top of a cannon?! Build a small cannon tower in between two cannon towers? Don't worry too much about the symmetry of the ship. What we need is more cannon towers and more cannons!"

"Remember this, you rookie engineers, don't be overly obsessed with outer appearance and ornaments, focus your intelligence on how you could increase the number of cannons and the cannon caliber! Come, chant with me! More is beauty, massive is magnificent, caliber is justice and cannon towers are the way to go! The weak RPG, go and die 300 times!"

"What? You all don't know what is RPG? That refers to fools who ride on their own gunpowder and blast themselves out as a cannon ball."

Alright, currently, the spreading of my teachings of more cannon towers has been going pretty smoothly. At least in the recent days, as the number of cannon towers on the Borealis increases. The ship is getting more and more deformed but in exchange, a different kind of beauty could be seen from it. More and more engineers are starting to appreciate this different kind of beauty.

While working, there are already some engineers who are shouting, "The billions of stars and billions of cannon towers. If there isn't cannon towers, then there is nothing!", "All of the cannon towers are equal, but there are some cannon towers who are more equal than the others!", "I praise you, the almighty many cannon towers."

However, there are some of them who weren't inspired by the teachings.

"... As long as we are able to solve the basically unsolvable problem of limited energy, it is not like I am unable to understand the modification of the cannons. However, there is really no need for some of the additional work. If we exclude the additional procedures required for the ornaments that you added in, we would have long finished the construction."

The chief engineer of the Borealis, Piacenza, is a rather conventional old scholar. He is unable to comprehend the edit proposal that I added in at the last moment's notice.

Ornamental procedures? Indeed, going by the mainstream route for shipbuilding, stitching the valuable dragon scales and dragon skin onto the boat and inserting the one-of-a-kind mystical magic gemstone into the core of the ship, other than flaunting one's wealth, doesn't have much uses. To him, it seems like a non-expert is trying to guide an expert in their own field. In the eyes of the experts, trouble would soon appear due to these additional procedures.

It is true that I am not building a boat though, I don't even know the fundamentals to build one.

"Undead Creation."

From a certain viewpoint, I have been treating it as a theoretical and rational scientific field. Just like how the western doctors of the foreign world dissect corpses to understand the functions of the human organs, the Necromancers of this world also start to understand corpses from dissection. They view that humans are a series of spare parts (organs) placed together.

In that world, there are already organ transplants, human reformation, human cloning and multiple other technologies. However, in this world, due to the existence in magic, a rookie Necromancer is even more crazed than the craziest scientists and surgeons. There is absolutely no difficulty whatsoever in transplanting an organ. It isn't that difficult to pile together a group of spare parts to stitch together a human.

After all, a surgeon has to consider whether that person is capable of surviving the operation whereas a Necromancer is able to make do with both the living and the dead. This is where the two differ from one another. As Necromancers realised the importance of the soul, they came up with the simple equation of 'life = physical body + soul'. Then, without any fear or restrictions, they are able to challenge the authority of the creator with no one going crazy. On the other hand, if a surgeon were to dissect a human into multiple spare parts, ignoring the fact of whether the person is able to be resuscitated when he is put back together, if the news were to leak, he would probably be treated like a murder

suspect the next day.

If an analogy has to be made, then it would be just like the hardware and the software of a computer. Necromancers are able to split life into two portions where the physical body is the hardware and the soul is the software. As long as the physical body is able to move under the will of the soul in the end, then the process and whether the physical body and soul is compatible with one another isn't important at all.

Thus, similar to those who frenziedly pursue DIY computers and work to come up with all kinds of weird computers, to the Necromancers, as long as there are souls and physical bodies, it is possible for them to play with it as they like. After going through countless eons of trial and error, the number of Undead Creations is innumerable. Thus, a superior physical body and a powerful soul are the most beloved experimental objects for every Necromancer.

"Defiling life and Gods? The only difference between us and the Gods are that they are much more experienced and advanced than us. However, we will improve and one day, we will create something that will surpass them."

The arrogant Necromancers declared so and worked hard towards the goal. As the most famous Undead Creation Specialist in recent times, my Undead Creation Study has a new element infused into it —— Undead Evolution Theory.

Once the stiff and dead physical body has taken shape, it would be hard for it to evolve by itself. The stagnancy of its form will cause its strength to become fixed. This is the reason why it is easy

for Undead Creations to hit a bottleneck, although it isn't impossible for them to overcome the bottleneck.

My solution to it is to merge a soul completely together with a physical body before modifying the creation through the soul. Afterwards, I will use overwhelming emotions and desires to drive the soul towards its evolution.

Ah, Dang (Gluttony), Omar (Pride), Bastian (Wrath) and Harloys (Greed). The reason why they are able to evolve continuously is due to their powerful and fixated soul.

The core of the theory may be simple, but it isn't a simple task to accomplish it. I can say proudly that my Seven Deadly Sins are the only Undeads who are capable of continuous evolution and I am the only one who holds the key to the technology.

Alright, after saying so much, most people should be able to guess what I am about to do.

Yes, I might not be able to modify a ship body design. Thus, I intend to turn the Borealis into a living super Undead.

The precious dragon skin and dragon scales on the deck and the side of the ships may look like extravagant and pointless ornaments. However, they are the tools required for me to summon a soul. As for whether the interception of the Hydra's soul will cause the Queen of the Storm's wrath... Since I have already offended her, it doesn't make a difference whether I go a step further or not. Besides, it is probably impossible for her to identify

the culprit as me.

Of course, there isn't much point to it if I could only summon the soul. The intelligence of Sea Monsters isn’t high and a summoned dead soul would tend to just be the fragments of the once large soul. This will result in severe side effects to the Undead Creation. To put it simply, not only will the Undead possess low intelligence, they might even go berserk. Thus, the soul is unusable until further work is done to it.

Thus, I intend to attach an 'operating system' to it, an equally powerful soul.

"Marsolit, are you ready?"

"Yes, Lord Roland. Everything is set to go."

Following my orders, the voice of a young male resounds to and fro the deck. From the moment the Blood Mage Emperor absorbed the poisonous blood of the Hydra, he was fated for death. Making use of the time when the ice is still sustaining his life, I communicated with him.

There is still a wish he has yet to accomplish and he is willing to roam the world with the identity of a semi-dead being to see it finished. As the price of saving him, if I am able to maintain the wholeness of the soul and grant him sufficient strength for his vengeance, then he is 'willing' to serve me for a century. Furthermore, if I were to assist him in fulfilling his wish, this service would go on indefinitely.

"Dragon Hunter Deimos has killed my daughter and my wife, so I want to seek vengeance on him and those behind him! He is already dead? No, the one who died is Deimos the Third. The one who killed my daughter and my wife is his master —— Deimos the First! They have a special kind of inheritance. The second generation is also known as Deimos. I have no idea where the second generation and first generation are, but the Emperor of the Auland Empire is sure to know. That clan has been working for the Emperor generation after generation!"

Alright, before Crowe regains his ability to speak, let's hide the fact that he is amongst us from Marsolit.

Of course, since he has accepted my Undead Modification, I don't have to worry about his loyalty towards me.

Placing a SemiGod Blood Mage Emperor into the body of a Lich who is deprived of flesh and blood is a waste. It is a coincidence that I require a powerful soul to drive this warship while Marsolit requires strength. Very naturally, the two hands come together in a clap.

In the control room of the Borealis, Marsolit's lower body has merged with the control room. Only his upper body remains on the outside. The heart of the Nine-headed Dragon beats faintly right before him. Along with the beating of the heart, a different energy starts to circulate throughout the giant ship. The power that belongs to a Necromancer alone.

At this moment, Marsolit can already be considered as an Undead, although his physical body is still plagued by frost and poison. There were attempts to cover up his appearance, but they were ineffective. In order to not frighten young children with his yin yang face, he took the initiative to put on a mask.

He seems to be resting with his eyes closed, but in reality, countless amounts data is flashing before him. He is currently preparing to take control of the entire ship by understanding the state of it and fine tuning his control over the ship before its activation.

Looking at the man who is working seriously before me, I am glad that I have entrusted this responsibility to a reliable person. Even so, a feeling of depression somehow glooms over me.

"Lord, what happened?"

"That, I somehow felt depressed. I will be fine after resting for a moment."

I could only say so. After all, you cannot expect me to be venting my dissatisfaction to the heavens and request for a cuter operating system.

"Damn it! Why do other people get sweet-smiling cute ship operating ladies dressed in a sailor outfit while I get a masked yin yang face ship dude. The will of the universe is unjust! Isn't this too much? Can I swap a bit?"

TL: Yin yang face -> Refers to a person whose one side of the face

is different from his other side.

"Of course you can, how about Rosemary? She's an outstanding beauty."

Alright, the will of the universe wouldn't answer such a question. However, Harloys wouldn't give up on any opportunity to strike a blow into my heart.

From a yin yang face to a yin yang person? Contemplating for a moment, I rejected the offer firmly. If we were to be in Rosemary's body in this instant (Why does this sentence sound so uncomfortable), she might be using her authority as the ship operating system lady to peek at the male crewmates showering or so...

TL: Yin yang person -> Transexual, a person with the qualities of both Yin and Yang.

"Don't insult me! I am also selective in the aesthetic appeal of men. Which part of those ugly males are attractive! I have much better taste that that!"

So, you only deny that you won't look at an ugly male? So, that means that you peek if they are handsome? The furious howl from Rosemary's phylactery reveals the deepest wish in her heart. Once again, I rejoice over the fact that I didn't make such a decision that could very possibly end in a tragedy and choose Marsolit instead. Finally, there is a normal person in the Gentlemen Alliance. Rejoice!

"Right, my lord, the area of the dragon skin on the left side of the ship is larger than the right side by 17."

"That's alright. It will be fixed automatically when the ship is activated."

"My lord, my second cannon barrel and ninth cannon barrel is slightly bent. Can you help me put it back in shape?"

"I doubt so. It is obvious to see if the cannon barrel is bent."

"I am very sure of it. The second cannon barrel is bent to the right by 2 degrees while the ninth to the left by 0.5. You would notice it if you pay closer attention to it. Right, can you move the bucket on the left side of the deck to the middle? The absence of symmetry makes one feel uncomfortable."

"Also, can the potted plants placed on the left and right be placed symmetrical to one another? Right now, there are three more on the left than on the right. It is unpleasant to the eye."

"Also, can you move the painting on the wall slightly? It is 30 degrees slanted. I feel awful looking at it."

Hearing his words, I immediately understood. How could it be possible for a normal person to appear in the Gentlemen Alliance. I suddenly recall the appearance of the red-robed Mage back then, how not a single hair of his is out of place and was placed perfectly in a neat fashion. I come to a realisation.

"He is deeply afflicted with obsessive compulsive disorder!"

Alright, the obsessive compulsive disorder patient continues nagging on and on about the floral patterns on the deck, the picture on the sail, the way the butterfly knot is tied on the cables to the uniform of the sailors. All kinds of unimportant information came blasting towards me.

A normal obsessive compulsive disorder patient would only bother with what is happening with him and around him. However, when Marsolit himself turns into the ship, this is equivalent to his body expanding by countless times. As such, the number of things he is bothered about increases exponentially.

His obsessive compulsive disorder isn't really a big problem. Rather, I, who have to listen to his opinions, am the one who is suffering.

The left and right isn't in equilibrium? Unacceptable.

The top and bottom portion doesn't correspond to one another? Even more unacceptable.

The left side of the deck is cleaner than the right side of the deck? How can this be tolerated! Either clean the right side or dirty the left!

Your beard isn't cleanly shaven and your clothes aren't worn neatly? I won't say anything else, get off my ship!

Hearing the relentless nagging, I start to doubt my own decision. Should I change to a Gentlemen ship operating system lady who could possibly spy on the males, or should I continue using this naggy obsessive compulsive disorder male? Finally, the words which I had been waiting for travel to my ear.

"Lord, all preparations are ready. Should the ship be activated now?"

"That's great! Cough, I mean, since all preparations are ready, let's cut the crap and begin."

Under my command, a light green light shrouds the entire ship. Despite the fact that it is clear that no one is operating the ship, a pair of searchlight flick on up in front of the ship, as though a giant beast has opened its eyes. The Borealis finally awakens and comes to life.

On the ship, a large number of low-tier Undead beings are merging together with the ship in a peculiar manner. They are becoming one with the backbone and boards of the ship, andbecoming the skeletal rack of this massive Undead beast. Beside the normal energy circulation wires on the ship, green fluid could be seen flowing through a transparent pipe. That is the poisonous blood that originates from the Hydra, as well as new blood circulatory system of this massive beast.

The dragon skin stitched onto the ship slowly creeps over the uncovered portions and the countless magic inscriptions on the deck start to extend. The resonance between the skin of the massive beast and the nerve system is also progressing well.

All unrelated personnel have evacuated from the ship, leaving only Harloys and I on it. At the same time, Rosemary's phylactery nags non-stop, "This isn't magic!", "How is this possible?", "This goes against the classical theory of Undead Creation!" and such useless words.

However, what leaves me frustrated is that the chief engineer Piacenza is also nagging, "This isn't scientific!", "This is too illogical!", "This goes against all the theories of shipbuilding!".

It is impossible for two systems to appear within a living being. As the howling apparition of the Nine-headed Dragon start to merge along with the ship, the dragon blood circulation system and the energy pipes start to merge together as one while the dragon skin and scales expand furiously. Very soon, they would form the true outer layer of the ship and the different magic inscriptions inscribed on the ship would serve a true nerves and organs.

Along with the tributes of the Undeads, the dragon bones and the deck slowly grow thicker. Innumerable searchlights and probes float in midair. They would all serve as Marsolit's eyes.

An additional defensive layer of dragon skin appears on the Mage Towers on top of the ship. Also, the appearance of the heavy magic cannons have changed entirely. Carvings of dragons appear on the canon body and judging from the ink-green color it is radiating, the change isn't simply limited to its outer appearance.

Before its awakening, it was still a patched-up ship made from several different spare parts. However, after it is awakened, the green dragon skin became the most magnificent paint for it. The Borealis whose outer metal shell is hidden has became an ultimate warship, as well as a breathing giant Dragon.

25 Mage Towers, 27 Green Dragon Venom-type Heavy Magic Cannons and 127 Heavy Engineer Cannon (It is not like I don't want to install more of them, but they have been stacked three storeys high and there is really insufficient space). A Dragon Breath Cannon is installed at the bow and the stern of the ship. After this living ship dragon used its own heart and body circulatory system to provide sufficient energy for this weapon systems, this warship is destined to be unrivaled in the world.

"Great, Marsolit. Oh, no, I should call you 'Envy' now."

"Yes, your highness. Envy will work for you. That, can you help me twist the cannon barrel straight? They seem to have gotten more bent. Right, I'm sorry but you seem to have buttoned your fifth button wrongly. Can you correct it, it is making me uncomfortable.

Chapter 125: Voyage And Confession

When the underwater gates opened, the water level of the entire river lowered significantly. However, it was fortunate that the new balance created by the massive rain and hurricanes had caused the Seafolk's reaction to the change in water level to be delayed.

When the giant ship floated to the surface of the water, we were surprised by the change in the city.

The City of Rain, Feloci, truly lived up to its name. In the past two and a half months, when we were busy completing the construction on Borealis, innumerable Seafolk had followed the path of the river to come to this city, and the human city had already been transformed into a new city of dreams for the Seafolk who desired better lives.

Harloys' clones served as our best scouts. Finding a transparent slime in the water is a near impossible task, not to mention that she had plenty of time to plant innumerable eyes across this city.

The originally magnificent capital still remained as the capital, just changing hands. The White Whale Tribe was originally just a giant tribe living by the coastal areas, but due to its contribution in the assault, as well as the great prestige they earned through the overwhelming victory, they became the leaders of this new capital.

Agus the 1st. This was the new name of the white Whaleman with the massive physique.

The preparation that was made for Darsos's inauguration ceremony had been used for the inauguration of the Whaleman who was originally named Agus. The unrealistic fantasy of combining the concept of a kingdom along with a country of Seafolk had been realised. Agus the 1st and his clan became the new owners of Feloci. Under the rewards and protection of the Queen of the Storms, even if the new tribes who arrived at the city were stronger than them, they could only remain as his citizens.

Feloci was the name of this city, as well as the name of the future kingdom of the Seafolk. The Guardian Goddesses of this country were the Queen of the Storms and the Water Elemental Goddess.

The entire kingdom was structured in a staircase-like structure. The new tribes would move into the various districts based on their race, such as the Fishman District, Naga District, Sea Beastman District, Sea Giant District, and so on. On the other hand, the original tribes who fought in the battle would enter the royal city and become the new nobles who would serve the royalty.

From a certain viewpoint, this was a fundamental change from their previous lifestyle of herding, as well as the dissipation of the authority held by the heads of the various powerful tribes.

As a result, although a new way of life was extremely tempting, not every single chieftain was willing to serve beneath someone. There had been plenty of cases of tribes who left after living in the city for a period of time. Even so, there were many members who privately sneaked back into the city halfway through their departure.

In this world of magic that resembled the time of the Middle Ages, the fixed population in the city along with the movement of the population to and from the city was the basis for the rise and fall of a city.

Soon, as more and more Seafolk gathered here, the new City of Rain became more and more lively.

Even though the borders of the city were still in a state of war, the new life for the Seafolk in the city had started to unfold. First and foremost was the opening of markets. The most popular goods were the daily appliances of the surface dwellers. Inexpensive vases, fresh fruits, and waterproof silk cloth could be exchanged for precious gems and jewels.

The accumulation of those newly-arrived tribes could not be underestimated. Many of the mystical treasures of the ocean could not be analysed, but judging from the magic wavelengths on them, there were indeed quite a few priceless treasures among them. Even so, their price was laughably inexpensive. An Epic-tier Dragon Pearl of a Sea Dragon could be traded for just two rolls of silk.

This is almost like exchanging jewels for rocks. It was very possible that not even King Midas would make a fortune that quickly. The great profits involved in the trade made me a little tempted. If it weren’t for the possibility of incurring trouble, I would have had Tracy barter for quite a few treasures.

Aware of a merchant's temperament towards profits, I didn’t doubt that the moment I started to spread the news, innumerable

merchants would risk their lives to trade with the Seafolk. At that point, the Seafolk would be able to make up for their shortcomings with the technology and products they earned from the trades.

Other than daily appliances, another bestseller in the markets were the multiple kinds of weapons used on the Surface. Even when the superior weapons made of alloy left behind by the Auland Empire had been hoarded by the White Whale Tribe so as to equip their own warriors, the longswords, pikes, knives, and other weapons from the Surface were far superior compared to the wooden, rock, and bone-made weapons used by normal Seafolk.

During these few days, the first shops to reopen were the blacksmiths. Due to the purge and flood that followed the assault on the city, very few of the skilled blacksmiths, craftsmen, and alchemists survived, and the few who survived met with quite a bit of trouble.

Many of the amphibious Seafolk who had been on the Surface previously were almost completely unknowledgeable about crafting, thus, the very first job of those blacksmiths was to waterproof the weapons. However, judging from the long queue outside the blacksmith's shop, it seemed that the flood had caused their craftsmanship to return back to the primitive, manual era. It would probably take a significant period of time before they would develop in this aspect. Even so, it was still a hard to come by powerup for the Seafolk.

Every night, there would be a bonfire and banquet on the waterproof platform. Even though most of the normal Fishmen would be unable to get even a single slice of cooked meat, the

festive mood still put them in high spirits.

Their civilization may have still been primitive with many shortcomings, but this newly rising capital was exactly what the Seafolk had expected and desired, and they were gradually developing into a powerful, centralized kingdom.

Every day, the City of Rain grew stronger. Every day, countless Seafolk arrived at the City of Rain. Soon, the city would be filled up to the borders, and in order to expand their living space, they would have to fight. It was clear to see that this would be the first battlefield of the eternal war.

Fortunately, or perhaps, unfortunately, the Auland Empire was truly a rich superpower with deep running accumulation. The great shame of losing their capital caused them to immediately reorganize their forces to prepare for war. Very quickly, a new defense line was built and the support troops from the numerous nobles from various territories arrived quickly.

It was hard to say how powerful the army to reclaim the capital would become, but judging from the war power they had accumulated and the overall strength of the empire, I still thought that the Auland Empire would be the one laughing at the very end.

Soon, the fight over living space would begin once again, destined to be savage.

Regardless of whom the final victor of this war would be, it probably wouldn’t be peaceful here for a significant period of time.

Auland Empire would surely focus all of their efforts into reclaiming their capital.

To us, neither of the sides could be considered as our friends. The only thing we wished for was to not get entangled in the fight, especially when we were under the very eyes of the Seafolk right now.

On that day, the storm covered the sight of the Seafolk. In the eyes of the Seafolk, the fall of the Hydra was mostly attributed to the Dragon Slayer and the Forbidden Spell, so they ought to still be oblivious to our existence. Even so, we dared not continue staying here for too long.

Predictably, in the near future, as more and more Seafolk gathered here, the increased Power of Faith would become nourishment for the Queen of the Storms. Eventually, when the Queen of the Storms finally converted this new city into part of her divine territory and a level of intimacy was established between the church and altars of the Queen of the Storms, the consciousness of the Queen of the Storms would most likely linger around here most of the time.

Perhaps this underwater secret base might be able to avoid the sight of ordinary mortals, but I did not have confidence that the same hold true for true Gods. Thus, the earlier we set forth, the safer we would be.

Thus, the seventh day after the Borealis had been successfully converted to an Undead, when the newborn Undead had started to get used to its new body and the first batch of weapons become

usable, we chose to set off.

The underwater passage used specially for the ship opened and the 300-meter long gigantic warship dove into it, proceeding slowly, the shock waves of its movement creating giant ripples underwater.

Of course, we met with a few Seafolk along the way. However, before they could have an encounter with the warship, they were blown away by the shock waves.

When this aquatic dragon left the water to soar into the skies, it left behind a giant whirlpool in its trail. Then, when the Mage Tower on the warship successfully activated its stealth mode, the interior of the Borealis exploded into cheers. After all, regardless of how incredible the design was, its practical abilities could only be proven in a real battle.

"First, the ship will leave through the east of Auland and enter the sea only upon reaching the sea in the east, as it should be safer that way. Then, moving along the coastal area, the ship will only soar up upon reaching North Trois. From there on, the ship would be moving diagonally straight towards the East Mist Communal Nation. This is the ideal path we have confirmed after multiple discussions."

"Why must we dive into the sea? Why can't we fly straight to East Mist?"

"If we were to fly straight to East Mist, we would trespass the

aerial territory of quite a few superpower empires. I don't think that they would be unprepared for any threats that appear in their aerial territory; even a stealth unit isn't really a rare toy to them. Do you intend on meeting their Dragon Knights? Furthermore, if the news of a floating warship were to leak out..."

I immediately understood Kelly's words. It was best to keep some things hidden as long as possible. If the existence of this ship were to be exposed now, countless troubles could ensue.

Kelly's suggestion was one made from judging the level of risk, and was worth a try. However, the suggestion of the chief engineer from Borealis, Piacenza, was much more practical and convincing.

"It’s not recommended for the maiden voyage of a new boat to involve too great a distance. After flying for a period of time, we will need to make some adjustments to certain apparatus, as well as fixing faulty equipment. Based on the condition of our ship, entering the water is the optimal choice. Furthermore, we don't have many supplies left. Thus, we should send a dinghy to the pier of Kasilo Kingdom. It shouldn't be too difficult."

Actually, I was not very concerned with taking a detour, but rather hesitant upon entering the sea.

The System might not be reliable, but it was the typical type which was spot-on on my misfortunes. I was quite concerned with its warning that reminded me to not enter the sea.

【Warning: The Queen of the Storms has marked you. If there

isn't a need, please do not approach coastal areas and, even more so, do not enter the sea.

Of course, if you insist, you can try to kill other Sea Monsters and true Gods' avatars. As long as you are in the sea, I can guarantee you that the rewards will be better than this.】

The Queen of the Storms was a member of the Malevolent Gods of Chaos. Her Jurisdictions included Storm, Tempest, and the Guardian God of a portion of the Seafolk. Although she had wanted to attain the Jurisdiction of the Sea God, she has yet to accomplish her goal in the last several thousand years.

The current Sea God was Osweyar, another ancient that had survived until the present day. From a certain viewpoint, he could be considered as the descendant of the current Ancient Water Elemental Goddess Aylos. This Sea God was renowned to have a low profile in the Order Faction. Perhaps they might be acquainted with one another privately, but I did not think that he would spare the Queen of the Storms any face when the horn of the eternal Sacred War sounded.

Detect the appearance of a single ship in the sea? Since even the Sea God Osweyar was incapable of such a feat, there was no need to speak of the Queen of the Storms, whose Jurisdictions did not include the existence of oceans. Even so, I dared not let my guard down.

"That ... must we enter the sea?"

"Yes, the probability of our engine malfunctioning exceeds 17%. Even if the fellows were to work overtime, they would probably be

unable to keep it operating for long. We would need to stop it to conduct checks and repairs."

"Fine, then get the guys to prepare for battle. Our theoretical enemies should be ... Sea Monsters. Yeah, let's treat that Hydra as our theoretical enemy."

Even without the System Notice, if the Queen of the Storms were to really come seek trouble with us, there was a high possibility that we would meet with Sea Monsters on the way. After all, that queen had another title—Queen of Sea Monsters, and there are quite a few Sea Monsters under her command.

"If it were just normal Sea Monsters, we would be able to disregard them. Do you really think that we would meet with a Hydra-class Sea Monster everywhere ... Alright, alright. You're the boss, we will follow what you say."

The others might think that I was being excessive, but based on my understanding of my own luck, as well as that System Notice, no amount of preparation would be too great.

While waiting for the ship to descend to the sea, I still had some matters I had to deal with.

"Since they are unable to play soccer on the ship, those fellows are getting bored. How many times has Yingou's alchemy lab exploded? I heard that yesterday morning they froze a portion of the deck to play ice hockey. Aren't they afraid of getting beaten off the ship with a stick? Forget it, since I have something to inform

them about, let me scare them while I am at it."

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It was a sort of fate to share the same boat in the midst of danger. On the other hand, when the danger passed, being in the same boat would require a reason.

Common profits? Common goals? No matter what, if they hope to walk together and call each other comrades, then there must be a core and goal that link them together as one.

Eating, drinking, playing, and enjoying life in a carefree manner could also be considered as a goal. However, if one were to build an organisation with such a thing as the goal, it would probably end up as a bunch of scattered sand and all would do as they pleased. Anticipating such a crisis, I had already prepared in accordance.

"Why should I be the only who fears, worries, and loses sleep over the impending doomsday? Since we're all in the same boat, let me explain to you all the possibilities that may result in the sinking of the boat in the future."

I started my lecture with such words. However, as I expected, the bunch of fellows responded with impassive gazes—"Even if the sky fell, there would be someone tall to hold it up. If the boat were to sink, the worst that could happen is that it won't arrive at shore. What could be so incredible about that?"

Asking me how I could read so much simply from their expressions? That was because those bastards had already said it out loud!

"I am a Siren. I don't fear the sinking of the boat. It is just that it would be troublesome to bring those collections of mine along with me."

"... Actually, I have been training hard during the period of time at the secret base. My swimming skills are not bad now."

"Big brother, don't judge me just because I have four hooves. Recently, I have been learning swimming as well. After taking off my horseshoes, I am definitely able to float. If the boat were to sink, you can sit on my back!"

"Hey, hey, is this a new business opportunity? Looks like a chance to earn big bucks has arrived! We should start to hoard life buoys and floating planks!"

"Stupid! What use are the life buoys! We should start purchasing all kinds of resources required for survival and make a fortune by selling them back to their original owners when the boat sinks."

"Idiot, how could we only sell it to their original owners? As long as they pay money, we would sell them to even the Fishmen and Sea Monsters!"

Yingou and Kabala's exchange was filled with the stench of

copper. The two of them were seriously considering their plan of purchasing the life buoys from crewman and selling them back to them if the boat sank.

"Gunpowder cannot be used the moment it comes into contact with water. Should we prepare some waterproof apparatus?" Clint, stop thinking about your treasured explosives all the time. Please consider whether you are able to float with your heavy armor first.

"Do I have to strip the Silver Battle Hymn again? Lord, will the sinking occur too suddenly? Will we lose our personal belongings as a result of it? If we were to really lose them, would it be possible to reclaim them?"

Ever since Diana got that mithril alloy full plate mail back from me and got a Mage to enchant it, she had been wearing it all day long, oblivious to the scorching weather. She even gave the armor a name. Now that she heard that the boat might be on the verge of sinking, the first thing she thought of was still her precious armor.

"Big Brother Roland is worried that the boat will sink? It's okay. If it happens, we just have to work together to freeze the surface of the water. This way, everyone should be able to climb onto the ice, thus averting the crisis. As long as no one dies, no matter how great the loss is, it should still be in an acceptable range."

Alright, was that consolation from Reyne the killing blow?

Everyone discussed fervently, but no one wondered why the boat would even sink. They were only exchanging their escaping

experiences, as though the sinking of the boat was already an inevitable event.

I shook my head helplessly. Given the personality of this bunch of fellows, I should have expected such an outcome.

"The boat I am talking about isn't the Borealis under our feet. She is called Eich, the continent Eich. Perhaps you might find it unbelievable, but our world is on the verge of destruction ..."

In that instant, everyone looked at me with wide eyes. After all, going by the common sense of the crowd, those who claimed that it was end of the world on a whim were either demonic cultist or lunatics.

Even though everyone stared at me with wide eyes, I did not intend to continue elaborating on it. After finishing the introductions, I walked down the stage.

On the other hand, the crystal ball which had been placed on the table earlier started to play a video that was prepared beforehand.

"The Seven Trials of Eich. From the start of the current Sacred War, our world would meet with seven destructive calamities, and we would be swept into the dangers of it as well. The core of it all is the eternal Sacred War. Now, the horn of the Sacred War has been blown again and this Sacred War is destined to be the final Sacred War as well..."

Inside the crystal was an education lesson I had prepared beforehand, and the contents within it were meticulously prepared by me.

"This is the information on the war that is about to occur, but even so, this is just the appetiser."

The internal conflict among the humans, the rampage of the Elemental Gods, the invasion of the Undead, the raid of the Demons, and the possibility of a full-blown war between the Surface and the Underground World. Perhaps some of them might have predicted that the Sacred War would not be as simple as it seemed, but their information couldn’t possibly be as detailed as mine.

Speaking of the invasion of Undead, I could point out directly which Death Dimensions were making preparations for war, as well as the estimated time for their arrival. As for the Demon army, I had the evidence and information provided by Elisa. The schemes of the Elemental Gods were right before us, and the invasion of the Underground World Alliance Army wasn’t a secret since a long time ago.

Only through detailed information and numbers would the point that I would like to express be convincing. The photos that would be shown afterwards were the breakthrough point that I anticipated.

"Ah, what is that! Why is the Dwarf Mining City Helos in ruins? I was just there last year and the people there were still busy at work."

What lay before them was a picture, a picture of a ruins left behind after a slaughter by a great army. The picture looked lifelike, the details in it far surpassing what image altering was capable of doing—this wasn't a picture from this world, but one that was derived from the game walkthrough!

"Asloren? Impossible? How could that beautiful Eternal Forest of Euphony be reduced to such a state?"

"Galor Highlands, my beautiful and splendid homeland, how could it be possibly be a black land contaminated and dyed red by blood! Who did it!"

Photos of the Elven country which had been reduced to ruins, the human plains that had been corrupted to become a land of Undead, and the Demon army slaughtering life forms on the Surface. All kinds of genocides and destructive wars could be seen, all kinds of futures that would overturn one's perception of the world.

"I swear in the name of the Holy Light that these are all images of the future that I obtained through certain means. If we do not do anything, they will become a part of reality."

The dense Holy Light shrouding me testifies to the authenticity of my words. While they were still worried and shocked over the doomed future, I throw out an even larger bomb at them.

"These tragedies are just the beginning. Those who lose their lives at this point can be considered as the fortunate ones, because

they will not witness the despairing destruction that would ensue. There will be no victors in this Sacred War. The final ending is the total destruction of the entire world."

At this instant, the pictures switched to the image that I would like to show them. That is a picture of the Eich continent from outer space.

The entire continent was fragmented into innumerable pieces and countless Dimension Doors had opened throughout. This was the result of the clash between the two Goddesses of Creation at their full might. Those who were able to survive until the very end, the strongest of beings, were screaming in agony and cursing the desolate fate that awaited them.

Finally, in the face of the final judgement, every life was equal. No one was spared, no one was saved, and no one was eternal. What awaited everyone was equal destruction.

Perhaps the two Goddesses of Creation might have been able to recreate the world and life. However, the life forms of the previous generation would not survive to see that day. They would be terminated in this very last trial.

"In order to prevent the worst ending, I have been preparing since long ago and have achieved some level of accomplishment. However, the strength of an individual is insufficient. I need your help, I need your strength, to reverse the path of the world from its ultimate doom!"

Chapter 126: Changes

What are above the clouds? In the most ancient religious epics, it would be realm of the true Gods, the final resting place of humans. At the top of the clouds, the world of the numerous Gods would be stare down for all eternity.

"Mama, Lord Priest said that Lord God is looking down at us from the clouds. But there are so many people down here, can they cope? If they are able to cope, doesn't it mean that they have eyes all over their body? That's scary!"

On a field, a straightforward rascal said such words. On the very afternoon of the same day, he was tied to a stake and sentenced to death for the crime of heresy.

Those were the famous “Little Tom's Words of Truth.” In the future, it evolved to become a challenge towards the falsehoods created and spread by those in authority, as well as the ignition of the changes that would be made to the numerous churches of Gods.

As for what exactly were above the clouds, the earliest batch of aerial knights who had been to the clouds wisely chose to avoid answering the question.

As the era progressed to the current day, there were some things that could no longer be concealed. The truth that the Heavenly Realm laid in another dimension was clear for all to see. As a result, the phrase “The Gods are always watching over you”

became empty words in books.

Gods are not omnipotent. Altars and churches were locations where their consciousness descend toward and reside. If one were to chant their true name, it might be possible for them to hear one's words. Questions directed towards the god could only be channeled through the prayers of the priests and archbishops. Of course, it was possible for them to send an avatar or God Envoy down, but the resources that would be expended wasn't a minute sum.

Distance and the unknown brought about fear and respect. Divine authority and the monarchies always vied against one another. Deciphering the secrets of the Gods might have always been a taboo, but the private investigations conducted by individual countries had never once stopped.

In an era where every country had an oracle of a true God had come to an end and in this generation, the Gods had granted the humans a greater degree of freedom. However, it is within expectations that along with the start of the Sacred War, the humans would slowly be robbed of it.

The Sacred War has already became an inevitable event. Without even requiring the Order Gods to send down their commandments, countries already started preparing for war. After all, their enemies were already at their doorstep.

In this Sacred War, the development of all kinds of aerial units would leap ahead exponentially. The Air Fleet of the Auland Empire might have been the most advanced of the lot, but it

definitely wasn’t the only one. The taboo of the past had already opened its doors to the mortals.

However, reaching the clouds wasn’t an easy task. Even without the existence of the taboo, the world above the clouds still remained inaccessible to ordinary aerial units. After all, the low temperature, lack of oxygen, and low pressure made it hard for even a physically fit warrior to bear. Those who tried to accomplish such heights would most probably die in their attempt.

Yet, at this moment, I flew freely about the sea of clouds, as though running on land. Erebella had shapeshifted to become a Pegasus and the surrounding Ice Crystal Barrier isolated me from the low pressure and lack of oxygen.

The low temperature that came with height was nothing to the Frigid Nightmares. The advantages of possessing a magic mount was apparent. However, the skies were far from being empty. In the distance, the sight of the mountain-like Cloud Whales turning about was a sight to behold, a sight that would leave one trembling.

Rather than say that Cloud Whales were animals, they were more like a hybrid between Wind Elementals and mammals. They were much larger than their counterparts in the sea and their movements caused the wind and clouds to billow. Even the Wind Elemental God was incapable of keeping this gigantic being in rein.

It was said that the Blackwings' ships and cities were also built among the clouds, and they were once a famous tribe in the sky. However, after being robbed of their privilege to fly, they had been

reduced to pirates. I had always felt regretful for being unable to enjoy the unique way of living of the Sky Tribes.

【System Notice: You won't be feeling regretful about it in awhile. I hope that you will still have the mood to enjoy the scenery by then.】

Ignoring the notice that suddenly popped out, I turned my attention towards the clouds not too far away.

There were all kinds of mysteriously-shaped clouds in the sky. Their forms were ever-changing. Some of them resembled the mountains, some resembled the trees, some of them giants, and some the waves of the oceans. Through their contact with one another, their shapes were always morphing.

However, not every cloud changed at every moment. Under the effects of magic, some clouds remained the same even throughout a span of hundreds of years. Those firmer clouds would often serve as the lairs of the Cloud Beasts, and at this moment, they didn’t seem to welcome our appearance here.

Even though I kept soaring ahead, a group of Cloud Beasts still continued to pursue us. A large portion of them were the amiable Cloud Dolphins, who were here to watch the commotion. The rest of them were small Cloud Dragons who hoped to prey on us, not knowing that their actions were suicidal.

Even though they were called Cloud Dragons, they were actually just meter long wyverns. These little fellows completely ignored the disparity between the strengths of the prey and predator and

were fervently pursuing us in hope of an additional snack.

Erebella might still be far away from the pinnacle of her strength, when she was capable of shapeshifting into an Ice Dragon, but the current her was still able to easily take care of these small fries.

However, I chose to only pat her slightly to signal her to speed up so as to shake them off.

"Aooooooo!"

After a deep howl, the Pegasus unfurled her wings and surged forward, pulling the distance between us and the Cloud Beasts in an instant.

"Lord Roland, are you happy?"

"Yeah, I am indeed very happy. You noticed it?"

Of course I was happy, otherwise I wouldn’t be coming here on a whim to tour the world above the clouds. If we had wanted to hasten our journey, travelling at lower altitudes would have been much more suitable.

As for the reason why I was happy...

In order to prevent the true secrets from not leaking, I didn't put the classified strategic plans within the courseware. What the rest

saw were just the tragedies that could possibly occur in the future. Other than stating the potential occurrence of the Undead Calamity, invasion of the Demons, and the war with the Underground World, the courseware didn't even list the reasons behind these disasters or record the estimated time of their occurrences, not to mention the strategies I have prepared against them.

The only thing they were aware of now was that they would meet with a series of calamities, and that I was trying my best to resolve all of these troubles. As for how they would be resolved and the possibility of success, it was all still an enigma to them.

Although I was recruiting comrades, my invitation lacked sincerity.

If they were to nod their heads despite having not knowing what they could expect, they would be handing their futures completely over to me. To do so took great trust, and the foundation for this trust needed to be built up over time.

I could understand their hesitation and silence. Forcing them to toil their lives away for another just with some cheap talk—such a thing only exists in irrational novels.

If someone were to tell me that "The world is about to be destroyed, you can only be saved if you put your trust in me, so give me all your fortunes," I would already be kind to not to slap that person's face several times.

"Perhaps, this is the revelation from fate. Lord Roland, I am willing to work for you. If destruction is what that awaits us, I am willing to face it with you."

Alright, just when I just said that such a plot only existed in novels, this silly lass jumped out to slap me in the face.

Paladins were always the bunch who are the easiest to coax, and Diana was the kind who was the easiest to coax even among the paladins. Her acceptance was a good start, but what that follows afterwards was still a long period of silence.

"Lord Roland, there is another Lich in Liu Huang Mountain City who goes by the same name as you. Your relationship with him is..."

Yingou Beyar asked a seemingly unimportant question. However, his words captured the attention of everyone in the room.

I hesitated for a short moment. However, since I had decided to face them honestly, I chose not to spout nonsense at this crucial period.

"That's me. However, I am unable to tell you the reason behind my revival."

"Then, who is the Legend Paladin from more than 300 years ago? The legendary hero whom that bunch of single-celled knights chant about everyday, the final prince who left a mark in history?"

This question was well thought-out. It seemed that even though this bunch of people were fooling around everyday, they weren't slacking off. At the very least, they had been collecting intelligence to prepare for the future.

If it wasn't for my determination to keep all of them on board, then some of them would have taken the initiative to leave the group back then when we had reached a safe zone.

"That's me as well, but I cannot explain the matter to you."

My confession caused several of them to gasp in shock. After all, a comrade of theirs who had been fooling about suddenly turned out to be a legendary hero.

Furthermore, this legendary hero had been right before them, living with them for a long period of time. Shocking as it was, it also made people wonder why he hid his identity and resided in Liu Huang Mountain City for such a long period of time.

"Last question. What is your relationship with Lord Wumianzhe?"

"Comrades. We have the same goals and same means. In a way, we are intimate to the point where we might as well be the same person. However, now that we've come to this point, those who choose to back down afterwards will have to sign a contract of silence."

I might have played a bit of a word game, but my words were true. We were the same person, so naturally, we were intimate to the point that we might as well be the same person.

Yingou looked at the Krose, who was standing silently by the side. The Archbishop of the God of Law hesitated for a moment before nodding to verify the authenticity of my words.

"Fine, I will speak in the stead of my elder brother as well. Our Safe Merchant Union will be staking everything on you. We will be under your commands. However, if it is an action relating to commerce, we will be demanding payment! The motto of the Goblins dictates that 'Close Goblins ask for payment straightforwardly!'."

This time, I was taken aback. From the start, I thought that the greedy and selfish Goblins would be the targets which I would have the greatest difficulty in convincing. I had already prepared myself for their refusal, yet they were the second to nod their heads. This was completely out of my expectations.

"What is there to get shocked about? Lich Roland has been our brother for many years. Furthermore, Lord Wumianzhe has always been a figure of respect among us. Since you have said that destruction is just around the corner, do we need to hesitate when there is a reliable backer right here?"

Everything could be traced back to the question of trust. Even though it was clear that huddling together would be the best

choice to deal with the incoming doomsday, if one were to find the wrong tree to stand under, they would simply be waiting to become pawns in the war.

From the moment that Yingou Beyar accepted the deal, the winds swiftly turned to my favor, to the extent that I even started to suspect whether this was a trap set up by him. However, indubitably, his choice had a significant influence on the decisions of the others.

"I will listen to Big Brother Yingou. I also trust Lord Wumianzhe's decision. I know that he wouldn't ascend for no reason at all. Perhaps we might just be pieces on a chessboard, but I am willing to trust the chess player, Wumianzhe. I believe that he wouldn't sacrifice us pointlessly." The moment Kabala's words ceased, the voice of the Dwarven Blacksmith echoed in the cabin.

"Since it is the will of Lord Wumianzhe, feel free to speak up if you are facing any trouble. It is enough for us to trust him. We might be short, but we are not blind. Without your help, we would have drowned in that cell. We will remember this favor."

At this point, things were still normal. However...

"Momo... Momo likes Lord Wumianzhe the most!" Alright, looks like you have noticed the equation of Wumianzhe = Lich Roland = Little Rolo, but what do you intend to achieve by slipping in a confession in the midst of this chaos?!

"What about food?"

"Dixu, you idiot, how can you be only bothered about food! Lord, will there be meat in the meal? I am okay with once every three days."

Only bothered about their stomach, Kavan and Dixu were probably the ones who were the easiest to bribe.

"How can this be! There are so many beauties in the world whom I have yet to come into contact with. How can I let them all go to ruin? For more beautiful beasts... beauties, let's do it! No matter who it is, as long as they intend to destroy this beautiful and cruel world, I will fight against him to my last breath!"

That should be the most normal reaction one would have towards the destruction of the world. However, in so many years, this was the first time I saw Beifeng acting so seriously. Furthermore, the radiance of the soul which could vaguely be seen meant that he was in the midst of comprehending something, very much so about to break through his bottleneck! A Legend Beast Mastery Hunter was about to be born!

"I was wrong. In the past, my understanding towards love was too superficial. Loving a person doesn't mean that I must possess him. Protecting everything that is beautiful, that is my truest wish. Love surpasses boundaries, kindness without motives! Goodbye, the me of yesterday. The me of today is going to comprehend the true profoundness of love."

"Guardian of Universal Love! I solemnly vow to protect all

charismatic existence, regardless of race, age, gender, job, whether it is cold-blooded or warm-blooded, its land of origin, whether it is dead or alive, whether it is an arthropod or a mammal..."

That... How apt the name was. His love was simply much too universal! I had heard many different kind of vows. Advancing into the realm of Legends was the crystallisation of one's experiences and comprehension, so the vow made during the advancement was often the true words derived from that person's comprehension. However, this was the first time I heard one that left me speechless.

"... regardless of whether it is a bird or a beast, regardless of whether it is a fork or a spoon..."

This vow was really long, but why is it that something sounds fishy about the vow the more I listened to it?

"Ah! Fight! Watch my Tiger Folding Stool!"

"I can't take it any longer. Beat him up!"

"Safe-brand bricks, special discount, please take note of this green logo whenever you buy anything! Safe-brand products are always that safe! Boom! Boom!"

The last part wasn’t a part of the commercial, but the sound of an explosion. To be capable of making a brick explode, how the hell did you all do it, Beyar Brothers?

Due to the vow that was devoid of a single shred of decency, someone couldn't stand it any longer and started on the daily activity of beating Beifeng up.

However, even though he was knocked down, Beifeng's vow of true love didn't stop. The sacred light representing the advancement in realm continued shining. Judging from the duration the process was taking, the Soul Imprint that was being forged would definitely be extraordinarily strong. Most probably, Beifeng wouldn't just be a normal Legend after his advancement.

"... regardless of whether it is an egg or a chicken, regardless of whether it is an S or an M..."

Alright, let’s ignore the vow which was getting more and more difficult to listen to. He was probably the only one in the world who would was enjoying a thrashing while advancing to become Legend.

Although they were fooling around as usual, the situation became less tense after the incident with Beifeng and easier to communicate at this point.

Should I say that Wumianzhe's reputation was astounding? After being informed that this was the will of the God of Law Wumianzhe, the living treasures of the Underground City decisively accepted the offer one by one. However, at the very end, I unexpectedly got a single rejection.

"Can I just follow you all around for the moment? I need time to make such a decision."

Tracy's rejection was still quite polite. A large portion of Aulanders also chose the same as her. Even so, quite a few of them decided to disembark from the boat after a period of hesitation. The only positive of the situation was that there weren't many of them.

Trust needed to be built up over time. I agreed to the requests of Tracy and the rest immediately, allowing them to follow us as they pleased. However, for those who decided to leave, I didn’t intend to force them to stay.

"Yeah, you can get off the boat after signing a contract of secrecy. However, you all aren't allowed to return to Auland within a year, otherwise it would be hard to explain your sudden appearance and disappearance. After all, you all probably do not wish to be locked in some dungeon of an intelligence institution for interrogation."

In the end, the results were much better than I expected. Only seventeen of them insisted on disembarking the ship and they were all the new talents whom we scouted from Kagersi before its fall.

The operation could be said to be a huge success, so how could I possibly not be happy.

"When the members of the Church of Law and my knights arrive, they would be able to serve as the backbone of our group and many things would probably be different. Perhaps, we might be able to

build an acceptable base. A Liu Huang Mountain City on the surface? Seems like a decent option."

Of course, even if I was happy, I wouldn't go out for a stroll on a whim. There was a reason why I headed out alone.

Finally, I reached my destination. The collapsed massive rock lion statues jogged a memory in me. The events that occurred here replayed in my mind, that "revolt" which overthrew the notions which high-tier undead held towards their own race.

Near the entrance, two familiar figures cloaked in black busied themselves around the rubble, seemingly looking for something.

"Camisia, Fanderk. Why are you two here?"

Yes, the two people who were before me are my knights, Camisia and Fanderk. There was always a kind of inconceivable connection between an Undead Emperor and his direct subjects. The reason why I rushed here was because I felt their presence here.

"Your Highness, we started to head north upon receiving your orders. However, Lord Bastian said that the seal here was starting to unravel, so we came over to take a look."

The Headless Horseman's high-tier Nightmare possessed the ability of flight while Fanderk was an Aurora Knight. Being aerial units, they were both ideal choices as scouts.

"Your Highness, Omar's seal has been released! It looks like it is the doing of the Xiluo Empire. They are courting death!"

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"The motion has been passed in the council. From today on, Omar Mist will replace the missing Queen of Banshees Harloys as the new 3rd Senator!"

Shocking news was pasted on the notice board outside the council room. All of a sudden, a “newcomer” stood at the very pinnacle of Xiluo Empire.

Undead who had never heard of Omar asked around to figure out who the guy who suddenly popped out of nowhere was, while those who were aware of him cursed the insanity of the council.

"Darn it, does the council intend to destroy all living beings? Are they not afraid of Omar starting another revolt? Now that Emperor Yongye is no longer here, who could keep that frenzied Pride in place!"

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Ever since I noticed the presence of the two knights here, I had roughly guessed what had happened. Even so, now that it had been ascertained, the good mood which I had while soaring through the clouds fell into the pits.

Since the seal had been released, there was no reason to remain here any longer.

Since both our destinations were the East Mist Communal Country, I brought the two of them back to the mouth of the sea where I had arranged to link up with the Borealis.

The path back to the ship was smoother-sailing. However, when we finally reached our destination, we realized that the Borealis was currently busy entertaining “guests.”

A massive Kraken had wrapped itself around the boat and its poisonous ink had dyed the entire region of the sea black.

On the other side, a giant Horned Whale frenziedly knocked itself against the boat. Its white horn glowed with the seven colors that represented the Power of Elements, augmenting the strength of its ram.

In an instant, I immediately understood the reason why we were assaulted by these two Sea Monsters.

"Haha, damned bastards, how could I possibly die so easily! Since I'm not dead yet, you all will be the ones to die!"

In mid-air, a crow which only had half of its feathers remaining laughed crazily. Half of its face was burnt and it was astonishingly ugly. However, the familiar duck-like voice allowed me to recognise him instantly.

"The greatest cockroach of the Celestial Tower, the Auland Branch Head Lamos's Eye! You sure are resilient!"

That day, when we were dealing with the Hydra, this fellow suffered a strategic-level Fireball from a Mage's Tower. At that moment, as we were rushing to retreat from the battlefield, we didn't have sufficient time to ascertain the results of the battle.

"The Queen of the Storms has granted me power! I am Lamos's Eye! Her most faithful servant!"

Seemingly afraid of getting hit by the cannons below, he chose to fly up to a high altitude. The staff in his hand that carried divine power seemed to be charging up its strength in the midst of the storm. It seemed to be the catalyst he was using to control the Sea Monsters below. Unfortunately for him, I was above the clouds.

"Hey~, look. What did I find? A remnant of the Celestial Tower. A Celestial Towerist can provide us with several days worth of energy. Furthermore, it is rich in protein. However, a Celestial Tower inhabitant isn't easy to deal with. Not only does it possess strong life force, it is also exceptionally agile when trying to escape, equally difficult to catch as their brothers, the cockroaches. Thus, we have to approach him slowly. Be careful not to make any noise."

"Hey, I caught it. Oh, it is struggling very fiercely!"

"Let us sever its head. We can eat the other parts of it raw."

"Of course, if we have enough time, we could try barbecuing it. It would be much more delicious that way."

"Yeah, the texture is not bad. Tastes like chicken."

"Stupid Roland, stop dubbing over my voice. Irene doesn't eat these kind of things! I will suffer diarrhea!"

Chapter 127: Legend-Rank Quest

It was said that cockroaches possessed the ability to escape and reproduce even when they were decapitated, although it was a pity that their brothers, the Celestial Towerists, were incapable of such feat.

Just as what was said previously, that resilient Lamos's Eye, without even making a real appearance in the text, died in the midst of a series of retorts.

Due to the high altitude he was flying at, he was way too near to the clouds, thus providing an opportunity for three aerial units to swipe down towards him. Before he could even react, he was decapitated by the swiftest Camisia.

Based on his strength and identity, being surrounded and lynched by two Aurora Knights and one Undead Lord-level Dullahan, at least he wasn’t really wronged in his death.

After he had been decapitated, his body was frozen and thrown into the sea. I didn’t believe that fellow would still be capable of climbing out of his tomb to cause trouble like that.

What was noteworthy was his staff. It wasn’t an ordinary treasure.

【The Will of the Queen of the Storm: Through this staff, the wielder chosen by the Queen of the Storm can become the oracle of her will. The wielder would be able to order the Sea

Monsters under her command. Prerequisite: Worshiper of the Queen of the Storm or someone chosen by her.】

【This is a simple staff made from ancient oak. The craftsmanship and material for its creation is inferior and the God Power that is contained inside is not worth mentioning.

System Notice: Through this wooden material, a certain lady who had undergone menopause for more than ten thousand years is able to view the surroundings about the wielder, and she is currently staring at you. You understand.】

Of course I do.

Kacha.

I smashed the wooden staff over my knee and the staff infused with God Power broke into two as the energy within started to dissipate into the surroundings.

The container that was used to hold God Power had been destroyed. As a result, the God Power would either return to the God or dissipate into the surroundings. However, this time, the situation was slightly different.

As one of the very few existences who had personally comprehended the nature of a true God's God Power, I could vaguely feel the sliver of God Power shrouding around me, as though it was unwilling to leave.

God Power was devoid of intelligence, so I did not think that it was possible for the God Power to set its eyes upon me. So...

"Is this it?"

There was nothing unique about the antique-looking old bottle. However, the moment I took it out, the intangible and formless God Power started to seep into it and a sliver of water appeared on the bottom of the carving of billowing waves on the bottle.

In this world, God Power required a suitable container to hold it; not just any material could become a constituent of a God Equipment.

This Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle was once a God Equipment, except that the God Power it contained within had completely dissipated through the long ages, along with the fall of the God. At present, after absorbing a part of the Queen of the Storm's God Power, it regained some strength.

【Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle. Unable to be evaluated. Mystical object (Can be upgraded. However, due to the fall of its original owner, it can only reach the level of a Semi-God Equipment)】

【The Calm Ocean: After activation, it returns all fluids surrounding the user back to its most basic form and nature. Upon absorbing the God Power of the Goddess of Storm, it has gained the ability to calm storms.】

【The Favored One of the Sea God: The owner of the bottle becomes the oracle of the Ancient Sea God. It is easier for the owner to gain the trust and goodwill of ancient Sea Monsters and ancient Sea Dwellers. When the goodwill reaches a certain level, it is possible for a Companion Contract to be signed. After the Companion Contract is signed, the contractee can be

summoned to battle for you.】

【Wrath of the Queen of the Storms: That fiery lass has already realized that her God Power has been stolen, and the bottle has become evidence of her setback. Thus, the owner of the bottle will be viewed with enmity and pursued by the Queen of the Storms】

【Osweyar's Displeasure: The current Sea God views every single existence who could threaten his Jurisdiction seriously. Do not give him an opportunity to pull one over you.】

【System Notice: This would prove to be a massive problem, so I recommend you to throw this bottle into the sea. Of course, with great risks come great benefits. What would you earn from offending these two true Gods? You want to know? Yeah ... actually I don't know it myself either.】

Looking at the System Notice, I breathed in a breath of cold air. Ignoring the System's disgusting attempt to act cute, “Osweyar's Displeasure” and the God Equipment automatically fusing with the God Power on its own accord explained a lot about the bottle.

"God Equipment and God Power are often specific to one another. The God Power melding into the bottle and that subduing effect of 'The Calm Ocean' provides quite a bit of hint. Sidunwar's God Power is connected to the God Power of the Queen of the Storms. Furthermore, they probably come from the same source. That's why they would be able to meld with one another and curb each other. Since the incumbent Sea God feels that this bottle would threaten his Jurisdiction, that could only mean that hidden in this bottle is... a God Soul or a Jurisdiction?!"

I could vaguely figure out a few things and I immediately went into action. I stuffed the bottle into my luggage and activated the

Anti-Detection Magic Ring. The longer this object was exposed for, the higher the possibility that it would bring about trouble.

"Recommending me to throw it away, ‘with great risks come great benefits,’ what is this? Are you trying to dupe me? Why don't you just say that this toy is involved in some great secret, and I would reap great rewards the moment I succeed, so don't throw it away? Wouldn't that suffice?"

【System Notice: You would need to be alive to spend the money you earned. Are you sure you want to keep it? Alright, I admire your guts. Then, prepare to accept the Legend rank quest. System will be counting down from ten. Final confirmation: 10, 9, 1! Confirmed!】

"Wait, why did '9' suddenly drop to '1'! I haven't confirmed anything! Besides, what do you mean by Legend rank quest? Is it even more damned than Epic rank quest?"

At this point, if I still did not realize that I was scammed by the System, I would truly be a fool.

【Congratulations for triggering the Legend rank quest: Revival of the Ancient Sea God】

【The Ancient Sea God Sidunwar was the strongest God of his time. At his pinnacle, there were multiple Main God-class existences under his faction. Back then, the Queen of the Storms was just a rookie who couldn't even fit into the ranks. The grandfather of current Sea God Osweyar, Ancient Sea God Bose, wasn't even born then. Sidunwar single-handedly ruled over the oceans, the area of which far exceeds that of the entire continent. In fact, he even challenged the prestige of the

Goddess of Order. As for the results of that, since his bottle is in your hands now, I shouldn't have to elaborate too much on it.】

【Although he has already fallen, due to some coincidence, the God Equipment which holds his heritage and his profound secrets fell into your hands, and was activated by a God Power of the same origin. Perhaps, in the era nearing the end of the Gods, the might of the Ancient Sea God will be known to the world once again.】

【System Notice: Due to the overwhelming difficulty of the quest, the possibility of you accomplishing this quest is low. Thus, this quest has been divided into three portions. Rewards will be granted for the completion of each part. Furthermore, there are no punishments upon failure. Yep, that is because if you fail, there is no need for me to punish you anyway.】

【Quest Requirement Part 1: Collect God Powers related to the ocean to feed Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle and evolve it to its Semi-God Equipment form.

System Notice: Do not think about provoking the Sea God from the very start. Also, powerful Sea Monsters that survived the ancient and immemorial era would contain a trace of God Power of the Sea God within them.】

【Part 1 completion reward: Semi-God Equipment Sidunwar's Ocean Bottle, 100,000 Fate Points. Additional rewards will be granted based on the level of completion of the quest.】

Granting 100,000 Fate Points just by completing the first part of the quest? Then, if the whole quest were to be completed, wouldn’t the final reward be 400,000 or 500,000? Previously, so much effort was expended to complete an Epic rank quest and in the end, I even had to kill a Demon Count. Even so, only 120,000 Fate Points were given.

However, looking at it from another perspective, if a Demon Count were to appear in an Epic rank quest, then it would be difficult to imagine what kind of enemies would appear in a Legend rank quest.

"Do it! Make those with large guts swell and starve those with small guts! With these points, not only will I be able to keep up with the progress of my plan, it might even be able to be carried ahead!"TL: It means that those who are daring would get what they want, while those are timid would end up with nothing.

In Camisia and Fanderk's eyes, my hesitation seemed like worry for the current situation.

"Your Highness, do you need us to make a move?"

Even though Lamos's Eye, who instructed the Sea Monsters to attack the Borealis had died, the battle on the ocean did not cease. In actuality, it got even more out of control. As the Sea Monsters started to rely on their own basic instincts to fight, the battle grew even more intense and bloody.

The giant octopus was one of the most commonly seen Sea Beasts, to the point that it couldn’t be called a Sea Monster. However, possessing a 100-to 200-meter long massive body, it was one of the stronger Sea Monsters. Before it, even the powerful Sea Giants are only a delectable meal.

The snowy-white octopus was an Ice Element Magic Beast that often appeared in the Belor Oceanic Region and was reputed as the

“Living Glacier of Despair.” Regardless of the kind of ship, if they came into contact with the octopus, they would definitely end up sinking into the sea.

With a thick layer of ice armor covering it, the octopus magic beast looked exceptionally beautiful. If it were to be shrinked by countless folds, it might have been a suitable pet for a lady of nobility. However, the lethal poison contained in its ink made it too dangerous for such a possibility to be realized.

Upon finding out that it was unable to pull the warship into the sea, the giant octopus entangled half of its body onto the Borealis, making full use of its physical advantage.

Not only was the body of water surrounding the Borealis frozen by Ice Magic, the tentacles of the octopus that were full of suction pads held the body of the ship firmly in place. Some of the tentacles even carried ice blades that were the size of glaciers. Poisonous ink sprayed down upon the boat like a tempest.

Naturally, the Borealis wasn’t sitting there idly. The poisonous cannons that carried the power of corrosion kept blasting at the octopus, but due to the incompatibility of attributes, especially in the face of the ice armor of the magic beast, its corrosive abilities did not take effect. Even so, under the bombardment of over a hundred cannons, the octopus was soon wounded all over and its left eye burst from an accurate shot. There were many times that the auto-regenerating ice armor failed to recover in time to ward off the attacks.

Massive beasts tended to be powerful but slow. Their way of

fighting heavily relied on the physical body they were blessed with, and they were inflexible in such an aspect as well. From our perspective, the brawl between massive beasts was not much different from a street fight between hooligans.

The massive octopus that was riding on the ship and brandishing those ice blades bore some resemblance to a frenzied female using her purse to hit an unfaithful man. The poisonous ink was not much different from the saliva she would spit onto his face. As for the Horned Whale on the other side, it resembled a powerful man wielding a thousand-pound hammer, looking for an opportunity to deliver the fatal blow.

Whales were born the largest natural creature in the ocean, and the Horned Whale was an enlarged version of a normal whale. Just the portion of the monster that surfaced above the water was already a dozen stories high. From head to toe, it was around 300 meters long. Its gigantic body granted it a majestic presence. With just a slight whip of its tail, it was able to generate giant waves. Even more so, its ram possessed the strength to suppress everything.

Before it, the super warship Borealis could only be considered a malnourished dwarf. Every single ram carried the strength of the mountains, and the giant horn at the forefront of the ram was like an incredibly sharp blade that increased the threat of the attack by severalfold.

Just by looking at the situation below, the Borealis had been suppressed to the point that it might break apart at any moment now. It was no wonder that my two knights would ask if we should

make a move.

However, I shook my head in response. The battle beneath us was not suitable for us to interfere in, and there was no need for us to interfere in it as well.

"... There's no need. Don't underestimate that boat. It is the brother of your captain."

Hearing those words, the both of them froze for a split moment. Then, Death Knight Fendark exclaimed in shock, "Again? Your Highness, Omar has just escaped.... You are creating all kinds of weird things again. Aren't you afraid they will escape your control..."

Before he could finish his words, Camisia hurriedly covered his mouth.

"You fool. Have you forgotten that our prince hates people criticizing his creations the most? He treats them all as his children. If you were to reprimand his children before him, he would surely find an opportunity to get back at you. Furthermore, what do you mean by 'all kinds of weird things'? If these words were to travel to Captain Bastian's ears, how do you think he would deal with you?"

"Do you want to perform as a clown riding a unicycle past a ring of fire? Or do you want to put on a lion costume to play with rascals? If you want to commit suicide, don't pull me down with you! I had suffered enough back then when those rascals kicked my

head around like a ball. The more I think about it, the angrier I get. I had pleaded to you for help, but why didn't you save me? Instead you chose to leave this headless knight running about to find his missing head. I even injured some innocent bystanders! Do you know how miserable I was?"

"Back then, I saw the 'ball' calling out so excitedly, the rascals were also having fun, and everyone was so happy. I thought that you were all having great fun playing together. So we took this opportunity to take a break. The last time old Liester played with the rascals, they took away one of his ribs. Eventually, he found it in a hole dug by a dog after his lunch meal. The smell of fermentation.... If it gets to such a point, I would much rather duel the Church of Holy Light to my death!"

Recalling the most severe punishment of the Red Hunting Hounds, “Playing with the Rascals”, and those rascals whom even demons and gods went all out to avoid, even my fiercest knight couldn’t help but concede defeat.

"That.... Your Highness, I'm sorry. I have misspoke. Please do not hold a grudge against me."

Initially, when my beloved one was criticized, I was slightly angry. However, when I thought about Omar, who turned against me a few years after his birth, and the fact that I might meet him very soon, I could no longer find any interest in squabbling over this.

"In order to allow them to reach the pinnacle independently, after designing the optimal road to becoming stronger, I didn't

impose any restrictions on them so as to give them sufficient space to develop freely. Was my decision to give them freedom wrong? Omar, now that I think about it, the things that happened then were my fault."

I shook my head. “Envy” Borealis and “Pride” Omar were two completely different beings. Envy was just the modification of a boat. No matter how strong it grew, it would remain as an individual. On the other hand, Omar was different. He was capable of creating the most powerful army single-handedly. At his peak, he was able to stand up against a combined assault by the other Deadly Sins by himself.

Pride was the foremost of the Seven Deadly Sins. From the very start, I designed him to be a leader figure for the Seven Deadly Sins, as well as my assistant. He was unique from the moment of his birth. Due to the excessive expectations stacked onto him, he became excessively ambitious and arrogant. Not to mention, he was still way too young and lacked self-control and rationality. Although his abilities were outstanding, his mental state was too immature for him to be independent.

In the end, when I chose Bastian to serve as my captain, Omar saw what ought to have been his being taken away. To Omar, the incarnation of “Pride,” this was a heavy blow compared to the smooth-sailing life he had had. How could the young Pride tolerate this huge disparity between his expectations and achievements? Anxious, he chose to flip the table like a child and used his strength to start an uprising.

"Hm? What ability is that!"

Just when I was reminiscing the past, a change occurred in the battle happening below.

The severely damaged Borealis suddenly glowed with a green light and the surrounding seawater bypassed the layer of ice and gushed towards the ship. Bathing in seawater, the green glow radiated even more brilliantly and the damaged surface layer and spare parts started to regenerate automatically.

In ten seconds, along with the retreating of the seawater and the fading of the green light, the ship that was filled with holes a moment earlier looked brand new at the current moment, as though it freshly came out of the workshop.

Did it seem very familiar? That was the main ability of the Nine-headed Dragon, the regeneration ability that left us with a headache then!

The Borealis started to counterattack. Its first target was the Horned Whale, which was preparing to ram itself into the boat again.

Red light shined on the dragon figurehead at the bow of the ship. Finally, the prerequisites of the ability of the “Envy,” which had been prepared for a while now, was met and started to activate!

The red light struck the Horned Whale and it started to thrash about in agony on the surface of the water. Following which, a savage apparition of the Nine-headed Dragon Emperor flashed past

the head of the massive whale and a giant, bloody wound suddenly appeared on the head of the whale. Fresh blood spurted out furiously from the hole, dying a huge volume of the sea red.

A few seconds later, that giant horn floated to the bow of Borealis and attached itself onto it. From now on, the warship Borealis would have the strongest ramming horn!

"Envy? It all originates from comparison. Nobody's perfect, so it is perfectly natural to meet someone stronger than you in certain aspects and feel envious and indignant over your inadequateness. If it is an optimal amount of envy, it can propagate growth and this is known as one's drive. However, if it is excessive, it will be warped into resentment against them, and when it happens, envy will become dangerous."

"The butterflies have beautiful wings, but I don't. I'm envious of it, thus I rip off her wings to create a sample. This way, I can delight myself over my collection, and the butterflies won't be flying around to incur my annoyance either."

"The eagles have grand wings that can soar in the vast blue sky. We, humans, do not have wings, but we still dream of sweeping through the endless skies. Thus, through our hard work, we created a flying machine modelled after them."

"My Envy of the Seven Deadly Sins, Borealis, is a combination of the two kinds of envy. If it is envious of the butterflies, it will rip off their wings and attach it to himself. That way, it would be able to fly in the skies."

The designing process of this “Envy” wasn’t easy, but I had a plan in mind, and I also possessed the required technology for it already. All along, the biggest problem was the materials. After all, energy was required to drive the many spare parts that were required for its construction. However, it was already a blessing if the materials did not implode due to the clash of incompatible magic. So, how could the organs that originate from different sources operate normally?

"Do I have to provide a source of energy and main system for each of the spare parts and organs? Then what's the point of ‘snatching?’”

However, the heart of the Nine-headed Dragon and the Legend-tier Nine-colored Tear Stone perfectly resolved the problem.

Each of the nine heads of the Nine-headed Dragon possessed different attributes, but it was able to release breaths of nine different attributes under a single energy source, and I had already deciphered the secret behind it.

【Legend-tier Mystical Treasure Nine-colored Tear Stone: Allows the attribute of mana with the same origin as the Nine-colored Tear Stone to change freely.】

It was just a simple explanation of the object by the System, but it clearly showcased the noble status the Nine-headed Dragon held as a Semi-God. After experimenting and making certain modifications on it, the Nine-headed Dragon Heart and Nine-colored Tear Stone were adjusted to create a multipurpose energy

source that served as both an energy source and attribute modifier system for “Envy.”

Judging from how Borealis had successfully stolen the horn from the Horned Whale and melded with it, it seemed that the design of “Envy” worked.

Meanwhile, the battle was already reaching its end. After all, the enemy of the Sea Monsters was a fusion between Auland's most powerful warship and my Undead Creation abilities. When science and magic mixed together, the result was the birth of the most powerful monster ship of this era.

The horn was originally attached to the skull of the Horned Whale, thus making it its strongest weapon as well as its greatest weakness. Losing its horn, even if it were to be left alone, it wouldn't survive for long.

Seeing its companion on the verge of dying and the disappearance of the envoy of the Queen of the Storms, it released its grip on the warship without any hesitation and escaped into the deep sea.

"Let's go, we probably still have matters to attend to."

This was the first time Envy experimented with its unused talents in battle. If my estimations weren’t wrong, its internal system was probably in a wreck, so I needed to quickly make some adjustments.

As I moved forward, I realized that Camisia and Fanderk were still rooted to the spot.

"Your Highness, is it not suitable for us to be heading there in our state? We think it would be better for us to fly behind the warship. It is the same thing anyway."

Initially, I was slightly puzzled over their reactions when I suddenly came to a realization. They were hesitating over their identities as Undead. They were worried that they would be unable to get along with the living.

Unlike Liu Huang Mountain City which was used to the presence of Undead, the fear and resentment the Surface humans held for Undead were deep-seated. It was perfectly normal for a Paladin to charge at an Undead to vanquish it upon catching sight of one. Camisia and Fanderk's worry wasn’t unfounded.

However, in response to their hesitation, I firmly shook my head.

"Let's go. An ugly daughter-in-law has to meet her mother-in-law sooner or later. The more we try to hide something, the likelier it is to be exposed. Eventually, the lie might lead to problems that are difficult to resolve. Since it is impossible to conceal the fact, we might as well do it openly then."

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Just like the River Styx, the Heavenly Pillar seemed as though it

led straight up, but souls traveling through it would need to pass through innumerable dimensions before reaching the Heavenly Realms of the various Gods.

Of the many Heavenly Realms, there was one that was particularly desolate. As compared to the other Heavenly Realms that would accept an influx of innumerable souls every day, there were very few souls that entered here every month.

"The Heavenly Realm of the God of Law, Wumianzhe."

Without the invitation of the owner, trespassing on one's Heavenly Realm was a highly aggressive action. There had never been any visitors to Wumianzhe's Heavenly Realm until this day, so no one, not even the Gods, knew the appearance of Wumianzhe.

The massive Heavenly Realm was forlorn. The devotees that should have been providing the God with the Power of Faith wandered about aimlessly, and not a single God Envoy that should have been upholding order here could be seen.

"Similar to the God of Holy Light, the God of Law has also lost his sense of self. The Goddess of Moonlight must be truly furious for the unlucky Bastlar to be dumped on the God of Law, Wumianzhe."

This event might have been a secret of the Gods in the mortal world, but to the servants of the various Gods, it was a well-known fact. Bastlar, who had incurred the wrath of the Goddess of Moonlight, was labelled as an unlucky fellow by the many onlookers.

After lazing about in boredom in the Heavenly Realm for many days, just as he had really started to think that he was abandoned, he was summoned by God Wumianzhe.

"Don't be too surprised when you meet Wumianzhe."

While awaiting his audience with Wumianzhe, Bastlar couldn't help but recall the bizarre words the Goddess of Moonlight said to him a few days ago.

"Hmph, even if he has three heads and six arms, he won't be able to scare me."

But when he met Wumianzhe, in order to prevent himself from shouting out loud, he almost pinched his flesh out so as to prevent himself from exclaiming disrespectfully. Also, to prevent the overwhelming shock from being expressed on his face, the usually calm face of Bastlar forcefully scrunched up into a ball.

The reason? Wumianzhe didn’t don his mask in his Heavenly Realm, and he realized that he had met that face just a few days ago!

"Bastlar, obey my will. As my envoy, go to the mortal world..."

When Bastlar walked out of that hall, those legs of his, which theoretically should have never felt fatigue, trembled. The hero who had fearlessly partaken in all kinds of battle felt afraid. He

finally understood the feeling of being a pawn in a massive battle.

"This time, the stakes you all have put in are high. However, since I'm already on the boat, then let's take it to the end!"

Chapter 128: The Northern Lands

"Quickly shut down valves 17 to 30! The 3rd engine is on fire, hurry up and evacuate all personnel in the vicinity. Where is the firefighting squad? There's no such squad? Forget it, get an ice spellcaster then. There are no ice spellcasters too? What about Princess Reyne?"

"The C15-21 storage rooms on the ship’s port are leaking. Where's the maintenance team? There isn't such a team too? Fine, freeze the leaking water and fix it after everything else is stable. Princess Reyne is in the engine room?"

"Knight Elohim, it is your turn to shine. What? Your Frigid Nightmare is a Snowman that is only capable of physical battle, and is unable of freezing anything? You log-head, why are you so useless! Tie you and your Snowman to the hole to clog it up!"

"Where have all those darned engineers gone to? What? They've all gone to the bow to look at the newly-fitted ramming horn? Isn't that an ability of the ship? They aren't capable of magic, what can they comprehend by looking at it? What?! They are looking at it because it is unscientific? That bunch of bastards! Prince Clint, please help me drag them back here. No, you don't have to do anything. You just have to stand beside them to make them run back here."

"Red alert. What happened? What? Knight Elohim really tied himself and his Snowman into the hole and got swept away!? I was only complaining and drawing a comparison! He really did that? That log-head! Darn it, ask Tracy to pull that fool back up. I am

already busy as it is! To think he would add to my troubles!"

"Princess Reyne, please head to the control room, someone in there is looking for you. That ... Lord Diana, I know that you were looking forward to having a great duel with the enemy, but can you not hinder our job by standing in the corridor, fully clothed for battle? We have already received several complaints of your armor scratching them and you hindering their job."

"That Legend Beast Mastery Hunter on the deck, the battle has already ended and your beast taming skills didn't work. So, get your ass back here!"

"I almost succeeded! Transmitting love takes time! Also, can you blame me for this failure? Do you think you can convince someone by saying that you love him while beating him up?" Alright, the voice of a certain man who could not be evaluated still loudly resounded even in the midst of chaos.

It was already a chaotic sight from the moment I landed on the deck. Kelly and Harloys's voice echoed from the cabin. That eccentric bunch was either helping or not. Anyway, every one of them were busy with something.

Regardless of how well designed the Borealis was, and how incredible the theory behind it, this was still a new ship that had yet to be tested in a practical battle. Furthermore, it was pushing it a bit for the Borealis to face two powerful Sea Monsters in a prolonged battle for its maiden battle.

It looked like I was overconfident in Envy. It seemed that the Sea Monsters weren't the only one forced into a corner.

Practical battles were always the most effective verification platform. The first problems to be exposed were always the shortcomings and weaknesses of said platform. Under the strikes of the octopus and the ramming by the Horned Whale, regions that weren't converted into Undead weren't able to regenerate. In addition, the energy tubes were proven to be too weak and many of the initial designs were proven to be ineffective. In short, all kinds of flaws started exposing themselves.

“Envy,” as the soul of the warship, was no different from a newborn infant compared to the long lives of the Undead, and it is still far from becoming a force to reckon with. Sustaining the cannon bombardments and ordering the crew around sapped all of its energy while constant regeneration drained a large portion of its mana.

These flaws weren’t really big problems. To make the evolution from a prototype to a real product required exposing its flaws continuously so that they could be fixed over and over again. Even so, it would all be for naught if it fell in the midst of battle.

"Little Roland is back? That's great. Hurry and help out at the port. It’s still leaking over there."

I received a quest the moment I landed on the boat. In response to that, I simply smiled.

"Kelly, don't just grab me to be your laborer. There are also two other old friends here awaiting your orders. Fanderk is an Aurora Knight as well, you know. On the other hand, Camisia may be a little slow mentally, but he does possess incredible strength."

"Ah! Aren't they ... All right, I get it. It has been long since we last met. Representing the East Mist, I welcome your return. However, now isn't the time to be reminiscing about the past. Little Fanderk, please help us freeze those places where water is leaking. Sir Camisia, please help adjust the sail on the deck."

"Big Sister Kelly!? Great, you're fine!" Hearing that voice, Fanderk was slightly agitated. However, he regained his cool quickly.

"All right, we'll do our best."

As the type whose actions spoke louder than words, Camisia had already started moving the moment he heard those commands. However, judging from how motivated he looked, that “welcome your return” seemed to have made him very happy.

That day, the trademark spell Ice Aeon was cast. Coupled with the insignia of Emperor Yongye, the divine apparition of a black skeleton king, there was no way that the secret could be hidden any further. Furthermore, the flags that the Red Hunting Hounds carried then were the Mist War Flags. Rumors that Emperor Yongye was the Paladin Roland had been spreading in the upper echelons of human society for a very long period of time. In the eyes of the wise, my identity had probably already been exposed.

I did not doubt that there would be people who would make the link between me and Emperor Yongye, especially when the fact that I was an Undead Lich in my previous life had been exposed. At the very least, Kelly is aware of it. Of course, there were some matters that were better off not exposed. A huge batch of trouble would arise if the East Mist were to be associated with Emperor Yongye. Since they've decided not to reveal the truth, it is best to leave it that way.

Perhaps it is due to the camaraderie built in the midst of a crisis, or perhaps they had expected it to happen, but the two Undead Knights were swiftly accepted by the masses, even though terming it as “the masses” was slightly pushing it.

Ignoring the Gentlemen from the Underground World who had gotten used to living by the Undead, the knights of East Mist were initially stunned by the assistance of the Undead Knights. However, upon realizing that they were their senior, heroic knights, their attitude changed.

The initial estrangement between the living and the dead was resolved after Kelly and Reyna pulled them to one side to say something. After seeing the trademark Frigid Nightmare Mount, their wary gaze turned into one of reverence.

The Knights could be found surrounding the two Undead Knights every day, asking for pointers. Camisia and Fanderk also happily imparted their experiences and battle techniques to their juniors.

Upon seeing such a sight, I heaved a slight sigh of relief. After all, sending Undead into a country of living beings was a gamble. However, since the Undead Knights were able to get along well with the other knights from East Mist, this could be considered as a good start.

Of course, this also had something to do with the numerous Gods being too busy with the prelude of the Sacred War. If that wasn't so, even if the national religion of East Mist was the absolutely fair God of Law, which was protected by Wumianzhe, I would have never considered such a preposterous cause for action.

While the dwellers of the Underground World and people of East Mist were able to accept the two Knights, the reason why I said that “the masses is slightly pushing it” was because of Aulanders.

To most human kingdoms, the East Mist Communal Country was a nation of barbarians living at the borders. From the very start, they were living at the edges of the human society. Furthermore, with the past incidents, their relationship with the other countries and churches was bad. Due to Diffindor turning into a Land of Death in history, though, and the Royal Knights exacting vengeance against their enemies as Death Knights, they did not view Undead with much hostility. Furthermore, given the position of the two as historical heroes of East Mist and the guarantee from the Mist royal family, it wasn’t hard to achieve harmonious coexistence.

On the other hand, Auland was one of the human empires. They had been brought up with the notion that Undead were evil and the enemies of the living. Furthermore, the occurrence of the

Undead Calamity more than a century ago and the appearance of Xiluo Empire had increased the pressure on them. The numerous churches of Gods also repeatedly spoke out against them. To them, being on the same boat as the Undead was no different than being locked in a cage with lions.

This was the mainstream view of the human society. Anything associated with Undead was evil, and the Undead Emperor was the worst of the lot.

Thus, the next day, I received over thirty complaints, and more than a dozen of them changed their mind and decided to disembark from the ship.

"Umm ... why don't we fly behind by ourselves? We were already very happy these few days. After all, it is normal for the living to shun the dead."

Hiding behind their cloaks, the two Knight volunteers asked to leave. However, I shook my head to reject their proposal. I had already expected this and my will was resolute.

"Take off your cloaks now. I want you both to be like you were in Liu Huang Mountain City, living proudly with your heads held high. You two don't owe this world or anyone anything. On the contrary, it is this vile world that owes you all a debt."

My words made the two Knights lower their heads, even though they don't express their approval or disapproval of my words. I know that they are hesitating, afraid that their presence will cause

a loophole in my plans.

"Since we've already decided to tread on this path, there's no longer a road of return. Since we are intending to build a Liu Huang Mountain City on the Surface, so as to prevent the innocent from being discriminated or even punished due to their race and identity, we are destined to break away from the status quo of the world. The path will be fraught with dangers, and this stumble is just the appetizer. We have to overcome it. Since they're bound to leave sooner or later, why should we pay them any need?

"If our paths are different from theirs, there's no point in them accompanying us on this journey. It wouldn't work out even if we were to coerce them. So, if they want to leave, let them be. After all, I only need those who tread on the same path."

***

Winter in the Northern Lands always arrived early. It was common knowledge among the Northerners to, before the arrival of the interminable and harsh frost, prepare sufficient provisions and preventive measures against packs of beasts.

The packs in winter were the hardest to deal with. Starvation would make them rabid, and the result of the winter lockdown of the mountains was that they would start grouping together to challenge the human cities, regardless of the price they would pay for it. Anyway, starving to death was no different to dying in battle. Rather than starve or freeze to death, they would much rather give it a gamble.

When the Mist Country was powerful, they took the initiative to clear away the hordes of beasts around the towns, sometimes even into the snowy mountains. On one hand, it was for additional provisions in winter. On the other, it reduced the number of wild beasts in the surroundings to the minimum, thus reducing the potential stress that each town faced in winter.

When winter set in, the knights would engage themselves in the anticipated Winter Hunt. At that time, even if not for rations, the knights would volunteer to clear away the packs.

In peacetime, the Winter Hunt was the best stage to showcase one's abilities. Every year, knights traveled into the depths of the mountains to hunt down powerful magic beasts.

However, the current East Mist Communal Country does not hold such power. Lack of provisions and assault by savage beasts were like a sword of Damocles hanging over their heads, and it was difficult to persevere through the winter each year.

In this world where the strong preyed on the weak, weak countries would just continue to grow weaker. The war twenty years ago cost East Mist of its final enchanted metal mine, and life there became harsher.

Sorloin was an ordinary city just a short distance away from the capital, Diffindor. When the Auland Empire was still in the midst of a blazing summer, autumn had already started to set in here.

In the past, this was the period where its residents busied themselves with harvesting their crops with the accompaniment of joy and sorrow.

Being able to reap sufficient provisions was definitely a joyous affair. However, if the crops that were harvested were of inferior quality most of the time, then a tinge of sorrow would accompany the joy they felt.

The Northern Lands were plagued with winter half of the time, and most of its lands were frozen. Having crops that ripened once a year in tiny amounts was a normal situation. Furthermore, this involved the issue of whether they were able to safely get by the harsh winter. Thus, whenever autumn set in, everyone would be slightly crestfallen.

However, although the harvest wasn’t splendid this year either, the situation was slightly different.

"Don't rush, there is enough for everyone!"

The young knights carrying the insignia of the royal family were giving out provisions with bright smiles on their faces. It was already standard practice for the royalty and nobles to open their stores when food wasn’t enough. However, the royal family wasn’t really wealthy either, so they couldn't buy many provisions either. The military nobles in the Northern Lands might have been known for their combat prowess, but they were equally known for being penniless as well. It was already difficult for them to sustain themselves, not to speak of helping others.

Thus, the foodstuffs given out every year would run out quickly, and the winter each year remained a difficult trial for most.

Thus, the food distribution in the past was similar to a battle, as everyone tried their best to fight for them. However, this time, they were all lining up neatly.

The reason? The dozens of carriages and resources stacked into a small mountain. Since there was enough of it to go around, naturally, there was no need to fight over it.

"Princess Reyne's visit to the Auland was extremely successful. Not only did she raise our nation's prestige, she even won many foodstuffs and supplies for us. Don't panic, everyone. There is enough to go around, be it food, clothes, or blankets."

Different from their usual bitter faces, the young knights were giving out food with happiness radiating from their faces as they promoted the greatness of the royal family.

"Umm ... big brother knight, can you give me a little bit more food? Last year, you only gave me a sack of rice, and I was so hungry."

The little knight froze. He remembered this seven-or eight-year-old green-haired girl. Last year, she came here with her mother. Upon seeing how emaciated both of them were, he gave a part of his rations to them. Even though the provisions were obviously still insufficient, the mother and daughter still thanked him

profusely before leaving.

"Little girl, I can give you a little more this year, but where are your parents?"

Little Ailee was still so young, how could they send a small kid to collect rations alone?

"Daddy was bitten to death two years ago by a pack of wolves while trying to protect mummy and I. Mummy gave all of her food to me, and she didn't make it. Now, I am the only one left in the house. But mummy taught me how to sew, so I can still make a living with that."

The children of the poor matured early. Despite being just seven or eight, little Ailee was like a little adult in her speech. However, what she didn’t know was that her handicraft was poor, and the dolls she made were of poor quality, so how could she possibly make a living out of it? It was only that the little girl didn't have much to eat, thus the neighbors thought of a way to help this piteous but resilient girl.

Hearing that calm recounting of a terrifying nightmare, the knight was taken aback. He felt as though something was clogged up in his throat and he can't find any words to say. In the end, he could only sigh. After all, too much of such misfortune had befallen this wretched land. Even if he was motivated and filled with drive, how far could he help them? After such a long time, he was already numb to the endless waves of misfortunes that occurred here.

This land had been poor for many years. As a knight, the only thing he could do was hunt for prey and perhaps, hope that he managed to exact vengeance on little Ailee's enemies.

"The rations were a little heavy, so you probably will be unable to carry it. So why don't you play around in the field for a while. After I'm done with the distribution, I'll help you carry it to your house."

"Yup, thank you big brother knight. I will be playing at the Twin Princes Square then. Meet you under the statues later."

The acne-filled face of the young knight continued to stare at the figure of the little girl skipping away before shaking his head to jolt himself back. Putting his thoughts aside, he continued with the distribution.

"Looks like I will have to give out my rations this year too. Right, since it is time for the autumn harvest, there should be rats in the mine. After digging out a few wild grasses and tree barks from the ground, I can steal from the kitchen some ... Hey, strong lad over there! Don't you feel embarrassed taking so much? Share a bit of it with the others! What? You are taking for that old granny over there? My apologies."

The rash young warrior hurriedly apologized for his misunderstanding.

Little Ailee was very fond of the Twin Princes Square. Not only

was it the location where her parents met and fell in love, there were also two beautiful statues depicting the Twin Princes, and her mother had told her many stories under the statues.

The old rock sculptures had already faded in color, but the debonair two young knights were still clear to see. The one standing on the slightly elevated platform was charging forth with a sword that represented the symbol of authority of the Mist Country, and it seemed as though nothing could stand in his way. At the time, his silver plate was soaked red by the blood of his enemies.

The one who stood on the lower platform was a dashing young warrior. He carried a fiery staff in one hand, and a giant sword in the other. His mouth looked as though he was in the midst of chanting some kind of profound incantation.

The two of them looked like thirteen-or fourteen-year-old golden-haired youths. The faces on both of the sculptures were identical, and it was clear to see that they were twins. Even though the sculptures had eroded over time, the elder brother missing an arm and the younger brother a leg, their unyielding will still clearly exuded from the statues.

While the rest of the square was filled with fallen leaves and dust, the surroundings of the statue were swept clean. This showed the special position these statues held in the heart of the people.

This had almost become a symbol of the East Mist Communal Country. Statues of the Twin Princes could be seen in nearly every single town, and in a certain sense, they had become the avatar of

the Mist's unyielding spirit against fate, as well as the Guardian God of the Mist. In order to boost the morale of the citizens, Princess Reyne was also trying her best to imitate one of the two.

"Umm ... Big brother knights, I will be giving this to you. Please continue to protect our town."

Ailee placed a half-eaten rye bread below the statues. This was a part of the very few provisions she had left. She remembered that, in the past, her mother used to do the same as well.

When she was younger, Ailee's mother often recounted stories to her, and the story of these two big brother knights was the one that was retold the most frequently. Even though the contents of the story had blurred in her mind, little Ailee remembered that the big brother knights managed to chase away the evildoers and protected everybody.

She also remembered her mother saying these words.

"... Under the perseverance of the Princes, the Demons and Beastmen were driven back to their lair, while the greedy neighbouring kings and hypocritical church got their retribution, and everyone lived happily ever after."

"But... But Ailee is still hungry. Is this happily ever after?"

She can still see the bitter smile on her father's face then.

"... Daddy is useless, being unable to grant you a life of happiness. But believe in your daddy. The moment danger strikes, daddy will be just like the Twin Princes who fought to their deaths for the country. I will give up my life to protect you, mummy, and everyone else."

She still remembered the blissful smile on her mother's face then.

"Martin, I believe that you are the best knight, and that you will work hard to fulfill your vow when danger strikes."

She still remembered the moment when her father fulfilled her vow, and how miserable her mother wept.

"Stupid Martin, I don't need any knight, I just need you back!! ... When will these bitter days come to an end!"

She also remembered the smile on her mother's face before she departed.

“Little Ailee, don't resent the world, and don't hate this country. Our King has died in battle, and Princess Reyne was crowned when she was just fourteen. The Mist royalty has already gave their everything to fulfill their vows, so what do we have to complain about?"

"Just remember the favorite catchphrase of your daddy, 'Hope lies at the end of despair. As long as the Mist flag continue to hang

up high, we, as the people of Mist, will never give up hope!'"

"Little Ailee, your mummy and daddy were useless, unable to give you a life without woes. However, please live on with a smile. As long as you persevere, one day hope will arrive. Perhaps, the Twin Stars might even descend once more to salvage this country that is on the verge of collapsing..."

She remembered how hard she had tried to carve these words in her mind, but was still unable to recall the entirety of it. However, what left the greatest impression on her mind was the Twin Stars who would salvage this country.

"Big brother knights, perhaps you won't be here to save this country even by next year, but please bless me so that I can get past this winter. There's also Grandpa Marge, Big Brother Klore, Aunt Emmy, please bless them so that they remain safe through the winter as well. Oh right, there's Lulu too. She might always bully me, but don't blame her. She doesn't have her daddy or mummy. Please look over her so that we can play together next year. Also, please bless ... yeah, that kind-hearted big brother knight from before as well ..."

In a single breath, little Ailee recited over a hundred names; even the name of the dog who bit her was on the list. Just as she was still trying her best to think of the names of people who required blessings, her prayers that had never been answered received an answer for the first time.

"They will be here. Next year, the country will be salvaged by the Twin Princes."

"Everyone will be blessed as well. At the very least, no one else will starve to death."

"At the end of despair lies a glimmer of hope! When the Mist flag flies high once more, the people of Mist will be saved!"

The moment these words fell, a figure dashed past her. That familiar face made little Ailee exclaim in surprise.

"Big brother knight!!"

At that moment, the young knight had finally finished distributing the foodstuffs, and was carrying Ailee's and his own rations over. What welcomed him was a panicked look on little Ailee's face.

"Big brother knight! It is the other big brother knight! The other big brother knight has come to life and he said that he will protect everyone and salvage this country!"

The direction which little Ailee's finger pointed to was the elder brother of the Twin Stars sculpture. The Roland Sacred Sword in his hand pointed into the distance, as though showing them the way to a brighter future.

Knight Cloone was taken back for a moment, before nodding his head with a smile.

"Yup, Prince Roland will protect the Mist Country forever. The Will of Mist never yields."

Chapter 129: Returning Home

***Letters cut off by the mountains' ridges*,**

Winter turning into spring.

With trepidation I approach my homeland,

Fearing to ask locals passing by.

This is a poem from Song Zhi Wen when he was escaping from his exile back to his family.

Heading straight north, the nearer I approached that familiar land, the more I experienced the "trepidation of approaching my homeland." However, due to the worsening circumstances, it was impossible for me to back down even if I wanted to.

Since it was fated to be unavoidable, I might as well face it head-on.

Under my request, the Borealis stopped at every single town, and I would disembark from the ship to inspect the situation there.

Due to the frequent stops, the journey to East Mist Communal Country that should have only taken a week dragged on for two months.

This was my usual way of doing things, and I imparted this foundation of governance to Annie and Reyne as well. It was impossible to solve problems by sitting on a high throne and

commanding one's subordinates. To truly solve a problem, one had to first investigate what the crux of the problem was.

In this aspect, waiting at one's quarters for a report and witnessing it firsthand were two completely different sensations. “Twenty people starving to death” and “personally seeing ten frozen bodies on the street, and the tragedy of humans snatching food from one another” were two completely different matters. The former would only result in the information being thrown to the back of one's mind after flipping through it, while the latter could give any conscientious governor insomnia.

At this moment, the more I investigated the situation, the more appalling I realized the situation was, contrary to my estimations.

All of the worst predictions that I had held for the country came true. After losing its final mine, the bankrupt East Mist was unable to sustain its spending and had barely kept together for twenty years.

Furthermore, the war with the Beastmen a year ago had shaken the final foundation of East Mist. After grinding away the last bits of the resources of the country, to the point that it did not have sufficient money to purchase rations for winter, the East Mist Communal Country was on the verge of collapsing.

As usual, the crops this year were lacking, and the treasury was so poor that its doors did not have to be locked. It was nearly guaranteed that a famine would occur. It was an utter blessing that we had extorted a large sum from Auland Empire, so that not many frozen corpses would be found during this year's winter.

Even so, seeing those citizens who didn't demand much of the country suffering so bitterly made one feel terrible inside. When I met cases which I was unable to tolerate, even though I knew that my actions wouldn't bear much effect on the country as a whole, just temporarily alleviating the situation of the individual, I still chose to lend a helping hand.

"Perhaps this may not be sufficient to change the fate of the whole country, but at the very least, it is able to change the fate of the person before me."

Throughout the journey, we collected more than thirty orphans. If that Ailee wasn't adopted by the warrior Cloone, I might have taken her away with me as well.

Of course, where there were good children like Ailee who left one heart's aching, there were bound to be evil fief lords and immoral merchants who, as always, stockpiled like the ones that appeared in traditional folklore. No matter where, those who tried to profit from catastrophes could be found.

Whenever I met with such situations, I jotted it down in my book to remind me to get even with them in the future. If they really went too far—for example, there was a fief lord who threatened to exercise his droit du seigneur to extort from his people. which caused all of his people to cry in discontentment. I would not forget to fulfill my duties as an executioner. Of course, at such a moment, I had to thank Reyne for the proof as an envoy of the royal family.

(TL: Droit du seigneur, also known as ius primae noctis, refers to

a feudal lord's rights to conduct sexual activities with any woman in his territory. ED: There are no known contemporary sources for this actually occurring in medieval Europe.)

"Wonderful, the royal family has started to punish the evildoing nobles."

A chaotic era called for extreme means. Since it would be the death penalty even if they were to granted an impartial hearing, for the sake of the oppressed citizens of his territory, it would be wiser to spare the cumbersome processes.

Even though I made sure to conduct my activities covertly, the rumors still spread like wildfire, causing a rise in prestige and authority of the royal family.

However, what was relieving was that perhaps those nobles who craved for a better life had escaped to other countries. Perhaps this country had the tradition of distributing land to those who had significant contributions to the military. Or perhaps, due being in the far north that the corrupt and extravagant means of the human nobles had failed to make its way here, a large portion of the fief lords didn't spout nonsense like “Since we don't have grains, why don't we consume meat soup instead.” They did not try to free themselves of the smell of earth, and continued to fulfill their duty in protecting their people.

Yep, using the words of the “pure noble blood” inherited over a span of several thousand years by the “true nobles” of Auland, the supposed nobles of the Northern Lands were barbarians who used their muscles to think. They had yet to shake off the stink of manure off themselves.

However, if I had to say, compared to those supposed pure-blooded nobles who were obsessed with banquets, extravagance, and hallucinatory drugs, I still prefered these farmers and barbarians. At the very least, they had not forgotten their origins. At the very least, they were like the ancient fief lords, protecting their own people from famine and the savage beasts of the wilderness.

While the royal family was stuck in a desperate situation due to long years of wars, a large portion of the fief lords were still trying their best to prop up the country. I had seen many who worked hard to bring better lives to their people, and there were also quite a few who were willing to use all of their fortunes to bring relief to their people. Every time I met with such situations, I couldn’t help but feel that when the people and fief lords had yet to give up hope, this meant that the backbone of this country had still not broken. There was still hope for it.

This was the aspect that I found the most relieving my entire journey. There was a solution even for the hardest external problems, but if even the bones had started to decay, then there was really no saving the country.

I had promised little Ailee to change everything, but as for how I should go about doing it still remained a gigantic problem for me.

In this era where the citizens did not demand much, there were two basic prerequisites to ensure a country's steady development. First, a steady supply of ration. Second, the security of the society. These two factors were closely associated with the basic problem of

survival. As for jobs, commercial and education, all these were higher tier demands up the pyramid.

The Northern Lands had never been a fertile land for growing crops. However, it was rich with mines. Using minerals to trade for rations and daily necessities was the standard norm that had been continued for thousands of years. In this very land, the past Mist Country stood high and mighty in the North. However, the current East Mist Communal Country kept losing its territories and it was on the verge of collapsing. This cannot be blamed on the previous generations of emperors for being inadequate. In truth, there was only a single reason.

"When the country is strong, its people will be strong. When the country is weak, the people will be weak. When a country is weak, everything really is sorrowful."

It was clear to see what the core of the problem was just by doing a slight comparison.

In the past, the Mist Country was a prominent country. Despite being small, it wasn't weak. The country had a militaristic tradition. The numerous combination of tier-3 troops and the Aurora Knights who were at a minimum of tier-4 were renowned throughout the entire world. Of the seven elite knight divisions under the Royal Knight Order, any two of them were sufficient to sweep through the entire Northern Lands.

Back then, the powerful Mist Country had helped the human society ward off the Beastmen and Elves, while sealing away the Demon Abyss in the east. Furthermore, being rich with mines, not

only did the neighboring countries not attempt to choke the Mist Country of its food supply, they even took the initiative to trade with it.

However, after the East Mist Communal Country rose from the fallen ashes of the destroyed remains of Mist Country, many of its powerful troops were lost, and the rich mines were occupied by other countries. Furthermore, the countless years of resentment that had accumulated throughout history brought it many different enemies. With its externals enemies and internal instability, it grew weaker and weaker throughout the course of numerous wars.

"Weak nations long for strength." Perhaps a reason for the current weakness of the East Mist was due to the heroic Twin Star Knights being seen as its Guardian Gods. Although the Mist Country walked to its doom eventually, the historical story of how a single country caused the alliance army consisting of over a dozen country scramble to flee was still spreading to date, and those lost, powerful troops still remained as legends within the speech of the males of East Mist.

(Weak nations long for strength 国弱思武穆. The literal meaning of this saying goes that a weak nation longs for the appearance Wu Mu (which refers to Yue Fei, a renowned general in the Han dynasty).

However, when comparing to its glorious past, the current tragic state its people were in made them even more depressed. Even if the militaristic tradition still remained, the current East Mist Communal Country had already been reduced to a third-rate country. Not only was it unable to dominate the Northern Lands with its military prowess, it was barely holding up against the waves of beasts in winter and the ambitious neighboring country.

"If only we had sufficient provisions and resources, Ailee's mother would not have starved and frozen to death. With a stronger military, even if the Mist Country is still unable to conduct the Winter Hunt and prey on the winter beast packs, at the very least, it will be able to control the scale of the beast pack before winter arrives. Entire cities wouldn't have to move in the face of oncoming winter, and little Ailee's father wouldn't have died in the journey."

This was also why I said that I was only “temporarily alleviating the situation.” The foodstuffs that we extorted would be finished sooner or later, and without sufficient military power, even if we were to survive this year's beast wave by some luck, we would still meet with problems next year.

If I wanted to reverse all this, what I had to do was clear. Since the lack of food and a weak military were our foremost problems, then settling the issue of rations and strengthening the army was what I had to deal with first. This was the path I had to take to settle the problem at its core.

I already had a plan for strengthening the army, but the greatest problem still lay with food.

"Provisions, is it ... This is really hard to deal with."

The barren, frozen ground may be rich in mines, but it really wasn't arable land. It was possible to hire Mages to adjust the weather in the short-term, but the Mages would require certain

materials for their spell, and doing it on a large scale would be unsustainable for anyone.

Since the solution eluded me, I should check the walkthrough. Naturally, the “history walkthrough” wouldn’t provide me with the answer for this question. The one I had to check was a different one.

【Roland's Foreign World Survival Booklet】

The thick and worn-out booklet had a thick layer of dust coating it, and the pages of it had turned yellow. Just by changing its cover, it could probably be sent to a museum as a historical artifact.

This was the notebook I made when I first traveled to another world so that I wouldn't forget the knowledge of the foreign world. Upon consideration that I might come to use it this time, I brought it along with me.

"Earning money by creating glass." The front pages of the notebook were filled with ideas, but most of these ideas had a small note written below it. "The creation of glass is a success, but the idea is a failure from the start. Alchemists have already created an even more transparent glass in the midst of their experiments out of sheer coincidence. My efforts are in vain."

"Inventing gunpowder ... Goblins have already invented it. Printing press ... The God of Knowledge has built his career on this."

My failures were jotted below each of those ideas. The notes written on it were the traces of my failures after my hard work back then. If words reflect a person, then these squiggly words clearly revealed my immaturity and anger back then.

With the knowledge of a foreign world, I expected to build a big name for myself in another real world. Looks like I was filled with ambitions then, but was struck down repeatedly by the cruel reality.

However, this wasn't the time to be reminiscing about the past. Recalling my primary objective, I flipped to the page on food, and I was shocked by it yet again.

"I got it! The solution to our food problem. Yeah, that is to plant highly resilient crops with high yield. Corn, sweet potato, potato, hybrid rice ... Using the high-yield foreign crops to replace the ordinary low-yield crops? This sounds like a great idea."

While nodding my head in agreement with the excellent ideas written on the book, I closed the book and threw it against the wall.

"That's easy to say! Where can one find corn and similar high-yield crops in this world!"

Yes, that's the main problem. If this world had such plants, famine wouldn't be a problem in this world. Looks like I really wasn't reliable back then.

"I know that the possibility isn't high, but it is worth a try. System, are there any high yield crops that can be exchanged for points?"

【There are.】

A question that I asked without expectations turned out to be affirmative. Even so, I wasn't moved yet. After all, I have been scammed too many times.

"What conditions do I have to fulfill for it? If it were that simple, I would have exchanged for it back then."

【10,000,000 Fate Points per high-yield crop.】

Alright, the System was still as damned as I expected it to be. However, this time, I unexpectedly received an explanation.

【If high-yield crops were to appear in this world, under the propagation of Druids and Mages, it would change this world from its core. It might even shake up the society that is based on feudalism. You can't possibly afford such a twist in karma.】

So that was the reason why I am unable to exchange for it. However, the System's explanation reminded me of a possibility.

"Looks like I have to send a letter to Eaglestorm. It would be impossible for us to hire Mages, but as long as we acknowledge the teachings of the Druids, who are viewed as a threat in most countries, they shouldn't demand much from us."

Since we are intending to accept Undead in our country, Druids were naturally not a problem. Different from the expensive Mages, Druids didn’t require a catalyst to utilize their spells, not to mention that ripening crops was one of their areas of expertise.

"However, that isn't sufficient. No matter how many Druids there are, it won't be sufficient to satisfy the needs of the entire country. Looks like I still have to scavenge for other ideas."

【I have already hinted you to such an extent, have you not realised it? The System might be unable to exchange high yield crop for you, but can't you create it yourself?】

Create it myself? My first thought was that the System was trying to scam me. I was only capable of Undead Creation. It was possible for me create a being that would turn one into an Undead when consumed, but it was definitely impossible for me to create a safe high-yield crop.

【Have you forgotten from whom you learnt Life Creation from? You are still deeply etched in her mind.】

At that moment, I came to realization. My Undead Creation originated from the combination of the knowledge from multiple fields, and many of the theories within came from a certain great Mage of Life Creation. If my memory did not fail me, that great Mage's specialization was the creation and summoning of plants. It might be impossible to create a high-yield crop that was capable of changing the entire world. However, to create and modify a crop suited for a little country in the Northern Lands shouldn't be too much trouble for her.

Thus, I hesitated for a moment on how I should write the second letter. That great Mage was different from Eaglestorm. If possible, I wanted to never meet her again in my entire life.

However, after contemplating it, no better ideas came to mind. Thus, I could only start writing helplessly.

"Dear Senior Amelia, it has been long since we last met. Your junior has something to ask of you..."

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Even the longest journey will come to an end one day. All kinds of primary scouting job had been completed and the familiar capital, Diffindor, comes into sight. However, I got lost in worry about personal gains and losses.

There was no reason to drag it on any longer. When we were about to enter the city, news that I received impelled me to order the ship to turn around.

Half an hour later, on the mountainous terrain twenty kilometers southwest of Diffindor, I found my objective. It was a quiet camp and a bonfire burned silently. The entire campground was filled with cloaked black figures who were sitting around solemnly.

"The Church of Law led by Xueti has already entered the city, established the Church and started propagating the faith. On the

other hand, Sir Ferdinand and the other Undead Knights are camping outside the city."

This simple news surprised me. After all, I understood Sir Ferdinand well. He was adamant about keeping promises and obeying orders. Since I asked him to lead the Undead Knights into the city to tutor the new generations of knights, it was impossible for him to discount my orders. He should have already entered the city by now.

However, the moment I disembarked from the ship and caught sight of the situation of the campground, the reason immediately came to me.

Initially, I thought that Ferdinand only brought twenty to thirty elite knights of the various troops to serve as instructors, so it should have been easy for them to sneak into the city. However, there were at least 300 people clothed in darkness at the camp!

Not even speaking of sneaking into the city, with 300 intelligent High-tier Undead, at least thirty of which are Undead Lords, a force that was capable of stirring up an Undead Calamity and destroying any city of the living, if the news of them were to leak, the consequences would turn out to be disastrous.

"What is with you all, didn't I say that ..."

Old Sir Ferdinand walked forward to bow to me. The old Skeleton General revealed an embarrassed expression. He was aware that he didn't do a good job with this matter.

"Upon hearing that we were heading to Diffindor, everyone wanted to take a look. As a result, the number of volunteers kept increasing. In the end, if it wasn't for Captain Bastian stepping out to suppress them and repeatedly adjust the number of personnel to send over, the number might have probably reached 5000 or 6000."

Looking over, Fayde, Lucas, Timier, Slance, Lani, Kakana and all the ace knights were here. Under my gaze, they felt slightly embarrassed.

I sighed helplessly.

"To think that you all walked over from the Underground World like that, you all didn't get noticed in the middle of the journey? However, it is good that you all came as well. It just so happens that I am in need of manpower."

"We mainly chose tread in the barren mountainous regions and wilderness, resting the day and trudging forward at night. It was troublesome in some countries, and there were a few small-scale skirmishes, but no one was injured. However, as we are well-versed in the geographical terrain of Mist Country, no one should have noticed us yet."

"Indeed. But for us to be able to creep to the vicinity of the capital without being noticed, the knights of this generation are far too lacking."

Alright, after these fellows managed to sneak in easily, they even started to complain about the other party's weak defenses.

"Have you all entered the city yet? What does it feel like?"

Even though the bulk of the group might have been unable to enter the city, given their prowess, it shouldn't be difficult for a dozen of them or so to sneak in. But when I asked this question, the response I got was an awkward silence.

"You all ... It can't be that none of you have entered the city?"

Yet again, silence. However, this time, it was silent consent.

"When we were far away, we were so tempted to come over to take a look. Yet, when we are finally approaching our goal, somehow our courage to enter just withers."

Fayde's words received a wave of head nods.

Perhaps, this was another form of “trepidation to approach one's homeland.” Even so, the Undead Knights did have other concerns.

"After all, we are already Undead, and we tread a different path from the living. Actually, I am already satisfied just by looking at it from afar."

"The circumstances surrounding the Mist Country of this

generation aren’t good. If they were to be associated with Undead as well, they might end up being even more isolated by the human society."

"Your Highness, our stubbornness has burdened you. Actually, we are already contented with walking about our homeland. We have already discussed about it and have decided to leave twenty people behind as instructors while the rest of us tread back on the path we took here..."

"Enough!"

An inconceivable fury made me interrupt the lamentations of the knights.

"Are you all done? Satisfied with a single look? Tell me loudly that your journey of a thousand miles, shouldering the danger of traversing through the territories of countless countries was just to look at your home from afar! You all are just satisfied with this? You all are willing to return just like this? Do you all think of me as a fool?!"

“Of course ...” Lucas swallowed his words after a glare from me. Apparently, he didn't mean what he said.

The sight that unfolded before me was similar to the one with Camisia and Fanderk. The past few days, they also kept saying that “I had fun these several days, but there are still fundamental differences between the living and the dead. We will be content with just flying behind you all.”

The fact was that no intelligent being loved to be alone, not even speaking of being treated as a foreigner. Since they are happy with it, why should they allow the opinions of others to impede this happiness of theirs?

I knew that they were hesitant and fearful of facing the living. They were worried that they might bring about unintended consequences to my plan, that I would be viewed with enmity by the rest of the world. After all, the status quo was that Undead were evil. I could understand how this feeling of inferiority was born, but I did not intend to allow them to accept it!

"... Back then, you all died for the people of this land. The current you are all returning back to save them! You are all triumphant warriors returning back to your homeland, and not cowardly escapees! You don't owe anything to anyone, it is the bastard world that owes you all.

"Stick out your chests! All of you are my prided knights! Put away those pointless concerns of yours. Today is the day of our victorious return. For all of you who have sacrificed your lives for this land, why should you all hesitate to return to the land which you have given your all to protect? What are you all fearing? Answer me! Such cowardice. Do you all think you were wrong back then? Do you all regret your actions?"

My confrontation caused the 300 pairs of soulfires to silently burn in the dark of night. Their minds weren’t calm.

"No, we never regretted it!"

"Even if time were to rewind, we would still be willing to sacrifice our all for our homeland. But the current us ..."

Who could be willing to simply look at the homeland that they have dreamed about from afar? The consciences of these knights were clear, so why should they be condemned to such a cruel fate? They feared, but what they feared weren't powerful enemies. Our knights never, had never, and would never fear a battlefield. I know that what they were fearing were the hostile eyes of those whom they had given their lives to protect, just because they were Undead.

"Great! Since you all don't regret it, then there's no reason to hesitate. Take off those meaningless cloaks and follow behind me standing straight as you can. Please continue to believe in me! I will bring you the honor and respect you all deserve!"

All of the Undead Knights stripped off their cloaks and black auras of death started to emanate from them. However, I smiled. These were the cute knights that I was proud of.

"Fayde, my flag bearer, are you ready?"

"Yes, Your Highness!"

"Raise the flags!! Tell everyone that 377 years later, we have returned victorious!"

The tall Skeleton General carried the war flag of the army and started to beat the war drums. The rise of the Mist war flag also meant a declaration to the world that the immortal army was gathering once again.

Just as before, the horn of war was blown on and the war flags of the military soared in the air. The knights wielded their weapons and marched forward in their formations.

Since it was a march of victory, how could there be only a single war flag? Under my gaze, the other knights also raised their own flags and among them, there were flags carrying their glorious family emblems, division flags that represented the honor of the division, and even personal flags bearing their war contributions.

To the knights, the war flags represented their honor. Even if they were to lose their weapons, they wouldn’t allow the flags they bore to fall.

The continuation of a family's honor, the glorious military, and the personal contributions of an individual. There were quite a few who bore all three of these flags together. There were even knights who carried over ten flags. However, they were only stubbornly shouldering the war souls of their brothers along with them.

Slance had twelve flags, Fanderk fifteen, Barak twenty and Setta seventeen...

Some of the skeleton hands of the knights carrying the flags were

trembling. This wasn't due to their weakness, but rather the heavy weight of the war flags. A flag bearer who was last in his division was afraid that he might bring shame to the honor the Snow Lion War Flag represented.

Ed Ron. His family had served in the Snow Lion Heavy Infantry Division for generations. However, this infantry division was struck by forbidden magic during the battle in Diffindor, and the remaining one hundred survivors had fought to the bitter end in the ensuing battle.

There were also knights who lost the final war flag of their unit in battle. However, they used the fresh blood of the enemies to regain their honor, and the shabbiness of the war flag that he personally stitched together made it hard for people to look at. Even so, no one mocked him. On the other hand, they allowed him to walk at the forefront of the marching contingent.

His name was Timier. The Black Griffon Aerial Unit had been wiped out; not even their corpses remained. Only he, who was a Dragon Knight, answered my summons and returned from hell.

The war flags were an extension of history. What he inherited were the bones of the loyal soldiers buried beneath the lands, the will of the warriors who had given their all for the land.

This is slight alteration of a poem by Ma Yuan, a general in Han dynasty. The whole poem means that the entire lands are filled with the bodies of the loyal soldiers who had fought for their country, is there a need to trudge their bodies back in horse carriages just for burial? (that's how they sent back the bodies back then) Back then, when Mao Ze Dong's son died in battle, and his

general asked if there is a need to bring his body back for burial, that's how he answered.

Every single flag was unbearably tattered, and every single of them represented the countless sacrifice and passion of brave warriors, as well as the memories of blood and flames beneath these flags.

In the distance, the morning sun slowly rose, and the last breeze of the night blew past. The tattered war flags rose in the air and we, the remainders of the fallen army, returned victoriously.

"Band! Rydestein's Heroic Victory, 3rd Movement—Celebration of the Triumphant Return!"

Accompanied by the echoing of the horns was music that represented the victorious return of warriors. The banshees started to use a gentle and cheerful rhythm to sing along with the music and in the midst of the harmonious orchestra, even the most awkward of knights started to hum along.

The march of triumph which brought a smile to everyone’s face sounded by everyone's ears, as the celebration of victory in the past reappeared before everyone's eyes. This was just like the innumerable times when we had returned triumphantly, preparing to be welcomed by the cheers of the citizens within the city.

"We ... are home!"

Chapter 130: The Sinless City

As the capital of the small country of East Mist, historic city Diffindor was quite renowned in the entire world. However, the tourists who were visiting the city for the first time always felt disappointed by the sight that awaited them.

This city was far from the magnificence of the capitals of other massive countries. On the contrary, it was ruinous and to this day, many old abandoned buildings still stood. While ancient architecture was worth looking at and appreciating as an art form, ancient ruins were lacking in that kind of attraction.

The city might have held a significant area and possessed the grandest city walls and defensive capabilities in the entire Northern Lands, but the population living in it was far from its historical height. Despite that only a third of the city was still in use, the people in the city were still sparse.

The Mist Bloodline had guarded the northern borders of the human society for several thousand years, and this ancient city which had undergone innumerable battles was its capital. History records that this city had been purged by foreign tribes three times, but the people of Mist still stood time after time to reclaim their territory to rebuild their capital.

In the long annals of history, it wasn’t the barbarian invasions of the powerful foreign tribes that dealt her the fatal blow. It was the dagger in the back that almost reduced this infallible ancient, historic city into ruins.

"1520 AD, after guarding this city for 15 months and expending all gunpowder and provisions, the human alliance army finally successfully conquered the final standing city of Mist Country, its capital Diffindor. Prince Roland and the troops he led died in the city."

This simple one line description was written in the historical books. However, to the people of Mist, this was a grudge that they carved into their bones.

That year, under the summons of Pope Paul the 9th of the Church of Holy Light, seventeen countries came together to form an alliance army. They took advantage of the lapse in the Mist Country's defense, when its main army was dealing with the Beastmen in the north and Demons in the east, and stabbed their dagger violently into its back. Then, their purging of the city directly caused Diffindor to become a Land of Death.

Soon afterward, the rampage of the Undead Knights blinded by vengeance and the Demon army that Prince Karwenz brought turned the seventeen countries into history, thus causing the most tragic loss of human society.

"The Church of Holy Light cannot be trusted. The darned human kingdoms and nobility are even less credible!"

This had been the solemn vow the people of Mist carved into their bloodline after being betrayed three hundred years ago. From there on, that was also how they operated.

More than two hundred years ago, the founder of East Mist Communal Country, Charles the 1st, claimed to be Roland's descendant and drove away the Beastmen colonizing the land and bought a portion of the Mist Country's territory back from the Elves and rebuilt the Mist Country.

In order to purify the Land of Death so as to establish Diffindor as its capital once more, Charles had requested the assistance of the Church of Holy Light back then. Even though the Pope had expended much of his energy to turn the Land of Death into a suitable living place, the perception of the people of Mist only improved slightly, from throwing stones behind their back to sneering at them, and building a regional branch in their lands. Furthermore, this was in consideration of the fact that Prince Roland used to be a Holy Knight.

Of course, given that the faith of Holy Light was the main faith of human society, the Mist Country's hostility towards the Church of Holy Light and other countries caused it to be isolated from the rest of the human society once again. This was also one of the major factors in its gradual downfall.

However, the stubborn Northerners never regretted their actions. Anyway, they were already viewed as barbarians by the “civilized” others, so it shouldn't matter that they are slightly more “vindictive” and barbaric. Rather than believing in gods living above the clouds, they believed more in the swords in their hands and the protection of their ancestors. However, when they were viewed with enmity by the rest of the world, and had been pulled into innumerable wars, it seemed that the newborn Mist Country was nearing its end.

However, there was a person who didn’t agree with it. He intended to work together with the new Mist Bloodline to reverse this hopeless situation.

Today was the day that would go down in history.

The day had barely brightened, and the citizens deep in sleep awakened to the cheerful march of a victory tune. The sound of galloping horses could be heard from the royal palace coming from the city gates, seemingly urging and rousing this ancient city from its slumber.

A red carpet was laid at the entrance of the city gates. The royal family ceremonial guards and band started to play a tune as the Royal Knights begin to position themselves in a formation. The guards on the city wall tossed flower petals of all colors downward. This was the prelude to the march of victory, as well as the beginning of a festival that everyone enjoyed. However, the one that was held a year ago was for a battle a year ago that resulted in great losses for East Mist and the Beastmen, and the death of the king loomed over the joy of victory.

Hearing this victorious melody once again, the civilians walked out of their doors excitedly and a commotion burst forth as they swarmed towards the city gates.

"The victory melody? We didn't fight any war recently. Could it be that the Knights had went to hunt down the beast packs recently?"

"Are you a fool? Princess Reyne's diplomatic visit to the Auland Empire is so successful this time that the returns from the trip are not any less than the gains from a war."

"So that's the reason! Princess Reyne has returned? Yeah, thinking about it now, it's about time for it as well."

The carriages from Auland carrying a large amount of resources had arrived at their country earlier than the princess. The overjoyed crowd filled both ends of the street as they awaited the return of their princess, hoping to present their welcome and gratitude to the returning princess.

Kachi kachi. Amidst the sound of the turning of the tires, when the massive city gates gradually opened, the first figure that entered caused everyone to freeze.

"Princess? That's not it."

That person may have shared many traits with the princess, but there were also many differing features between them.

Princess Reyne wasn’t that tall, nor was her face that mature. More importantly, that older version of the ice armor obviously belonged to a man. There stood a young man with a smile on his face.

"He seems so familiar, but I am unable to put my finger on it..."

"Statue! The Twin Stars Statue!"

"Yes, if Prince Roland was at this age, this should how he should look!"

"They really look identical! That disposition, that smile and that Roland Sacred Sword by his waist.... Wait, Roland Sacred Sword!"

In the depictions of the statues, the missing symbol of royal authority was striking. There wasn’t a single Mist citizen who did not know the design of the sword. Furthermore, the sword was emitting a light, silvery glow, similar to how it was described in the legends. Also recorded in the legends was that this sword fell along with Prince Roland.

While the citizens were shocked over the Roland Sacred Sword, the Royal Knights, who had only received the orders to play the melody for the march of victory, burst into commotion as well. When the knights behind the young man entered the city, everyone was shocked.

Those familiar tattered war flags swayed with the wind as the Undead Knights marched proudly under the sun.

Before the Royal Knights could draw their swords as a precaution against them, the young man's declaration echoed in the entire city under the assistance of Amplification Magic.

"I, Holy Knight Roland, the final king of Mist Country, have

returned along with my Knights."

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The red carpet beneath our feet couldn’t be considered high-tier, and it was a little shabby to be using it to welcome guests of the country. However, as I stepped on it and gazed at the Mist citizens before me, I felt inconceivably happy.

The Undead Knights had stepped into the city. At this point, they had already thrown away all of their doubts and the fiery soulfire in their eyes displayed their resolute will.

Yes, they had nothing to worry about, and there was nothing for them to fear. They were just returning back to their country. Even if changes had occurred to their bodies, the heart of a traveler craving to return back to their homelands hadn't changed.

Soon after I passed the city gates, Reyne, who was riding on a Frigid Nightmare, appeared with a smile. Her presence effectively soothed the tense atmosphere initiated by the presence of the Undead.

"Princess Reyne? What is that? That lustrous white mount?"

"Frigid Nightmare! That is the mount of the legendary Aurora Knights! I never thought that I would be able to witness the legendary Aurora Knight with my own eyes. Could it be that the young man is really Prince Roland?"

While the citizens of East Mist were shocked by the reappearance of the Frigid Nightmares, while at the same time cheering for their Princess Knight for advancing to become a Legend-rank Aurora Knight, the very next sight made all of them gasp in shock, as well as verifying the authenticity of “Prince Roland's” identity.

Fifty-four Frigid Nightmares marched in neatly through the city gates. Even though the knights riding on them were beyond recognition, the identically sculpted ice armors couldn’t possibly lie. In the past, that soul mount that was emitting a bone-freezing chill was a privilege of the Mist Country. More importantly, those fifty-four Aurora War Flags dispelled all doubts of their identities.

"The Order of Aurora Knights! It is the Aurora Knights Order, the legendary knight order that was able to easily defeat an army a hundred times its size! That was the most prided force of our Mist Country! The unstoppable Knights of the Northern Lights who had dominated the Northern Lands!"

Weak nations long for strength. Throughout the years, when East Mist was suppressed and bullied by the other nations, the people of Mist couldn't help but recall their previous glory.

"Are those Alchemist Knights incredible? Are those Wolf Knights of the Beastmen incredible? If our Aurora Knights were still here, those shameless fools would never be able to be so audacious!"

As their own knights got beaten down innumerable times due to the difference in the level of equipment, this resentment and

grudge passed down from one generation to the next. Eventually, the lamentations became sighs of helplessness and despair. Sometimes, they couldn’t help but accept the fact that their homeland was no longer as strong as it used to be.

"The Mist Country which used to dominate the world with their cavalry has became a weak nation with no powerful troops."

For a period of time, there were rumors that Princess Reyne had displayed the might of an Aurora Knight in the Auland Empire. However, to the Mist citizens who were aware of the history of the Frigid Nightmares, they knew that it was impossible. So, they simply treated it as a rumor.

"Sigh, if only it were true. If we still had Aurora Knights on our side, it would be impossible for the others to step on us."

At this moment, Princess Reyne, who the citizens were familiar with, stood out brightly even in the midst of the Undead Aurora Knights. The Frigid Nightmare in the shape of a horned beast verified those rumors to be true, and the Aurora Knights had returned to the world!

"Is it our Princess who has brought back our pride, the strongest Aurora of the Northern Lands?"

"That is Knight Captain Elohim! He has also became an Aurora Knight! The Heavens have blessed our Mist Country, the Aurora Knights have returned us! We will no longer be that weak third-rate country anymore!"

Perhaps the Aurora Knights may not have been the strongest bunch of my order of knights. However, to the Mist citizens, they were the symbol of the strength of the Mist Country when it was at its peak, the precious jewel that they hoped to regain.

The reason why I had the Undead and Aurora Knights line up at the front, putting Reyne and Elohim in the midst of them, was to lower the hostility the citizens may have held towards the Undead, as well as to establish some correlations within the minds of the citizens.

"Could that man truly be Prince Roland? Could it be that those Undead are the final Aurora Knights in the Battle of Diffindor?"

As the host, Reyne knew what to do after I shot an encouraging look at her.

The young, female knight stepped out of the formation and faced the hesitating citizens. She took over the possession of the Roland Sacred Sword from me and made a declaration that would go down in the annals of history.

"I, Reyne Qin Mist, a descendant of Mist royalty, in hopes of regaining the might of our country, found my ancestor, Prince Roland, and his order of knights! From now on, the Aurora Knights will shine in the Northern Lands once again! Under His Highness and the loyal Order of Royal Knights under his command, our East Mist will rise anew!

"Perhaps some worry about their identities as Undead. However, I can use my honor and life to guarantee that they are existences worthy of trust. My people, I know that you all have your own worries and hesitation. After all, they have all became Undead. Yet, back then, they used their lives to protect their own city. Now they stand up once more to avenge their friends and families even after their deaths. Even though they are currently Undead, and there is a risk of their souls being eradicated by such a course of action, they chose to help us. Towards these Knights, what do we have to doubt?"

The declaration of the young, female knight echoed throughout the entire city through the usage of Amplification Magic, and that clear and bright voice resounded to and fro in the city. In fact, even before she made that declaration, the radiance of the symbol of royal authority, the Roland Sacred Sword, had already ignited passion in the hearts of the citizens.

"The Roland Sacred Sword! Holy Knight Roland and his Order of Royal Knights have returned! Our Princess has found the missing symbol of royal authority and the knight order!"

Facing the agitated crowd, Reyne paused for a slight moment before continuing.

"Their faces might be scary, but look at the emblems they bear on their armor and weapons. Look at the Mist War Flags which had undergone countless wars. The Will of Mist will never yield, and the Mist War Flag will never fall. Even after their deaths, they still continue to protect their homeland. Isn't this another form of the Will of Mist? If we can't believe them, who can we believe? Are we

to believe in the untrustworthy Holy Light instead?"

Due to the lack of time, I didn't have sufficient time to guide Reyne on her speech. Looking at the impassioned speech unfolding before me by the forthright Reyne, I couldn’t help but to smile in relief.

While Reyne was still in the midst of her speech, the sky suddenly darkened and a gigantic beast swooped across the sky, generating countless cries of shock.

"Bone Dragon? No, there's someone on top!"

"He actually jumped down! That is a Bone Dragon Knight!"

Upon landing, Timier raised the familiar Black Griffon War Flag. Since the Roland Sacred Sword and Reyne had already verified my identity, it was time for me to say something.

"Timier, the final remaining Dragon Knight of the Mist Country. In the Scott Aerial Battle, our Black Griffon Riders unit were besieged by enemies who outnumbered them by more than fivefold. In order to cover the retreat of our ground troops, the unit fought bravely to their deaths, and Timier himself killed two of the three Dragon Knights that were attacking him simultaneously!"

Despite the intentionally flat voice, my words still stirred countless shocked exclamations.

Without a doubt, giant dragons stood at the very top of the food chain. An ultimate force like the Dragon Knights could only be found in the greatest of the empires. It is something that the current East Mist dared not even think about. Based on historical records, the Mist Country of the past did possess numerous Dragon Riders. They never imagined that after such a long time, they would be able to witness this sight with their own eyes.

"Our aerial unit consists of a group of young men, but due to the brutality of an aerial duel, the losers often do not leave a corpse behind. Even though the aerial unit is the elites of the Mist Country, only Timier responded to my summons and dealt the second wave of vengeance against those darned invaders!"

After bowing, the proud sole Dragon Knight waved the Black Griffon War Flag and led the way on the red carpet of victory, as though he was a brave warrior who returned victoriously from war. No, he was indeed a brave warrior who returned victoriously from war!

"These are our Knights. Vile Undead? No! We are just a foolish bunch who returned from hell due to the reluctance to accept the occupation of our beautiful Mist Country by invaders!"

As Timier and the Aurora Knights proceeded forward side by side, those who walked through the city gates behind them were the remains of each army, and I started to go on a recollection of their history.

"Polar Bear Squad, the heavy infantry of the royal family! It is made up of the merging of the remains of two squads near the end of the war. Equipped with Avalanche Guardian plates, they are our strongest barrier and fortress! After going through innumerable wars, sixteen men remain of them, and the strongest in their midst, as well as the youngest, is Carlos Tills."

I nodded my head gleefully as I introduced one of my most trusted knights to the world.

"He is the 'Mobile Fortress' I rely on. In order to cover the escaping refugees, he used his body of flesh and blood to jam the rock bridge, using his physique to stall the butchering blades of the invaders. Back then, he died from being pierced by hundreds of arrows. By then, his blood had already flowed dry from his body and not a single bone of his body was complete. In the end, he could only come back as an Abomination. That year, the Defensive Knight who I am so proud of even now, Carlos Tills, was only fifteen year old."

It was hard to imagine how an Abomination could show a look of embarrassment, but at this moment, Carlos was nodding his head in embarrassment towards the citizens. His smile still remained as it was in his youth.

"Perhaps you all have never heard of Asmu Hound Tamers, but it is a special type of Ranger troop. Their representative is our heroic scout...

"The Knight of Swift Wind, Slance, might just be just an ordinary Dragon Lance Knight, but he is one of the backbones of the army of

the Mist Country...

"Oh, this is Great Sword Saint Fayde. I'm sure that you all must have heard of his name as the best Sword Saint of the Royal Knights. Of course, that is if his father, the old Sir Ferdinand doesn't undercut his position...

"This is..."

One by one, the names of the knights were listed, followed by the identity of the knight and their past exploits. That history of their resolute determination appeared before the eyes of the citizens once more, and they realized that these frightening Undead Knights used to be the legendary heroes of the Mist Country.

Going by the traditions of the Northerners, if they were upstanding heroes when they were alive, then they were figures worthy of respect even after their deaths.

Since the unknown could bring about fear, then allow me to dispel that fog of secrecy.

As long as they had not sinned, even as Undead, the loyal and powerful knights would only be a pride of mine, so there was no reason for me to conceal their existences.

However, some citizens did not agree.

"Damn those Undead, to dare to step into the world of the living!"

Despite the huge, golden robe, his plump belly could not be concealed. As the Archbishop of the East Mist Regional Church of Holy Light, under the protection of a ring of Holy Knights and Priests, Archbishop Lorf arrived at the scene. It was very possible that the panting him was the reason for the tardiness of the Church of Holy Light.

Just like how no Justice Knight would let any sinners who defied the Rules of God slip by them, the Church of Holy Light on the Surface did not spare any “evil” Undead. The proud entrance of the Undead into the city was an insult to the Holy Light and the Origin of Order.

Under the drive of the fervent pursuit of their faith, despite the overwhelming difference in strength, the Holy Knights still put up a formation in front while the Priests prepared to assist them from the back, as though they were preparing to start a fight at any moment.

Their arrival was within my calculations. In fact, they arrived later than I have expected, and I had already prepared something in advance to deal with them.

"Why do I remember that this is a Land of Law? Isn't the Church of Holy Light overstepping its boundaries?"

My confrontation caused old Lorf to freeze for a moment. Apparently, the fact that the Law had become the national religion of East Mist meant that he had failed thoroughly in his mission to

spread the teachings of Holy Light.

At this moment, the person I was waiting for also arrived at the scene.

"Hey, old Lorf, don't go too far. The East Mist Communal Country has already declared the faith of My Lord to be the national religion of the country. This is already a Land of Law. Aren't you going too far to try to kill someone before the Pope of the God of Law!"

Xueti rushed to the scene on time, winking at me mischievously the moment he appeared. I saw many familiar faces standing behind him. That familiar silver mask exuded the radiance of the Power of Law. He looked like he had grown significantly stronger since the ascension of Wumianzhe.

"Tauren Pope!"

The Church of Law that had arrived two months ahead of us had settled into East Mist officially, and the citizens had already gotten used to this amiable Pope Tauren.

The moment the Church of Law arrived, they positioned themselves in between us and the Church of Holy Light, clearly trying to prevent a conflict between both sides.

"Darn it, they are vile Undead! They are the enemies of all beings of Order! Why do you all stop us?"

"Archbishop Lorf, before My Lord, there is only the 'innocent' and the 'guilty'. Please do not use race as a means to differentiate good and evil. At this moment, I can only see you all trying to commit a crime. This is the divine territory of the Church of Law. Do you really take us as mere ornaments?"

"But they are still Undead. They are bloodthirsty and savage. Even if they used to heroic figures, can you ensure that they will not harm others due to their natural instincts?"

The notoriety of the Undead was deeply ingrained into human society. The furious howl of the middle-aged Holy Knight Captain was extremely persuasive, causing hesitation among the citizens. At this moment, Xueti laughed heartily.

"Of course we can. I can guarantee in my name as the Pope of the God of Law that they are Heroic Spirits in the truest sense, and not vengeful spirits driven by their bloodthirstiness. They lived in Liu Huang Mountain City for more than a century, but never was there a murder case from them. Just a while ago, they played a part in the slaying of a Demon Count. That was a grand battle worthy of the word ‘epic.’ On the other hand, your Holy Knights always cause trouble in the name of eradicating evil, disrupting the order of the city."

The position of the Pope of the God of Law was incomparably noble. From a certain sense, it was an equivalent existence to the Pope of the Church of Holy Light, Sincarlos the 3rd. At this moment, Xueti's words were even more convincing.

"You ... You vile dwellers of the underground, you are a conspirator with them. You are all miscreants! How can your guarantee be trusted!"

A split moment after the Archbishop of Holy Light howled in anger, he immediately covered his mouth. Even so, he was unable to retract that gaffe that could even qualify as a personal insult.

"Are you sure? You dare to insult a Pope of a True God as a miscreant? Also, I cannot ignore your discrimination against the Underground World. This is a grave insult against the entire Church of the God of Law. I will send a letter of remonstrance to Sincarlos the 3rd."

A slip of the tongue in a public area could not be resolved that easily. Just as Xueti was intending to pursue Lorf on that matter, even though I knew that it wasn’t an appropriate moment for me to be speaking out now, I still choose to stand up.

Miscreant? Who was the miscreant? There were some things that just could not be tolerated any further.

"Lorf, is it? You are the successor of the bloodline of Cardinal Lorf the Philosopher? Fine. From a certain viewpoint, I, already a Holy Knight from 300 years ago, can be considered as your senior. Then, let's talk about who the miscreant is. Fanderk Jenon, you should have heard of this name."

The moment my words rang out, sweat droplets started to flow down the forehead of 'Philosopher Lorf' profusely. As the future

Cardinal successor, Lorf was aware of that forbidden history.

"You are unable to reply? Of course, that is an unfair trial that the Church of Holy Light is ashamed about! For a kind, devout believer in the Holy Light to be hanged as a vile heretic, the true miscreant is the one who sits at the seat of the judge! Is this the justice and impartiality that the Church of Holy Light speaks of?"

Under my interrogation, the pale Death Knight slowly stepped forward. To those who were aware of it, the face of the Death Knight was no different from the one recorded in history.

"Everyone! Just like what Prince Roland has mentioned, I was once a Holy Knight. However, as I was unwilling to testify for the Cardinal, who was expelled from the Church afterward, I was hanged in the Holy Light Square to pin the blame on Mist Country."

"There... There is no such thing! No, I don't know about it."

"Then do you dare to swear upon the authenticity of your words in the name of the Holy Light?"

If one swore falsely in the name of the Holy Light, it was equivalent to turning one's back on the Holy Light. How could Archbishop Lorf, who viewed the seat of the Pope as his ultimate goal, possibly make such a vow?

However, even if he didn’t make such a vow, that awkward

silence, pale face, and sweat drops that flowed down his forehead had explained everything.

A commotion immediately broke out. Not only were the citizens astonished and furious, even the Holy Knights and Priests who were willing to sacrifice themselves for the propagation of the teachings of the Church were in disbelief.

Even though the current Church of Holy Light had a good reputation, it did not mean that it didn't have a shadowy past. If they themselves were immoral and guilty, and hid their sinful past, what right did they have to represent the Holy Light in bringing judgement upon evil?

Looking at that ugly, fearful state, I laughed. However, this was a laugh derived from overwhelming rage.

"I swear in the name of the Holy Light that the reason why the calamity then would develop to that point was due to the filthy and vile upper echelons of the Church of Holy Light. That supposedly sacred battle was just a depraved act by a bunch of greedy wolves under the leadership of a lion! You bunch of hypocrites are just using the flag of a sacred battle to satisfy your greed through plundering. You all are the source of all evil! Look at me! How dare you degenerates use the Holy Light?"

Unfolding the wings that radiated the blinding Holy Light and Sacred Inferno, that dense concentration of Holy Light power was the best proof for the authenticity of my words.

"I am a Holy Knight as well, but I don't worship the God of the Holy Light. Even more so, I won't be a puppet of that laughable Church of Holy Light of yours! I only believe in the justice of the Holy Light itself! The Holy Light never made us kill innocent. Knights, do you think that your own justice can be dictated by the teachings of the Church of Holy Light? If so, who will guarantee the justice of the Church of Holy Light? Perhaps your supposed actions of eradicating evil are only another 'righteous flag' that you all use to murder the innocent!"

As a War Angel, I was a God's Envoy in the teachings of the Holy Light. Under my furious glare and the interrogation of the pure Holy Light on their conscience and faith, a large portion of Holy Light users in the field started to waver.

And when these interrogations started to spread across the entire world, the Church of Holy Light would begin to fracture, and a faith that worshiped Holy Light on its own would emerge and grow at a distance alongside the Church of Holy Light. Eventually, it would result in a painful and embarrassing fission for the Archbishops.

However, at this crucial moment, when Lorf was forced into a corner with his ugly self revealed, the gazes that the citizens of Mist Country shot at him became more and more hostile. On the other hand, the middle-aged Holy Knight Captain stepped forth once more.

"The Church of Holy Light of today is no longer the Church of Holy Light 300 years ago. We have been progressing and improving ourselves. Talking about this history bears no meaning.

The main issue at hand is whether these Undead pose any threat towards the living. Pope Xueti, you are acknowledging that you originate from the same location as them? I remember that your court has a rule that states that anyone who is involved in the case cannot bear testimony. Since you are related to them, your words are naturally nullified."

This is indubitably an attempt at changing the topic at hand, as well as a twisted interpretation of the teachings of the God of Law.

"Is this a court? Guaranteeing something and the testimony of an eyewitness are two different things. Going by your logic, if the guarantor cannot have any relationship with the obligee, then there would be no one to guarantee for him."

Hearing that twisted interpretation, Xueti flew into a rage. Just as he is about to rebuke him, a familiar voice spoke up.

"Then can I serve as a guarantor?"

This red-haired warrior appeared in the crowd all of the sudden at a certain point. Even though his languid voice was filled with mischief, the inconceivable might that could be sensed from beneath the outer appearance of the red-haired warrior made Holy Knight Captain Woode fearful of him, to the point that he even used polite language.

"You are?"

TL: He uses a politer form of you.

"Adam Han, Red Lotus Sword Saint, a loyal brother of Roland, as well as the previous City Lord of Liu Huang Mountain City. Do you also wish to circumvent me?"

The Red Lotus Sword Saint was one of the potential candidates for the strongest human in the world. His indelible results in terminating the Yongye Calamity made him a living legend and a saint. In front of him, even the current Pope could only be considered a junior of his.

"Margaret, Saint. Arlodante's Truth Overseer substitute. I have interacted with the Undead Knights for nearly 200 years. I trust them, and I am willing to use my honor to guarantee them."

Just a short moment after the Great Saint landed from the sky, that quiet vow echoed through the entire city and the trust within her words left a deep impression on its listeners.

"Representing the will of My Lord, I can also guarantee that."

This time, the voice also came from the sky. However, it was a familiar deep voice that carried the accent of the Elves. It reminded me of an acquaintance whom we had just separated from.

"Bastlar?"

As expected, along with the descent of the Light of Order, the

God's Envoy appeared.

Hearing that prominent name, Woode's back was drenched in sweat. At this moment, he was still praying in expectation that it was just someone with the same name.

"The Heroic Spirit of the Goddess of Moonlight, Dragon Slayer Bastlar?"

"Yes, but I am Wumianzhe's Heroic Spirit at the moment. I will settle with you the matter of your twisted interpretation of the God of Law's teaching. Right now, there are two Semi-Gods and a Heroic Spirit guaranteeing them Is this enough for you?"

Under the challenge of a Heroic Spirit and epic heroes, Woode was unable to rejoinder. When he was in a weak position and speechless, I suddenly felt like rationalizing it out with him.

"Fine, let's not talk about the past. Let's discuss the present and the future then."

"300 years ago, you all used the annihilated Mist Country based on an unconfirmed fact, resulting in the sixteen years of Demon Calamity, thus bringing about the most grievous cataclysm to the entire human society. Now, this country plagued with innumerable problems is forced into a corner yet again, but what do you all intend to do? You all claimed that you are protecting human society from the encroachment of evil, but in my view, your Church of Holy Light is the origin of evil!"

"We are guiding people towards benevolence!" The Holy Church was the origin of evil? This never before made claim shocked Woode. After which, fear started to creep forth from inside. In that instant, facing the countless dark histories and the furious condemnations by the victims, even his slick tongue was unable to find the words to refute.

"Worshipping the Holy Church means to guide others towards benevolence? What a joke! The conduct of my Knights is a hundred times nobler than those pigs in the Church of Holy Light cloaked in the robes of an Archbishop! How many years has it been since my people have been on the verge of starving to death? Yet, I don't see the Church of Holy Light doing anything about it! Fine, the Church doesn't wish to interfere in it. I will! Then why is it that when I bring my Knights back to lead my citizens to a better life, you leap out to criticize our actions! Will those haughty superiors of yours be happy only when this country is destroyed and all of its citizens have starved to death?"

The furious questioning left the other party tongue-tied. Suddenly, a small pebble hit Woode's head. It was a little girl venting her frustration.

"Bad man, don't bully Big Brother Knight!"

While Woode was stumped for an answer, when the numerous grudges and resentments of the country were thrown under the sun from the continuous interrogation, the rage of the citizens in the surroundings was already on the verge of exploding.

The action of the little girl was only the initial spark. Following,

more and more pebbles, tomatoes, and potatoes were thrown.

Finally, under my interrogations, when all of those dark histories were revealed, the Mist citizens' dissatisfaction with the Church of Holy Light burst!

"Murderers! Begone from the Mist Country!"

"You oppressors and miscreants, do you all not know the meaning of shame?"

"Karsha from Aymon family, if you still consider yourself a citizen of the Mist Country, take off that ugly priestess robe and return back to us!"

Under the agitation of the crowd, the influence that the Church of Holy Light had developed here over the course of so many years would probably be uprooted in an instant.

When the Church of Holy Light was viewed with suspicion or even exiled out of the lands, my Knights would receive the respect they deserved in the future for their heroic deeds in the past.

At this moment, I didn’t have the leisure to be surprised about these “minor things.” Bastlar had brought to me Wumianzhe's gift, and it was something that would astound the entire world.

"Divine Forbidden Spell: The Sinless City. This?"

"Yes, this is the gift that My Lord, Wumianzhe, has granted this city and the East Mist Communal Country. In this world, only Lord Roland has the qualifications to use it! After all, how could it be possible for the Order Gods to allow the City of Rain to monopolize the market?"

Perhaps I was the only one who knew what my inner thoughts were. This big gift was something that I required the most now. With it, the estrangement between the living and the dead would be swiftly repaired.

After hesitating for a moment, I made up my mind.

【I, God of Law Wumianzhe, declares that under my will, the capital of the East Mist. Diffindor. will become a sacred land of the Law Faction—A land devoid of sins. 】

When I tore apart the scroll filled with God Power, the God Power gushing out from it controlled my speech. After which, from above and below, the voice of the God and a mortal merged together as one.

This was the declaration of a True God. The entire world must listen to my will.

【In this city, no one shall be incriminated because of their identity, race, or social position. Before the Rules of God, all intelligent lifeforms are equal. If someone were to violate the Rules of God in this city, regardless of his identity, position, or race, he would be marked as a criminal by a permanent

Judgement Spell, and all of my worshippers shall judge his crimes!】

At this point, the incantation came to an end. However, somehow, I moved my lips and additional content appeared within the declaration.

【In my city, Undead do not represent evil, and Holy Light does not represent justice. Before the Rules of God, everyone is equal. The benevolent shall be rewarded, and heinous sinners shall not be spared!】

Notes:

Weak nations long for strength 国弱思武穆

The literal meaning of this saying goes that a weak nation longs for the appearance Wu Mu (which refers to Yue Fei, a renowned general in the Han dynasty).

Chapter 131: Ghost Festival

【I, God of Law Wumianzhe, declare that under my will, the capital of the East Mist Diffindor will become a sacred land of the Law Faction—— A land devoid of sins 】

All mortals must remain humble before the will of a true God. When a God's declaration was conveyed from the clouds, even the most furious of paladins and priests had to stop their arguments.

The God beyond the clouds showcased their might and innumerable pillars of light descended from the heavens. The silver Light of Law illuminated the entire world. The faint layer of silver cloaked the ruinous infrastructure within the city, causing the city to look solemn and dignified.

Contained in the golden scroll is the God Power of the God of Law. Without a doubt, this was a nation level (permanent) strategic Forbidden Spell.

Along with the tearing of the scroll, the overflowing Power of Law turned me into the medium of this Forbidden Spell as I replaced the God of Law to release this extreme Forbidden Spell.

However, in the predetermined declaration, I added in my own verse.

【Can sunlight survive alone without the night to complement it; is there no darkness to the other end of the Holy Light?】

【In my city, Undead do not represent evil, and Holy Light

does not represent justice. Before the Rules of God, everyone is evil. The benevolent will be rewarded, and heinous sinners will not be spared!】

The two souls of the same origin harmonized with one another, and Wumianzhe, who did not possess self-awareness, gave up his control in the end, allowing my will to rewrite the predetermined declaration.

When the declaration of the true God echoed throughout the entire world, even I am unsure of what kind of repercussions it could bring, and what the additional words I added into the declaration would cause.

At the very least, in the eyes of those of the Holy Church, a true God bringing up the idea of 'Darkness to the other end of Holy Light; Holy Light does not represent justice' was a slap to their face. At this very moment, despite being in the Order Faction as well, in the eyes of all Holy Light jobs, the God of Law had become the top enemy of the God of Holy Light.

Even so, they were unable to censure us. After all, Wumianzhe was also a true God of the Order Faction, standing neck to neck with the God of Holy Light in a certain sense. On the other hand, the Church of Holy Light, in name, was the servant and representative of the teachings of Holy Light. No matter what, a servant criticizing a companion of his master was a disrespectful action.

"What does Wumianzhe mean by this? Does he intend to start an internal war among the Order Gods?"

Facing an unpleasant guest, the servants might not be qualified to make a stand, but the owner was allowed to reprimand the other party for their discourtesy. Everyone waited for the God of Holy Light to respond to the declaration, but the long-awaited response never arrived.

Alright, actually, these two true Gods do not possess self-awareness. They operate only on their path of logic to expand their faith. My declaration didn't contain any direct insults, and I only brought up the possibility of 'darkness to the other end of Holy Light, and that it does not represent justice'. These were facts and would not be determined as an aggressive action by that simple logical thinking of his. In fact, in the logic map of the God of Holy Light, those words had nothing to do with him at all. And thus, it wouldn't elicit a response to my words.

Perhaps, in the eyes of those who understood the secrets of the Gods, this was just a meaningless little trick. They would only be doubtful of how Wumianzhe, who had lost his self-awareness, was able to utilize such a play on words. However, in the eyes of most mortals, this was equal to the silent acknowledgement of the words of the God of Law by the magnanimous God of Holy Light.

"There could be villains hiding beneath the cloak of Holy Light, and shadows exist behind the Holy Light as well. Perhaps the Church of Holy Light isn't as sacred and righteous as it seems."

This was probably the thought going through the minds of a majority of the listeners. Very possibly, in the eyes of the world, the God of Law and God of Holy Light had already started to stand

at opposite ends with one another. At the very least, the most direct impact of this declaration was that there would be some friction among the Church of Holy Light against Law jobs.

However, since my initial goal was to poach personnel from the Holy Light and even replace the Holy Light in its entirety in the future, hostility of this level is within expectation. On the other hand, only when faced with enmity on the outside could the Law Faction unite together as one.

As the medium of the Forbidden Spell, I fully understood the effects of it.

Being a God Power Forbidden Spell on the same level as the City of Rain, when the Light of Law permanently envelops the entire city, anyone who oversteps the boundaries of the Rules of God within this city will be marked with the highest-tier Judgement Spell, turning their entire body crimson-red. This effect would be sustained for 24 hours, and all Enforcers who were aware of it must pass judgement on the criminal.

The Sinless City. When all tragic sins are exposed under the sun and it becomes impossible to escape from one's crimes, the ideal of a city devoid of crimes will become reality very quickly.

If Liu Huang Mountain City is the Law Faction’s sacred land of origin, then Diffindor is fated to become its land of miracles as well as the land where Law will start rising from. From today onward, the Law Faction would be intricately linked to the East Mist Communal Nation.

At this moment, the agitated citizens were surrounding and attacking the bunch from the Church of Holy Light. Under the hint of my gaze, Xueti stepped forward to stop them.

"Under the gaze of my Lord, Wumianzhe, no sinners will be able to conceal themselves. Even if the Church of Holy Light has numerous past sins, the ones before us are indeed sinless. Please allow them to leave."

After the descent of the miracle, the position of the Church of Law, which had just become the national religion of East Mist, would reach greater heights. The Tauren Pope of the God of Law religion would, without a doubt, become one of top three most authoritative figures in this country. Under such circumstances, his words would naturally be influential.

"Archbishop Lorf, your presence here will only worsen the conflict. Please hurry up and leave. If you still treasure your pride, please leave this city as soon as possible. If you choose to persevere on here, please do not die in this city; you will only cause unnecessary work for us."

By the side, Xueti made sarcastic remarks while helping them out of the situation. With the Church of Law regulating the situation, the moment a gap appeared among the crowd, the noble regional Archbishop immediately fled, leaving his guards and priests behind...

"That is enough. It will be troublesome for us if their Archbishop

were to die here. Given their nature, it is totally possible for them to fabricate stories like 'The God of Law has colluded with the Undead and some Archbishop has died in the midst of carrying out his duties'. Judging from his current look, he seems to be scared out of his wits, so he will probably lead his team out of the city soon. It would be best if the Church of Holy Light can give up on the entire Northern Lands. Sigh, given their overbearing methods of dealing with problems, the possibility of them completely letting go of the Northern Lands isn't great. Looks like we will still have to toil out with them in the future."

With the departure of the 'villains', the citizens started to cheer triumphantly. The horns echoed once more and the symphony of victory played.

Under the war flags, the Knights proceeded on with their march; different from their prior solemness, the citizens joined the ancient heroes in the homecoming parade.

With the guarantee from numerous heroes and the descent of the miracle, the estrangement between the living and the dead shattered, and the forced, one-sided show came to an end. In the start, I was still slightly worried and hesitant, but now, the crowds were finally cheering for the returning ancient knights.

The grave atmosphere dissipated shortly after. When the living joined in the ranks of the formation, the parade started to exude joyfulness.

The elderly tried to ask the knights about the difference between the history they knew and the true history, while the middle-aged

tried their best to leave their impressions on the knights. The youngsters beheld the figures of the unyielding knights of Mist with admiring gazes, wondering if they could become one of them, whereas the mischievous children would secretly prod the ice swords and flaunt their bravery to their companions.

The Aurora Knights at the front of the parade quickly became crowded. The elegant ice armors attracted the attention of the females and the children, while the legends of those donning it became the dreams of all males. At this moment, despite the stony faces on the Knights, happiness was gushing through their hearts. At the same time, they had to guard themselves against the sudden assaults by the rascals, as well as to explain the dangers the ice armor could pose to the crowd as well so that they wouldn’t touch it.

Most of the knights were the same as well. However, what left the greatest impression on them was the bizarre method of acknowledgement and reunion.

"The clan insignia on the flag... Could it be that you are my ancestor?"

"You... Are you the descendants of my younger sister? You truly resemble her!"

"Lord, can you visit our family when you are free? My children should be interested in listening to your stories."

"Of course I can. I will head there the moment the parade ends!

Everyone, look, I have descendants! I have a family once more; I am no longer alone!"

These sights occurred one after another. After receiving an affirmative, the living would receive the admiration of the other residents while the dead would be blinded by their joy and gleefully flaunt their descendants to their companions. Of course, most of them were the descendants of their siblings.

As for those who had no descendants of their own, they solemnly decided to check the civilian records to see if there were any descendants that were of their bloodline, or any far relatives who had changed their names. At the very least, for a family of their own.

Their cold outer appearance was like a barrier that the Undead Knights were used to putting on to isolate the coldness of outsiders from the inner heart. However, at this moment, the barrier was slowly crumbling, exposing the gentleness within.

The ones who were touched weren’t in the minority, and I had seen two Undead Skeleton General who laughed their lower jawbone down.

In my vision, even for the mentally resilient as Camisia, when young girls were busy putting on flower garlands on the head he was hanging by his waist, that flustered reaction and cross-eyed look revealed how touched he was, as well as his inherent qualities as a virgin with centuries of experience.

Should I be thankful for the fact that Undead were incapable of shedding tears? Otherwise, judging from the agitation of their soul, their uncontrollable tears of joy would have flooded the whole place, and the march of victory wouldn't be as magnificent as it was.

"Finally... This is a true march of victory!"

Yes, what is a march of victory when only the triumphant homecoming warriors are involved? The waiting and welcoming villagers were the true reasons for the struggles of the warrior. Without the understanding and welcoming of the Mist citizens, without the blissful smiles on their face, what was the meaning behind the sacrifice of the warriors and their return?

At this moment, the thousand pound stone in my heart was finally relieved.

"What do I do if the citizens are unable to accept the Undead Knights? If it comes to that, everyone would be miserable, and it would be impossible to salvage the situation."

In reality, even though I spoke of it so confidently and was the first one who entered through the gates, my heart was pounding furiously.

However, I know that I must not reveal my cowardice, otherwise 'escapees' will appear within those hesitant fellows, and we wouldn't have the success we were experiencing now.

Despite being massive and hideous, the Abomination Carlos had rascals climbing up his shoulders. Perhaps the young parents hoped that their children could interact more with this young knight who died young, or perhaps this was the Mist citizens using their own ways to console this unfortunate youngster.

Should I be thankful to the Church of Holy Light for their hindrance? If it weren't for their enmity, the painful dark history wouldn't be pulled out and the Undead Knights wouldn't be so easily accepted by the people.

"No, we should be thankful for the Mist citizens dwelling upon this land. It is my trust in them that made me stake in on this bet. It is impossible for the living to tread beside the Undead in any other countries!"

"Un, we might as well commemorate this day. Every year, we will hold a small celebration to deepen the friendship between the two."

I didn't expect that this thought of mine would result in the birth of the famous Ghost Festival of the Northern Lands. On that day, youngsters would dress up as demons and mythical beasts to join in the night parade of a hundred demons. Naturally, there were true 'ghosts' in their midst as well.

Undead not being viewed as evil will become one of the most important trademarks of the Sinless City. Soon, when the news spread, countless discriminated races and minorities would start to consider heading to the Northern Lands.

"I have not sinned, so why must you all pursue me to no ends? I have had enough of this.

While Roland was still busying himself for the future, a certain someone was destined for tragedy.

A few months later, when the news of the Northern Land reached the Auland Empire, the emperor who was still vigorous despite losing his capital showed his weariness for the first time.

"You will regret it." The elegant figure and her words appeared in his dreams once again, and the words that contained another meaning beneath the surface became the greatest rue of a certain emperor.

"Yes, I've regretted it! I've truly regretted it! Is this karma? Is this retribution for allowing others to assassinate you? Or was I mistaken from the very start?"

Every time the emperor drank on his own, he would be shouting these words while bawling over it.

At this moment, the attendants who thought that the emperor was stressed due to the worsening war situation would close the doors and call for Lord Hermit and Lord Rosemary.

The former was a strategist deeply trusted by the emperor. Regardless of whether it was matters concerning the war or daily affairs, he was always able to come up with suggestions that satisfied and left the emperor assured. On the other hand, the latter was a beauty that left one dizzy-headed. Empathetic, she was always able to soothe the burden and emotions of the emperor with a few words.

This time, it seemed that Lord Hermit was too busy with war affairs, thus only Rosemary came.

"Emperor Darsos? Why did you drink so much again?"

"Rosemary? Come, accompany me for a drink."

"As you wish, your highness. Except, it will better for you to cut down on the alcohol. Drinking too much harms your body."

"Hehe, I never expected that you, who she sent to me, would worry over me. Come, let's chat."

As expected, after a few words, the spirits of the doleful emperor lifted.

"Rosemary, you are truly my soulmate. Regardless of whether it is military affairs, politics, economics or commercial activities, you truly know it all. Perhaps, if I chose you to be my queen from the start, many things would not have occurred..."

Seeing the two of them hitting it off, the understanding royal attendants silently closed the doors. Perhaps, not long later, something would happen.

Chapter 132: A New Era

【Ding! Congratulations on building a new job advancement infrastructure. The job change to an Avalanche Guardian has been unlocked. The job advancement to an Aurora Knight has been unlocked. The job change to a Swift Wind Knight has been unlocked. Please throw some citizens in, give it two minutes, and a powerful warrior will leap out... Did you think I would say this? Stop dreaming. This is the real world. There's no way such a disorderly job advancement system that's neither scientific nor magical could exist.】

【You want powerful warriors? Sure, train them yourselves, cultivate them. ——You expect soldiers to pop out just by building barracks? The Star Wars next door is beckoning you.】

Alright, it isn't that easy to obtain powerful troops, but for this System, which is neither scientific nor magical, to retort that I am being unscientific, it seems that it is as darned as usual.

This is the third day since the 'homecoming' march of victory. However, not only did Diffindor's celebration not stop, the celebration activities even expanded to be national level.

"Since that's the case, we might as well allow the entire country to celebrate for an entire week and pardon all criminals. Un, the food will be provided by the nation's treasury so as to allow the citizens who have suffered for far too long to enjoy themselves."

This was the decision that I had made. It was clearly an attempt to win the goodwill of the people. But at the same time, it had the

effect of calming the hearts of the people before the arrival of the storm.

A celebration mainly consists of delicacies, alcohol, music and cultural performances, as well as all kinds of unique activities. The cheers of delight, dancing and singing outside the windows of the squares never stopped and the sound of the drums shook even the heavens. However, in the palace, everything had reverted back to the hectic daily routine.

"Going by your plan, we still have sustain the homecoming celebrations for another five days, not to mention supplying the celebration of the other towns with food. This will exhaust at least two months of our rations. If things go bad, it might even cause a shortage in the rations that was finally sufficient to last through the winter. Although a kind man had sponsored us this time, and we earned quite a bit from him, the expected shortage in rations in the long term still remains a menace. If you weren't the one who brought up the idea, I would have gone all out to block the proposal, before finding an excuse to exile the perpetrator to the borders and have them serve as a laborer."

The sentiments of the top court lady Kelly was shared by most of the officials. Used to thriftiness due to the difficult and harsh life here, they would even tear a copper coin into two to spend it over a course of two days, so how could they tolerate such an 'extravagant waste'? If it wasn't for me backing it adamantly, this celebration probably couldn't even be held.

"Everyone here has suffered. However, this will all be worth it. On one hand, this is a way to reward the citizens. Even though the

harvests were pitiful this year as well, it isn't their fault. After toiling for an entire year, they should be granted a few days of rest. On the other hand, I want to leave a new impression on the citizens. 'From today onward, everything will be different.' With this at the core, life will become less difficult for them."

Morale? Popularity? The will of the people? All these may seem fleeting, but they can become a positive driving force from another perspective. At the very least, filling the stomachs of the citizens and painting a beautiful future for them to look forward to was all we could do at present.

Of course, changing this country from the ground up was still something to be done step by step.

I proposed an unrealistic request to the System, and as I expected, I received an even more unrealistic response. Every single warrior required several years, sometimes even decades, of cultivation. Hoping that troops would magically appear just by throwing resources into a newly-created barrack? If only this held true in reality as well.

"Then, the two foremost matters we have to attend to is to reconstruct the individual main divisions and to settle the problem with rations..."

A sparrow may be small, but its internal organs were still present. This emergency internal meeting had more than thirty officials attending it, and based on the primary interaction with them, it seemed that there were quite a few talents among them. It seemed that these experienced and hardworking politicians played

a big role into why Reyne and the Mist royalty were able to persist to date.

TL: The Mist Country may be small, but its internal workings are still complete.

A filial son can only be identified when the family is in poverty. Similarly, the truly loyal subjects are the ones who stick with the country through times of difficulty. Should I be thankful for the years of difficulty they have experienced? They were able to calculate out the burden that a month of celebration would have on the supply of rations next year, and settle on the locations of the new barracks within a short ten hours. This was something that that bunch in Liu Huang Mountain City, who goes 'What Lord Saint says is correct' for all matters, could never hope to accomplish.

However, no matter how efficient the governance was, and how well-utilized the resources are, it was still impossible to alleviate the situation when the country was that severely lacking in resources.

At this moment, the conference made one feel very uncomfortable. As a newcomer without any official position, I was sitting in the chairman's seat to officiate the internal affairs meeting. And yet, they were all treating it as though it was something reasonable, as though this was the way it was supposed to be... Un, the one who felt the most uncomfortable in the meeting was, no doubt, me.

After all, I was already used to governing that bunch of

unreliable subordinates of mine. A large portion of the time, I would be arguing with them during the meeting, trying my best to direct the discussion, which had begun to digress from its boundaries, back to the topic at hand. In contrast, seeing the officials seriously discussing the problems now made me feel uncomfortable.

Seeing the serious faces of the middle-aged and elderly officials as they jotted down notes on the meeting and pondered deeply before raising questions, I was tempted to bring Xueti, who was still enjoying himself in the square, over and show him how others dealt with matters seriously.

"As for the problem concerning rations, there should be a stock of meat coming in half a month. If stored properly, it should be able to slow down the depletion of our rations."

Kelly came to a realization.

"You mean that whale?"

I nodded my head. It was too much of a waste to leave that corpse of the mountain-like Horned Whale in the ocean. Considering the problem of food East Mist was facing, I decided to send the Borealis to drag it back here.

Considering that it was way too big, if it was impossible to drag it back as a whole, it was also possible to cut it into several pieces to ship it here.

Even when top-tier Sea Monsters were dead, their might will linger in the surroundings for a period of time, thus there was no need to fear fishes and prawns from consuming it within a short period of time. The meat of the whale could be used as rations while there were top-class spices within its body. It would be a waste to leave such a great fortune to rot in the ocean.

"As for the means to resolve the problem of rations from its core, I have a proposal. By selling our acquisitions, we should be able to purchase rations sufficient to last us for two to three years. Thus, we should start planning for the long-term."

After all, East Mist was a small country. Given that the resources given to us were sufficient to make the emperor of the massive and powerful Auland Empire feel an ache in his heart, it was even more so an astronomical sum to East Mist. It was possible to live off it for several years.

At this point, the head treasurer flipped through his records and nodded his head affirmatively.

"If we were to sell away those jewels and minerals, it could sustain us for five years, let alone two years."

I nodded my head in satisfaction. At the same moment, I recalled the bitter face Darsos had when he was extorted by us. Recently, I had heard from Rosemary that she had successfully invaded the inner circle of the Auland Empire. Perhaps, this may allow me the chance to interfere in their affairs in the future.

"I am really curious as to how she was able to infiltrate their inner circle of authority despite being a servant of obscure origin, and to say that it is possible to climb even higher on the totem pole..."

Even though she refused to explain how she was able to do it, I do not think that she was lying to me. Other than the fact that her phylactery was in my hands, the top classified secrets of the entire continent that she was supplying me with also proved that she had gained sufficient trust to access them.

"To survive by preying on the wealthy isn't a feasible long-term plan, even though it is sufficient for us to survive for a few years. I will think of a solution for our rations. So, let's talk about the other proposal —— Expanding our military."

If it was in the other countries, pushing forward an expansion in the military was an incredibly vexing process. It would cause an outbreak of war between the Dove Faction and the Hawk Faction. Unless the emperor forcefully suppressed the opposing faction, it would take at least three to five years, sometimes even reaching a decade or two, to expand. Furthermore, one had to take into account the reactions of the various fief lords when strengthening the army of the central. Even if the motion were to pass by some sheer coincidence, by the time new divisions were being formed, people would be vying for military positions and authority.

TL: The Dove Faction supports peacefulness, whereas the Hawk Faction refers to the nationalists.

However, to the East Mist that had been struggling in the

Northern Lands for a long time, it was something the population fervently longed for. The main reason why the military wasn't expanded in the past was due to the lack of funds and rations to sustain it.

"Regardless of whether it is to deal with future wars or to protect the people from the waves of beasts in winter, we require a powerful army. In the Northern Lands, one will never find military prowess excessive. Thus, the first thing that has to be done is to restore the previous establishment of the Mist Country. With my knights at the very core, the various battalions will be reformed. Their names and flags will remain the same, and the equipment and gears will be as it is in the past. With the old veterans leading them, the battalions should be able to take shape within ten years."

Looking around at the surroundings, the crowds nodded their head slightly in approval. Their eyes were filled with enthusiasm. After all, the Mist citizens had already suffered the bitterness of a lacking military strength. As long as there were sufficient resources, rebuilding a powerful military had been something they were dreaming of.

"In reality, the will of the younger generation to protect their country is strong. The numbers who actively applied to join the military has always exceeded our logistic capabilities. As long as the supplies are able to keep up, along with the attraction of the legendary troops, there should be no problem with the number of manpower."

"Un, then let's begin the recruitment of the army as soon as the

celebration ends. If we do not have sufficient equipment, use wooden swords and wooden spears for training first. Let's first get the situation kicking before we proceed on to the specifics. We must quickly make use of the time to allow them to undergo training before war starts."

There was someone who heard the other meaning behind my words and raised his doubts.

"War? Does Your Highness believe that war is imminent?"

"Un, you all should have heard of it. The eternal Sacred War is about to occur again, and the battle between Auland and the Water Elementals and Seafolk is just the prelude to it. The unrest doesn't just stop there."

Speaking of the eternal Sacred War, the faces of those in the room darkened. Expanding one's army was one thing, but fighting another war was something else. They barely had a few days of peace; why was trouble knocking once again?

"A few days ago, I received a confidential intelligence report that the Blackwings in the South have allied themselves with the Wind Elemental God. Their Cloud Fleet is currently heading west and, along its way, has plundered quite a few towns. Even the capitals of two middle-tier kingdoms have been a victim of theirs. As for the north..."

The moment I spoke of the north, everyone's attention focused on me. After all, this was the utmost north of the human society,

and anything that happened here concerned their safety. No matter what, they had to be wary of whatever happened here.

I sighed helplessly. Were the Mist citizens really condemned to a life filled with catastrophe? They had chased away the Beastman tribes a year ago and barely had a few days of peace when new problems arrived.

"...In the north, there seems to be quite a few tribes that have received the support of the Earth Elemental God and become powerful in an instant. That fellow proclaimed himself as the Khan of the Beastmen. Right now, they should be in the midst of an internal war, annexing one another. Going by their past history, it should be a matter of time before their great army starts venturing south."

TL: Khan -> The supreme leader of nomadic tribes.

"That is impossible! Ah, Your Highness, I am not saying that you're lying, but..."

"This is a destructive catastrophe! Your Highness, is your source of information reliable?"

"Your Highness, are the Beastman tribes from the highlands or the plains? Have the other countries of the Northern Lands received the news yet?"

As expected, the moment the figurative bomb was thrown, the

conference room burst into commotion.

The Northern Beastman tribes could be divided into two groups. The Highland Beastmen resided in the Oregon Mountains, the geographical terrains of which were complex. Over 70% of the Beastmen of the Northern Lands resided there. On the other hand, while the Beastmen of the Holen Plains may be fewer in number, their population was more densely concentrated and the actual danger they posed is significantly greater.

If it was the Beastman tribes from the highlands, there were at least a few countries who stood between us and them. On the other hand, the Plains Beastmen share a part of the border with them. And due to historical reasons, the several dozen kilometers of the boundary shared with them had never been peaceful.

Of course, this is still a positive situation. If it was the previous borders of the Mist Country, with the long border between both sides, the pressure would be even greater. In these two hundred years, the rise of a highland country, the Suya Kingdom, and the neighboring Rhodes Kingdom, which were both ruled by those who share the bloodline of the barbarians, had split the great plains of the Beastmen into two, thus alleviating the pressure.

By the way, these two countries were also the only two of the seven countries in the Northern Lands that have amiable relations with the East Mist Communal Country. Other than the fact that they were viewed as a 'Nation of Barbarians', their countries were also built on the lands of foreign races, and they did not annex the land of the original Mist Country. The lack of a historical feud among them formed the basis for their amiable relationship.

As for the other five of the Seven Countries of the Northern Lands, most of them were founded by the fief lords from the south. Some of them were even relatives of the seventeen destroyed countries, so how could the relationship between them and the Mist be cordial... At the very least, unless it was absolutely required, merchants were unwilling to head to this 'Nation of Barbarians'.

The current chaotic situation of the Northern Lands was as such; 'The three countries of the Northern Lands where most of the indigenous population of the north lives (There was also an ancient Fengqi Country on top of Rhodes Kingdom and Suya Kingdom. It borders the Rhodes Kingdom and its political stance leaned towards the north even though its royalty stemmed from the south)'; 'The other four countries founded by Southerners (of which Sleuweir Kingdom is a product from the splitting of the Mist Country. They emphasize that they are the legitimate Mist Country)'; a bunch of autonomous regions that weren't small in size.

The entire Northern Lands had been regarded by the other massive human countries as barbarians; furthermore, the continuous conflict between the various countries of the north had caused this land of bitter frost to become the frontier and a place of exile for human society. As for those supposed autonomous regions, quite a few are 'lands of freedom' governed by bandits and criminal organizations.

"...Unexpectedly, this intelligence was supplied by the Elf Kingdom, so it should be credible. According to them, they have informed most of the human kingdoms. It is the Highland

Beastmen; it seems to be a tribe called Blood Axe Tribe."

"Pui, that bunch of long-ears can't wait for us to grind ourselves thin with those Beastmen. However, just as usual, we were excluded from it all."

"Hah, Sleuweir is in for misfortune. Those bastard traitors deserve it."

"Karsomi Communal Country as well. It seems that the Blood Axe Tribe isn't too far away from them. However, the Rhodes Kingdom might be hit as well."

A commotion burst out below. At this point, the conference had finally gotten to its final point of discussion.

"Don't get too excited yet. Although we won't be at the forefront of the impact, it is very likely for us to be roped in. Furthermore, if they manage to break through the borders, we will still have to face the Beastman tribes, so we have to make preparations for actual war. Thus, I have a suggestion. Starting from this year, we will start one of the symbols of our past glory —— The Winter Hunt!"

The conference room was still in an engrossed state, whereas I was resting by the corridor.

Even though it was already late at night, a ruckus could be heard from the square not too far away. The bonfire had lit up and the unrefined but lively music made me smile from the depths of my heart. I also saw the Bone Dragon, which was shaking its hips, dancing queerly. It seemed like they intended to party the entire night.

After delegating all tasks that could be delegated, the remaining matters didn't require my attention. The arrangements for the homecoming celebration and the recruitment of soldiers for war were going well. The only debatable aspect was the Winter Hunt that I proposed at the end of the discussion.

Only the Northerners were aware that the wild beasts in summer and the beast packs in winter were two totally different concepts. The beast packs that had been driven mad and bloodthirsty by starvation did not fear any enemy at all.

When berserk from starvation, they could use their heaps of flesh and blood to fill the trenches dug along the city walls. Also, there were numerous mutated and powerful magic beasts in the snow mountains. If they were to go on a rampage, they would definitely be scary opponents.

Spring and autumn in the Northern Lands were extremely short. When put together, spring, summer, and autumn only added up to five months. Thirty days from the end of autumn, snow and ice would fill the Northern Lands as the season of frost started to set in. In previous years, to deal with the beast packs, creating a solid wall and clearing away wild beasts were the optimal solutions.

If the wild beasts were to gather into packs, then moving the citizens from the villages and towns to the large cities would be the only plausible course of action. Even so, not everything could be brought along, which meant that when they return once spring arrives, the sight of their ravaged homeland would be all that lay in store.

Furthermore, a large migration was extremely dangerous. If they were to meet with beast packs that had set off in advance in the midst of their journey, it would be equal to delivering food right to the belly of the beasts.

However, to make the citizens totally give up their home, livestock, and farmlands from the very start was even more unrealistic. They were barely able to survive with the harvest they had each year. Furthermore, there was limited living space around the cities, not to mention the problem of rations.

It was clear to see that the methods of dealing with the problem of the beast packs were filled with loopholes. On the other hand, the Winter Hunt that I had proposed could bring large amounts of meat, as well as unique products from the beasts, reduce the stress that would be exerted upon the cities when those beast packs were cleared, and boost the morale of the citizens and army. There were benefits in doing so.

Of course, everyone knew of the advantages in doing so, but the reason why carrying it out had been postponed was due to the lack of military prowess.

Using defensive tools to deal with the beast packs, which were

only capable of charging blindly into the cities, was totally different from heading into the wilderness to battle with the bloodthirsty and cunning beast packs. The reason why my suggestions were rejected by the masses was due to their understanding of the military might of the country, as well as their lack of confidence in it.

"However, without battle experience, how can one's army grow stronger? No matter what, those brainless beast packs should be easier to deal with than those frenzied Beastmen. If you are worried for those young fellows, there are old veterans to guide them, and only through facing true battles will they grow rapidly. An army that has never seen bloodshed before, no matter how outstanding their equipment is, they can only be considered as security guards."

I didn't argue with them. After all, it was all just cheap talk without evidence to support it. To convince them, I need to prove to them that we had the power to do so. Besides, the army was under my control, so I could make preparations for it in advance.

Right, my current identity was also awkward. After all, I am a prince of the Mist Country. The royalties of this country claimed themselves to be my descendants and had been acknowledged by the world as such as well. Thus, I should be a member of royalty as well. However, logically speaking, this would mean that I should have been an emperor who had stepped down. Yet, I had never assumed the responsibilities of an emperor before, and I am also still alive. So, do I elevate straight to the position of a retired emperor?

This relationship was so complicated that probably even the world's most incredible genealogist would be unable to make sense of this mess.

Furthermore, the troops under me were held in the name of Princess Reyne's Guardian Knight.

Yes, Guardian Knight and not a titled knight. After all, in order to use the Roland Sacred Sword to verify my identity, I could only have Reyne confer on me the title of a knight on the surface. Yet, she conferred on me the title of the Guardian Knight at the gates of Diffindor.

"We're about to enter the city now, so it is impossible to find the Council of Elders to confirm your nobility and your territory. Since there have been many examples of one's father and elder brothers holding the role as a princess's Guardian Knight, and Big Brother Roland is like my elder brother, so just make do with the title of a Guardian Knight."

While saying these words, Reyne's tiny face flushed red, seemingly embarrassed.

However, the identity as a Guardian Knight is indeed convenient. I am able to handle matters in Reyne's name, as well as avoid many awkward situations. Back then, I thought that this idea was excellent, and I even praised her for it.

"Your ability to adapt to situations is excellent; seems like you are able to think on the spot. Un, you are indeed my descendant."

Despite it being a sincere praise from the depths of my heart, for some reason, after I said these words, Kelly and Reyne's face darkened. There were even some from the Undead army behind who laughed.

Alright, back to the topic, at the very least, the identity as Reyne's proxy gave me some confidence during the conference when I did not hold any official positions.

Also, there were many things that I had started working on that were inconvenient to mention at the conference.

"Since the symbol of royal authority, the Roland Sacred Sword, has appeared once again, the East Mist and the various other Mist Country spin-offs can start discussing a coalition. Also, the Frigid Nightmare altar in the snow mountains should have accumulated quite a few newborn Frigid Nightmares, so it is about time for us to produce true Aurora Knights. Seems like I must handle these two matters personally to get them done."

Troubles popped out one after another. At such a moment, I feel illimitable yearning for Elisa. If she were here, I could confidently throw everything onto her... or I could make time to chat with her.

【System Notice: Your suicidal abilities are about to break through the heavens... Cough, this time, I didn't appear just to lecture you on how you are courting your own death. There's another daily quest for you to complete.】

【Ding! Daily quest: Today's Unfortunate Fellow. Please

punish at least three villains who have committed evil deeds. Based on the identities of those who were punished, you will be rewarded with 1-100 Fate Points, and there is no upper limit for the reward of this quest. However, if you fail to accomplish it, 1000 Fate Points will be deducted. ——Just because you have earned a lot of Fate Points recently, you think that you don't have to do daily quests? If you fail this daily quest as well, the next deduction will be 10000 Fate Points.】

Looking at the daily quest, I was taken aback.

Committing evil deeds did not necessarily mean that the deeds had to be illegal, but what was illegal often translated to evil. In previous days, it would have been easy to find villains; there would be plenty of them in the jail cells. However, as it is the homecoming celebration today, and a universal pardon has been issued, where the heck would I find a villain?

Even if I were to start looking for one right now, the declaration of the Gods on the land devoid of sins was still seemingly echoing in the ears of everyone. Even the most insane villains would fear the might of a God and keep a low profile for some time.

"Looks like I can only give in to my misfortune. The darned System must have been unhappy with me and is trying to pull a prank on me. So be it, a thousand points then. But if it is going to be ten thousand points tomorrow, then I must really take caution... Pu!"

The sight before me caused me to spit my tea out. I rubbed my eyes to double check if I was hallucinating.

A bunch of men was running about, and there were quite a few familiar figures in the group. The one leading at the very front was the tall and mighty Tauren.

"Returning back to nature, treading along with the wind, this is the true nature of us Taurens. My true name matters not, please call me the Son of Wind! Come, my friends, join us in this wonderful run alongside the wind."

Not out of expectations, there were quite a few guards chasing behind this group of bastards. Their clothes and pants were messed up as they waved the wooden sticks in their hands around.

"Lord, at least put on your underwear. Your underwear. Your underwear!" The town security shouted as his words echoed through the streets. In that instant, my face turned green.

"Son... Son of Wind your head! Do you think that this is the Underground World? How many Taurens do you think that Diffindor has? I bet you were exposed from the very start! For the Pope to be bringing others to run around nude, how do you expect the judges of the Church of Law to do their work tomorrow? I thought that you would at least hold it in for a few days! Alas, our heritage is unfortunate!"

Thus, I unsheathed the Silver Avenger without hesitation.

"I got it. It seems that the System isn't unhappy with me. It's the Tauren! Fine, today, I will be cleaning up my household."

【Ding! Bingo, but there isn't any additional reward. Further System Notice: Think about it, why did the quest only request for a minimum of three but did not set a limit on the rewards? Yes, as this is the miraculous Sinless City, even those local criminals would have to keep themselves in check for a period of time. However, have you forgotten that there is still another group of eccentrics who are skilled in dancing about the boundaries of law?】

"You want to become a fireworks expert admired by the crowds? You want to comprehend the profoundness of a festival from the Underground World? Safe and reliable, flashy and radiant, Safe brand fireworks, a product worthy of your possession!"

Alright, a villain who sold dangerous objects and counterfeits had appeared.

"Hmph, it is about time for us to settle our grudge. I want to avenge my lover number 38!" Leaning against the wall was a Dracon Hunter who exuded the aura of an expert.

"Hmph, don't think that I would fear you just because you've ascended to the ranks of a Legend. A true hunter will never fear the strength of his prey; it will only make us feel more blissful. Hmph, your weaknesses have already been exposed to me. The next instant will be the moment of your death." This was an old Dwarven Hunter. Despite his ordinary outer appearances, his shining silver hunting rifle didn't seem ordinary.

By the side, a Goblin was trying his best to shout.

"The grudge from thirty years ago is about to be settled, and an epic battle is about to play out. Kabala Gambling Den is currently accepting all kinds of bets. Those who bet on the victory of the Legend Dracon, the payout is 1:2, whereas those who bet on the victory of the Ace Hunter, the payout is 1:3. As for the both of them perishing together, 1:10, and for the two of them settling their grudge amiably, 1:100..."

Alright, to think that there would be private brawling and a gambling fraud. At this point, I already knew what to do. Before the reputation of the Underground World and the Church of Law fell into the gutters at the hands of these fellows, I had to quickly deal with them.

"That, can I bet that the duel will be terminated due to special reasons?"

"Of course you can, but the payout is 1:7. However, the settling their grudge amiably ending isn't included in the mix." The gleeful Kabala raised his head, but his smile turned into a cry upon seeing me.

"You... Aren't you supposed to be in a conference?"

Ignoring him, I threw a sack of gold coins on top of his head.

"Keep it well, I will be claiming my prize money from you after I'm done dealing with these bastards!"

Alright, what happened afterward was a night of suppression that everyone was glad to see. After running myself to exhaustion, I decided to place rebuilding of the Town Security Army as the topmost priority.

In the end, not only did I complete the daily quest, I even earned more than 700 Fate Points.

Of course, the nude-running Pope would also become the dark stain on the Church of Law. In the future, this was how the annals of history would record this dark history.

"AD1897, during the homecoming celebration, due to overwhelming joy from the return of the knights, the incumbent Pope then, Xueti, drank too much during the celebration and acted out of decorum. Even though he didn't violate any law, in order to punish himself, he hung himself on the highest flagpole in the royal palace for three days and three nights."

"The world was impressed by the strictness he treated himself with and his noble character, and, thus, they titled him as the 'The Impartial Upside Down Man'. Hanging upside down on the flagpole had also become a method to find one's path when one was confused. Furthermore, in order to commemorate this event, sprinting along with the wind during the day of homecoming had also become a tradition. Naturally, most of the participants would still put on a pair of underwear."

Notes:

Since Reyne, who is a descendant of Roland (as they claim), was the royal family, it meant that Roland must have been an emperor.

For example, if an emperor had 3 daughters and 2 sons, these 3 daughters and 2 sons were part of the royal family.

If the elder son (son 1) inherits the throne, then the sons and daughters of (son 1) will become the main line of the royal family.

In contrast, the children of the 3 daughters and the younger son (son 2) will NOT be considered as part of the royal family.

So, if you work this way upwards, and if Reyne is the empress, it means that Roland MUST have been the emperor.

Also, the retired emperor held significant standing in China. In a country like the East Mist where the ancestors were truly respected, it was natural that they valued seniority as well. So, going by this logic, Roland should be one of the most respected figures in the entire country (as well as highest standing in terms of social position).

Chapter 133: Distance And Expectations

1897 AD, the summer of the Year of the Griffin.

Against the worsening situation in the country, as well as the eternal Sacred War that was about to occur, the East Mist Communal Country's 'Princess Knight' Reyne Qin Mist had decided to seek for the Mist Country's lost honor. After going through many tribulations and trials, she finally received the acknowledgement of the Heroic Spirit of her ancestor, Roland Mist. Following the return of the Undead army, marked by the "Homecoming Day Celebration" and the "First Winter Hunt in 300 Years", a page opened in the annals of history as the Northern King of Wolves crouching in the Northern Lands started to rise once more.

That was the evaluation written in a certain history magazine many years later. At this point, everything seemed normal in it...

"Of course, to a large portion of the audience, this isn't the main point from the very start. Princess Reyne who remained unwedded for her entire life chose her ancestor, Roland, to serve as her Guardian Knight. This became the popular theme for the works of many playwrights. Even though there aren't many details left behind, considering the chaotic relationship within the household of the Northerners and the fact of Princess Reyne remaining unwedded for her entire life, we can infer that there is some truth behind these creations. As for the rumors of Princess Reyne having a unique sexual orientation, that is likely just a tactic to divert the attention of others."

“—The previous passage is extracted from The Truth Behind The Top Ten Historical Romance Plays, compiled by a printing press which was the subsidiary of the Arhinlo Empire’s Cultural Department. Note: This book has been banned by the East Mist Communal Country and numerous other northern countries. The author is wanted by the East Mist and if someone is found bringing this book into the Northern Lands, he will be lynched. The publisher takes no responsibility for the damage incurred by the purchaser.”

Alright, let’s not pursue the matter about the incredibly suicidal future printing press, although it’s not like I could pursue the matter even if I wanted to. Ignoring the problems that the position as a Guardian Knight would bring in the future, at the very least, it solved the problem of my awkward position, thus preventing the bizarre situation of having two central figures in East Mist.

After all, East Mist Communal Country was in the midst of rebuilding its various divisions, but the head of the divisions were all Undead Knights. In the perspective of outsiders, I seemed to have appeared from nowhere to take control of the new armies, so it did seem like I was gaining too much power over the country. In the end, it is best to avoid some matters if possible.

The formation of most of the divisions went well. The moment the intention to expand the army was revealed, the conscription points and the barracks were filled to the brim. Due to our industries lagging behind, it was impossible for us to equip all of them. However, at the very least, we weren’t lacking in manpower and training could be started.

However, while some things were well, others weren't that lucky. There were some divisions which met with problems from the start, and they had problems that could not be resolved within the short term.

"Asmu Hound Tamers? We have the complete improved training methods of the troops, and those who signed up are intelligent lads who are carefully hand-picked from the applicants. They are all good seedlings. The Undead Rangers also demonstrated their expertise in taming hounds and how it feels like to have ten Skeleton Hounds suddenly surrounding and assaulting an enemy in a battlefield. However, the problem is..."

"Tucker War Hounds are extinct? How is it possible?"

Alright, we really didn't expect such a problem to occur. Tucker War Hounds were massive warhounds unique to the Northern Lands. They were around half a human's height and their snow-white fur was exceptionally resistant to the chill. Furthermore, they possessed sharp fangs, a strong sense of smell, and an aggressive and loyal personality. They were the best companions to an Asmu Hound Tamer and after undergoing training, they were capable of competing physically with lions.

"We had also just realized it. Back then, due to the overwhelming damage from the fall of our nation, all of the warhounds that we were rearing were lost. After which, natural disaster struck year after year in quick succession. Even humans were unable to find food, needless to say, dogs. Those wild dogs that failed to escape into the mountains were all consumed as food by the refugees. At the very least, not a single warhound can be found in Diffindor

now.”

After hesitating for a moment, I finally asked, “...Since the warhounds are extinct, why don’t you all... change your job to Asmu Wolf Tamer? The Northern Lands may lack everything, but one thing it doesn’t lack is wolves. It seems that the Winter Wolves are rather powerful as well. Since they belong to the same family as hounds, there shouldn’t be too much of a difference between the two.”

Alright, the moment the words of this outsider sounded, the Undead Rangers stared at me as though I was an alien.

“Your Highness, wolves and hounds are two completely different animals. Wolves have a wild nature, which makes them a difficult target to tame. Furthermore, Winter Wolves are Magic Beasts. No matter how I look at them, they have nothing to do with ordinary wolves.”

My mouth opened, only to close without saying a word. After all, do you expect me to start talking to them about Darwin’s theory of evolution? Besides, who knew how the hounds and wolves from a foreign world evolved? It was possible that they might be two different species. If I turned out to be mistaken, that would be even more embarrassing.

“Crossing species would be difficult, but...”

At this point, talking about crossing species, somehow I recalled that certain someone/

“The reason why you still like humans is because you have yet to meet a life form which you truly love. Species? That is never a problem!”

—By a certain elder brother of the True Love Siblings.

Thus, I tried advising them.

“It might seem inconceivable, but you all can give it a try. Look for the hunter named Beifeng Herault. Yeah, that ‘criminal, Beifeng; crime, Beifeng; punishment, Beifeng’ mortal legend. No, don’t look at me like this, I have not given up on treatment yet, nor did I eat medicine today. Trust me, try looking for him first.”

The rangers left half-convinced half-doubtful. Thankful that I was able to hoodwink them, I forgot the entire matter.

I didn’t expect that two months later, the rangers would rush into my office and inform me of the surprising and pleasant news.

“What, that fellow actually managed to tame a Winter Wolf? Herault Wolf Tamer? Go ahead, what does a single name count as. Right, how did he succeed? Hmm? Why did all of you go silent? Alright, I know that I shouldn’t have asked, so please do not tell me. Don’t go spreading it around as well!”

While the Herault Wolf Tamer happened to find a substitute out of coincidence, there were few divisions that, due to numerous

reasons, were unable to be formed.

The meritorious Black Griffon Aerial Unit, who had its final remaining Dragon Knight Timier as its living signboard, had many people enthusiastically signing up for it. However, the recruitment closed within a single day, and Timier did not manage to accept a single person.

The reason? How could an aerial unit be created when there wasn't any powerful aerial mounts? Just by the name of the Black Griffon Aerial Unit itself, it was clear that the Mist Country's aerial unit was not much different from those of the human empires. They depended heavily on griffons as their main fighting power. However, how could the current East Mist afford to raise those expensive Griffon?

Furthermore, now that the Sacred War had started, these kinds of military supplies were hard to buy. Upon seeing his brothers building up their own divisions while his was still empty, Timier panicked.

"The proposal to transfer the Aurora Knights and Dullahans into the aerial unit is rejected. Timier, don't look so bitter. I will have Bastian capture a bunch of Manticores here. Those are even more powerful than Griffons."

"What? Aren't those two completely different species? Can manticores even be tamed? Trust me, you only need a Beifeng. What? Only with Griffons can your group formation be executed? Alright, if you insist on having Griffons, I remember that Xiao Hong had been rearing a group of them. It should be fine if I

borrow a few dozens of it from here. However, if it numbers over a hundred, even if she is willing to hand it over, we cannot afford to raise them."

Just like how the energy consumption of mechanical flying units is a hundred times that of a chariot, in order to escape from the bindings of gravity, aerial troops require a massive amount of food to sustain their energy consumption. Regardless of whether they were mechanical aerial units, magic lifeforms or living flying beasts, the same rules applied for all of them. In fact, the Griffons which humans raise and giant eagles can already be considered one of the better ones.

Four hundred to five hundred Griffons could eat the amount sufficient to feed ten thousand humans in a single meal. Most probably, the Finance Head would faint from seeing the expenditure afterwards. However, it was true that there wasn't much use to Griffons if they didn't come in a pack.

"Fine, the most I can accept is 30 mounts, so the division can only serve as a scouting unit. I really cannot afford any more than that."

If it could only number thirty, then so be it. After all, it was much better than having an empty division. As Timier left the room sighing, a new trouble came knocking.

This time, it was the siblings Fanderk and Lani. They were once outstanding Holy Light users, and after they were converted into Undead, both of them became outstanding Death Knights. The division they were creating had met with great trouble.

Initially, their “Dawn Hammer” was a Holy Light division centered around Holy Knights and Battle Priests. However, not mentioning how the East Mist was hostile with the Holy Church at the moment, which would cause the growth of the recruited soldiers to slow, the division commander and vice-commander were unable to use Holy Light as well.

Having Death Knights who were incapable of using Holy Light to impart skills of Holy Light and the battle techniques of Holy Knights would be a completely awkward situation. Furthermore, if these Undead were to stay with a massive group of Holy Light users, they might just happen to be cleansed by it somehow someday, so they would have to be wary of it as well.

“… Why don’t you try building an order of Black Warriors and Black Knights? Or why don’t you just start a division of Death Knights and teach those lads the battle techniques of Death Knights in advance?”

In the end, the Fallen Holy Knight Order and Death Knight Order fell through. After all, the prerequisites for a job advancement was way too absurd. After all, no living knights would take the initiative to job change into a Death Knight.

As for Swift Wind Knight Slance, who was in the midst of discussions with me on building a Light Cavalry Order, the contents of our discussions can be summarised with nine words.

“Money? Mount? Equipment?”

“No money! No mount! No equipment!”

Knights were a money-burning class, and Knight Orders required a large amount of funds to be pumped into them. Only with strong finance could a country afford to support powerful Knight Orders. Upon hearing my reply, the cool Slance turned around to leave. Perhaps, from the very start, he knew that it was impossible, but he couldn’t give up without giving it a try.

Initially, I thought that conscripting manpower to build new divisions would be an easy task, but when I am seated in this position, when innumerable small matters came flying towards me, I realised that my thoughts were too simple.

Those flaws at the very start were still solvable through thinking flexibly. However, there were a few aspects that were true dead ends. The greatest problem of it all was the East Mist’s industries, which were lagging far behind this era.

This lag was in all aspects, be it smithing, mining, refining, engineering, or alchemy. Every single one of them was still at the standards of a century or two ago. There were wise kings who had tried hard to advance these industries, but even if we ignore the fact that the East Mist was locked out and viewed with hostility by the main human societies, East Mist couldn’t afford to buy those technologies.

The design of the old furnaces was still stuck at that of two generations ago. All of the products in the alchemy and

engineering shops were all some standardized low-end stuff with low specifications. Then, after the final mine was lost twenty years ago, the mining industry went into decline and at present, it was already basically negligible.

In this world, smithing a good sword first required mining sufficient iron ores before refining it into metal ingots. After that, the metal ingots would be forged into swords under the hands of a blacksmith. If it turned out to be a superior product, then an Enchanter and Alchemist would be invited to carve magic runes on the sword to enchant it.

Given East Mist's current industry standards, besides trying to decipher the new weapons obtained from Auland, even repairing those damaged weapons in the armory was already a difficult task, much less producing new equipment of acceptable quality in bulk for the new army.

Even an inferior metal sword requires countless processes to be done on it before it can be formed, not to mention the superior equipment used by those ace knight orders. The East Mist fell into a bizarre situation where there were blueprints but no craftsman, technologies but no facilities, models but no resources.

However, the talents that I had scouted from Auland were fortunately all from different industries. However, it would take a long period of time for them to truly integrate into this country, and the resource that we were lacking the most at the current moment was time.

Boom! Boom!

The sounds of explosions in the distance reached the heavens. The roof flew across the sky, rotating into the distance. However, the citizens were already used to this sight. After all, the explosions had become a daily occurrence.

Previously, the citizens couldn't understand the rationale behind creating a specialized district for the various experts of various industries to do their research, but after numerous days of explosions and flames, they finally understood my painstaking efforts.

However, this time, a familiar figure could be seen after the explosion. It was the "Miraculous Alchemist" Olivia, and smoke was emanating from her. At this moment, even though she was a mess, a thrilled expression covered her face.

"Ever since she has come under Yingou, Olivia's explosion frequency has taken up half of the entire research district. Explosions occur at least three times every day, and on some days, it can number up to ten times. To be able to remain alive after all that, perhaps that's where the 'miraculous' of her title came from."

While I was slandering her in my head, Olivia smiled happily upon seeing me.

"Your Highness, there have been some results to the object that you wanted me to research. Just as you said, it could probably change this world."

Chapter 134: Revolution

Magic Engineering was a new field of research that was bound to revolutionize the entire world. However, at this moment, it was still in its infancy stage.

It wasn't something entirely new that popped out from nowhere, but an amalgamation of engineering research, scientific theories based on material engineering, and magic formation research, a magic system theory based on alchemy. In "history," it shone in the intermediate stages of the Sacred War.

I had poached the two founders of the new study from Auland Empire. Putting aside Timmy Lade, who was still studying in the public school, Olivia, who had been studying under the great alchemist Yingou Beyar, was making great improvements.

The Goblin had often bragged about his genius disciple on private occasions (at the same time, he also laments that the inventions of his disciple aren't reliable, and he had been a victim of them many times) and thus, as her sponsor, I gave her the research topic I wanted to embark on without any hesitation.

Without a doubt, this was cheating. Giving the original inventor her original research topic, even providing her with facilities beyond what she was able to lay her hands on in "history." If she was unable to succeed even under such circumstances, then there was nothing more I could do.

Of course, they still weren't as mature as they were in history

when they founded the study either. Thus, I had prepared myself to wait patiently for the ripening of the fruits before harvesting them. However, upon hearing from Olivia that there was progress in their research, I was overjoyed.

“Your Highness Roland, those that involve the other fields are still in the midst of being deciphered by everyone else. However, the ‘Portable Energy Source’ that you had tasked me to create happens to be within the field of magic formation research and alchemy which I have expertise in. With the help of teacher and everyone else, I have already roughly grasped some leads on the subject.”

I was delighted. This “Portable Energy Source” happened to be the research that I was looking forward the most to. If this hurdle were to be crossed, then the progress of the research could be carried ahead.

In “history,” there wasn’t any newly developed technology that had had as much of an impact as Magic Machinery Research. The reason for it was because this technology was prepared for the physically weak humans, and humans were the main fighting force of the Order Faction.

The concept behind its design was that humans needed to train for a minimum of several years to attain supernatural abilities, while on the other hand, Magic Beasts were born innately with their own talents and magic. So why not create an energy source to power a machine that mimics the abilities of these Magic Beasts so as to save the time required for humans to attain such abilities?

The fighter who wields the equipment, the magic engine that serves as the energy source, and the external shell which serves as a medium to channel the energy, these three come together to form a perfect system. It was evident that the core of this technology was the portable energy source. When this system was formed, even the most everyday human was capable of using supernatural abilities.

Even the Magic Machinery Dragon which was capable of competing with true dragons that was developed later on was an extension of such a concept. The only difference that set it apart from the others was its powerful engine and its sturdy outer shell. However, there wasn't any revolutionary change to the technology in terms of its concept map.

From the very beginning, the outer shells of the machines weren't a problem at all. Liu Huang Mountain City's engineering research had been leading ahead of the world, and the machineries behind Roland No.2 were formidable in and of itself. However, its energy source, Titan's Heart, wasn't a product that could be mass produced. The other machines of the Roland series were energy core burners and the energy required to drive them added up to an astronomical sum. That was also the main factor that was preventing it from going into the production line.

To my knowledge, the energy of the Magic Machines was derived from the kinetic energy of humans. One could also find a member of the spellcaster class to recharge the energy within the weapons quickly. This meant that as long as one had a charging port, it was possible to reuse the weapon over and over again, making it a worthy one-time investment for many. That was also the reason why it was able to become commonplace in the world.

Of course, making heavy machines from the very start was a foolish action that was unlikely to bring many benefits. My ambitions weren't that unrealistic. Auland's White Wolf Guards were able to reach an average strength of Silver-tier relying on their exploding Savage Javelins and their Savage Swords which were able to cut through everything. This proved how important an artificial magic weapon was to the fighting style of an average soldier, as well as the potential rise in fighting prowess it could induce in them.

I did have a large bunch of the standard equipment of the White Wolf Guards in my possession, but deciphering the secrets behind them wasn't something that could be done in the short term. I reckon that even if I were to successful analyze the secrets behind them, the composition of the alloy and the high-level enchantment on them would still make them difficult to be produced on a large scale. Most probably, due to insufficient materials and lack of technology, the results of it would contribute nothing to the military strength of East Mist.

However, if I were able to provide a magic sword that had low prerequisites to every single soldier of mine, just with the basic elemental enchantments, every single one of them could potentially become mobile rechargeable cannons. This would revolutionize the role of a soldier within wars and the basic firepower of an army would increase exponentially.

Thus, the first problem I had to tackle was the creation of a rechargeable magic engine, and the core technology behind it was its rechargeable energy source. At this very moment, Olivia was telling me that she had managed to overcome the first obstacle, so

how could I possibly not be overjoyed?

My estimations were that it would take a minimum of three years to get to this point. However, it had been just three months since returning from Auland and I was already presented with such positive results. I could hardly believe my ears.

Perhaps due to my overly passionate gaze, Olivia felt embarrassed. She lowered her head and muttered.

“Lord, I didn’t do it alone. Teacher Beyar (Yingou) and Lord Kakana had contributed greatly to the research as well. It was a group effort by us all.”

Mistress of Plague, Lich Kakana? I was taken aback for a moment before a realization struck me.

Back in her time, Kakana was an ace alchemist among ordinary peasants. It was said that her goal back then was to become an alchemist merchant and sell beauty products and vitamin pills.

The stronger one’s will, the more resentment one will carry to one’s grave, the easier it was for one to become an Undead. She, who still had lingering wills in the world (she still refuses to reveal what the matter binding her to the world was), responded to my summons and became a member of the newly formed Red Hunting Hounds.

Alchemist and Saint were occupations that had a great demand

on one's accumulation of knowledge, and they were well-known for the slow progress one faced climbing up the ranks. Time and experience were one's greatest limiting factor. At the very start, Kakana, who wasn't skilled in battle, was only a young sister who everyone protected carefully. However, she eventually became one of the most fearsome existences in the army.

Alchemist was a job that became more powerful the more knowledgeable one was. The longer an alchemist lived, the more fearsome he became. With sufficient time, there were no dangerous experiments that one couldn't do, no out-of-the-box ideas that one couldn't try, and no poison that one couldn't concoct. An accumulation of knowledge for 300 years made the tonics she brewed something that no Undead would dare to drink, much less the living.

She slowly progressed from a mere Skeleton Mage to a powerful Lich. Even I was unsure of how strong she currently was. After all, there wasn't an opportunity for her to use her full strength. Given how Liches were existences that were at minimum Legend-rank, her strength was bound to be something not to be underestimated. Also, her title "Mistress of Plague" showed the impression the world had of her. The lives that had perished from her plagues were uncountable.

At the current moment, she had three apprentices, and one of them was a Lich just like her. Gold-rank alchemists were equivalent to a human kingdom's national treasure, much less say Legend-rank alchemists. An incredible research team that comprised two Legend ranks and two Gold ranks was something unheard of in the human society.

It was precisely because of them being too capable—with their research directed towards poisons, plagues, and such—that I had been depriving them of an opportunity for them to showcase their talents. Otherwise, if they were to start a few destructive plagues there and then, even the Gods would collaborate with one another to deal with us.

The Goblin Explosive Alchemist Yingou Beyar, the Human Miraculous Alchemist Olivia, and the Undead Alchemist Mistress of Plague Kakana and her research team. Somehow, intentionally or coincidentally, a research team consisting of top-tiered alchemists that even large countries were unable to match up to was assembled.

“No, luck played too much of a factor into our success this time. It was all thanks to Olivia’s innovative thoughts.”

A faint, blue-green soulfire burns in the sockets of a skeleton, and concealed beneath the white robes were withered bones filled with magic. The very existence of the being struck fear in the hearts of the living. If it wasn’t for the slightly sharper voice synthesised by magic, no one would have thought that this individual was a female.

However, by the looks of it, it seemed that she was slightly unused to the doctor’s robe. As she walked, she would subconsciously tug on the cloth by her chest and her sleeves.

It was my suggestion to have Undead put on clothes of ordinary humans. Of course, it wasn’t due to my unique interests of wanting to see an Undead fashion show or a zombie rabbit lady. One of the

contributing factors why the living was estranged from the Undead was due of their tattered and gloomy clothings. With a change in that aspect, even though the Undead weren't used to it, it helped to put onlookers at ease.

"I didn't think that the product of a failed experiment would be of use. It used to be an ice maker in my storeroom."

At this point, several Knights who had heard the explosion rushed over. They skillfully pushed aside numerous scattered fragments of the wooden house and pulled the half-fried Goblin out. The Goblin, who had been waiting a long time for them in the rubble, whipped out two bottles of medicine. Gulu gulu, he drank them and the scaldings on his body disappeared at a rate visible to the eye. Then, upon noticing my presence, he rushed here spiritedly with a smile.

"Old friend, a fat lamb... Oops, I mean respected sponsor, we have already completed the task you entrusted to us. It's about time to talk about monetary rewards."

As long as there was money to be earned, this Goblin became more single-minded than a zombie. I was slightly taken aback by how quickly he bounced back to his usual liveliness despite being severely injured a moment ago. On the other hand, everyone else had an expression that said that they were already used to this sight. This "Explosion–Swift Recovery–Next Explosion" cycle had already become a daily occurrence in their life. In fact, in order to make the reconstruction and rescue efforts more convenient, their temporary lab was reduced to this simple log house.

In their report, I soon understood the reason behind their swift breakthrough.

“That is to say, the original magic formation for portable energy source had been discovered by Olivia long ago, but she only remembered it because of the topic I gave her?”

“Yeah, I happened to stumble upon it coincidentally when I was still a rookie. It was a magic formation that allowed energy to flow cyclically so as to lower the temperature of an underground chamber for extended periods of time. Using that as the basic blueprint, we created a miniature energy source that could store energy for extended periods of time.”

The microwave was created in an experiment using the radar of the military. Penicillin was discovered accidentally due to a negligence in the lab. X-ray was stumbled upon while changing experimental conditions. A falling apple led to the uncovering of gravity. In a different world, facts have proven the importance of “coincidence” and “luck” in scientific progress. I didn’t expect that it would be the same for alchemy research in this world.

Probably, from the very start, Olivia was the key to opening this vault, and my action of looking for the inventor to “invent” this ending resulted in a successful replication of this “coincidence.”

“It is a magic formation comprising flowing liquid. Its structure contains sixteen layers, but its size is barely that of an egg. It should be sufficient to meet your requirements.”

Just by the outer appearance itself, it was a completely transparent crystal, and there was a light red liquid flowing slowly within. However, upon contact with the surface of it, I could feel the pulsating magic beneath its peaceful surface, as though it was alive and kicking.

“Well done, I will double the reward I promised you. Your next research goal is to put the energy source into practical usage in ordinary weapons. From the looks of it, it seems that we will have many new, powerful troops soon!”

According to the others, I had been carrying a peculiar smile the entire afternoon. I would be smiling whenever I met others, shake their hands and return their greetings. Many people were shocked by my attitude.

However, I had reasons for my happiness. Other than the increase in the strength of our army that “Olivia’s Magic Box” (I had been named it myself, but the initial name of Olivia’s Vibrating Egg, which I came up with as well, had been vetoed) was going to bring, the breakthrough in this technology also meant that the massive fortune the Magic Machinery Revolution was going to bring in the future was already mostly in my hands.

“By that time, many countries will come knocking to purchase them. Going by my plans, we will definitely sell it to them. However, how we should go about doing it is a wisdom of itself. It is definite that we will have to extort a large sum out of them, and it might serve as an ice-breaker for East Mist in its diplomatic ties.

After all, it is foolish to be making enemies out of the entire world. Even if it was very tempting to slice the other party apart, a friendly face should be shown on the surface. Only in this way can a backstab have the greatest effect."

During this period of time, I had been thinking about how I could extort their money out of them. Naturally, a bizarre smile would hang on my face as a result. The only thing that caused the smile to crumble were the two news that I received consecutively.

The first one was within expectations. It was with regards to the restlessness among the Beastmen due to the arrival of the Earth Elemental God. The territory of the Beastmen was already filled with spies from each and every country, and Rosemary's news came at a timely moment.

"The internal conflict among the Beastmen will be concluded by winter this year. The frost will make it difficult for the Beastman army, which is lacking in rations and clothes, to conduct a southern expedition. However, the moment the ground starts to defrost next year, it is very likely for the Beastmen to journey down the mountains."

Upon receiving the news, I sighed. What that will come eventually comes. In any case, the good news was that they wouldn't be coming in the winter, so we had half a year to make preparations for it. On the other hand, if they really came during the winter, it would be easier to deal with them by making use of the adverse conditions.

However, the other important news was a completely abrupt

massive bomb.

“Xiluo Empire has suddenly declared war upon its surrounding countries. Its Undead army had traversed across the death swamp, the freezing highland, the sweltering desert, and numerous other forbidden zones of the living to assault the other countries. This time, eight of the twelve Senators were involved in the attacks, and the size of the army was uncountable. The sudden raid was extremely successful, the human kingdoms were caught off-guard. The armies of several kingdoms that were involved in the fight were pushed back continuously, and of which, one of the victims of their attacks was a superpower of the continent, Solo Federation.”

If the assault of the Undead was within expectation, then what happened afterward left the intelligence groups of the various countries perplexed.

“The newly appointed 3rd Senator who was less than three months in his position, Pride Omar, has rebelled. He led the army he was just granted control of in a coup d’état, and at this crucial moment, the Royal Faction chose to remain neutral. As a result, the Council was forced to face him head-on. At present, the Xiluo Empire is divided into three factions and is mired in an internal struggle.”

They were making good progress in the battle and two smaller kingdoms were already on the verge of destruction. Yet, at this opportune moment, an internal conflict broke out among them. Furthermore, it was a chaotic battle involving three factions in its midst. What were they up to?

The Seven Deadly Sins, Pride Omar Mist, was a powerful expert who, despite his sudden appearance, was able to prompt the Bone Dragon Queen Gria to give up her position as the 3rd Senator to him. In an instant, the attention of the entire continent was focused on him.

When he proclaimed himself to be the son of Yongye, the head of the Seven Deadly Sins, and the news of him once rebelling against Emperor Yongye was dug up, everyone had a “The heck, so he is a formidable figure after all” epiphany.

“Still the short-sighted Feyland as always. Did you think that by releasing Omar’s seal you would be able to use him to suppress the Royal Faction? Yeah, it is true that he would be able to suppress them, but had you not thought that Omar would be able to suppress your Council of Dark Night as well? By handing him an army to lead by himself, aren’t you giving him a chance to start a coup d’état?”

I could roughly fathom the thoughts of Feyland. He probably hoped to use Omar to keep Lionheart and the others of the Royal Faction in check. After which, making use of the chaos from the Sacred War, he would focus all of the strength of Xiluo into starting a war with the living.

He probably thought that the reason behind Omar’s rebellion back then was to obtain greater authority and strength. Thus, he promised him the world. As long as the main force from the Death Dimensions were to arrive eventually, it would mean nothing even if he failed to fulfill his promises.

“Other than me, it is impossible for Omar to obey the commands of anyone else. As the incarnation of Pride, it is impossible for him to accept anyone being of a higher standing than him. For him, there’s no need for any reason to start a coup d’état. If someone were to question his actions face-on, he would just find any random excuse such as ‘You are an eyesore,’ ‘You are too ugly,’ ‘Despite being born so ugly, you dare to command the suave me’. Words that seem to have come from damned rascals would pop out from his mouth and drive the other party into a rampage.”

I know that darned rascal and that Undead Control Ability named as “The Highest Authority of the Dark Prince” too well. Any Undead that came under his control would serve him faithfully for eternity. Perhaps, just like back then, several Undead Lords might already be under his control. If so, then this internal conflict would probably drag on.

For some reason, I felt sympathy for Feyland. After planning so tediously for many years, gathering sufficient military power, gaining control over the twelve Senators, waiting until an opportune moment—the prelude of the Sacred War, perhaps even checking the points of entry for the invasion multiple times—, they all gone to naught.

“Who will be the final victor? If I were to gauge based on the strength of the two factions, 3:7 for Omar to Feyland. However, if Lionheart doesn’t make use of this chaotic situation to play some tricks, the years he had spent by my side would have all been for naught. Forget it, it doesn’t really matter anyway. No matter who wins, all that matters is that Xiluo has lost.”

The intelligence network of the ambitious Auland Empire was truly formidable. However, the news that those elite spies risked their lives was sent to me at first time's notice through Rosemary's phylactery.

The situation of the various lands differed from one to the other. However, there was a common point between them all. That was that none of them were peaceful.

"The storm is already brewing, we have to speed up our preparations. What that is of utmost importance now is... the autonomous region of the hybrids and the Northern Altar. I mustn't drag the matter on any longer. After I'm done with the miscellaneous work here, I will have to set off once more."

Due to the very few members of the royal family, the East Mist Royal Palace's sparring field was opened to the Royal Knights as practice grounds. However, it was closed to them today. Other than the sparring experts on the field posing a threat to spectators, today was also the day for the experimentation of the newest weapons.

The specifications demanded the new weapons weren't too high. Most of them were engineered magic swords with an inner core inscribed with a Fire Conversion Magic Formation.

Both flames and machines were the expertise of the Goblin

Engineers. As long as they were offered sufficient rewards, the efficiency and passion they showed in their work were incomprehensible to the other races, to the extent of even toiling 23 hours a day. As such, in less than half a month, the prototype I had requested had started to take shape.

The crimson-red magic sword carried with it the might of crushing mountains and billowing oceans. Radiant flames shrouded the blade of the sword and the hot wind it generated caused its adversaries to feel suffocated.

After the wooden dummy sustained a single blow, it started burning furiously. It was swiftly reduced to ashes.

“Is this a success?”

At the next moment, the gemstone “vibrating egg” placed on the hilt of the sword flashed before extinguishing altogether. At the same time, the blade of the sword started to melt. After a few seconds, along with the diffusion of heat across the entire sword, the melting portion started to expand. It didn’t take long before the sword was reduced to a puddle of metallic liquid.

“Another failure? The results are a little disappointing,”

The wielder looked at the hilt of the sword in his hand in pity, completely oblivious to the scalding metallic water dripping onto his body. After all, the temperature achievable by his physical body was not something this mere magic sword could ever hope to match.

“Of course. How can it possibly endure the infusion of your full strength? I simply wanted a SemiGod like yourself to test the limits of its might. How is it?”

Adam scratched his head.

“Bronze pinnacle. No, grudgingly, it should pass for a low Silver.”

Clearly, the firepower was far from satisfactory for him. While lament could be heard from his words, the scribes by the sidelines cheer in delight. The result was already far better than their expectations.

Those who were on the field were the top fighters of East Mist, and the reason why I had them here wasn’t just to view the testing of the weapons.

“Alright, since the Magic Engineered Sword and Magic Engineered Firearms have passed the primary test, the next job is to develop two new forces with these at the core of them. In order to allow these troops to truly leave a mark on history, I have an idea in mind.”

Heroic Spirit Bastlar, Adam, Old Ferdinand, and Fayde. The four of them were highly qualified Sword Saints. Furthermore, none of them were purely physical Sword Saints. On top of their swordsmanship, they had their own expertise as well.

At this moment, even if I didn't say it out loud, they would have probably guessed it. After all, most of them knew that I had requested Bastlar for the complete information on his Nightfall Blade.

"Is it about the Magic Swordsman job advancement?"

"Yeah, we will open up a new path for everyone else. At the very least, this path shouldn't lead to a dead end after a certain point. Every single job has its own techniques and battle style that is suited to them. Thus, we have to develop a job advancement suitable for these Magic Swordsmen. The job advancement will be between Gold rank and Silver rank and it must be far superior to those useless Mage Knights. It will be called Four Elemental Swordcaster, and I am willing to become the very first Swordcaster!"

Chapter 135: Sword Seals And Army Divisions

Job advancement wasn’t something that was rare in this world. On the contrary, almost every single expert who had reached a certain level would choose a job suited for them to advance to.

For them, it was a necessity upon reaching a certain level, while in my System interface, there was a much more direct view on it.

LV60 Warrior/LV7 Weapon Master; LV60 Justice Knight/LV2 Castigator; LV60 Mage/LV1 Fate Weaver. The former were the basic jobs whereas the latter were job advancements. For the basic job, one would have to continuously temper oneself and mature through the Iron, Bronze, and Silver ranks before they could reach the standards required for a job advancement.

Actually, there wasn't much of a difference among the various basic jobs and most of the skills and abilities each job possessed were shared by the others. The main differing factor for their strength were their talents and basic stats. Choosing a job advancement meant choosing one’s future path and what one was going to specialize in. At the same time, it meant giving up on the other countless possibilities. Even so, specialization significantly boosted one’s strength. At Legend-rank, some of them were able to use the single specialization of theirs to crush everything else.

For example, a certain more and more Beifeng individual whose name must not be spoken of had the basic job of a Ranger. After which, he advanced to become a Beastmaster, which was to say, he had given up on his previous Ranger skills—his archery, survival,

trap setting, tracking, dual wielding, and numerous other common Ranger skills, and instead, chose to specialize in controlling and taming wild beasts.

When he had reached Legend-rank and forged that bizarre Guardian of Universal Love Soul Imprint, his skills in taming beasts and proficiency in controlling them were raised to his limits.

It was said that during that battle in the ocean back then, he managed to cause a momentary hesitation with the Sea Monster. If not for the relentless cannon bombardments, he might have even successfully tamed it. It was unthinkable for a Legend rank to induce such an obvious effect on a Sea Monster that was at minimum Myth rank.

If he had really managed to tame a Sea Monster as his pet, his fighting prowess would be raised by a few hundredfold in an instant. This clearly showed the massive benefits specialization could bring to an expert.

What? This fellow had been overpowered from the very start, and he wasn't a good representation?

Yeah, your words weren't really wrong. I doubt that there would be another Beastmaster who would love their responsibility to the extent of forging their soul with their will, and deriving their strength from their soul. In fact, a normal soul was the limiting factor of mortals. The more obsessed and frenzied a soul, the more fearsome the potential it possessed. To a certain extent, he was a far distance away from the concept of normal. He is a ridiculous

existence, but one with unlimited potential.

At this point, I couldn't help falling into contemplation.

"If he were to continue rising up the ranks like that, given how the Jurisdiction of Wild Beasts and the position of Beast God is still empty, if he were to really step into the realm of SemiGod, there might be nothing to stop him in the most difficult step in ascending to Godhood.... That's too terrifying!"

I can't help but picture what would happen if Beifeng Herault were to really become the Beast God. I feared that the world wouldn't fare well then.

Alright, seemed like I went on a tangent. Let's not talk about the fearsome future for now. At the very least, I definitely would not allow that to occur. Let's get back to the main topic at hand, yeah, job advancement.

Job advancement meant choosing a specific path to specialize in. As a simile, it is like climbing a mountain. The further one goes, the narrower the road gets. However, when one turns back to take a look, one would realize that he had soared above the others.

Using a much more down-to-earth comparison, an ordinary law student had focused in finance law when he was in his Master's, before going on to specialize in international anti-monopoly cases in his Doctor of Philosophy research.

This was an example of going from a broad range into a specific genre. It may seem as though one is walking into a narrow path, but in actuality, they are climbing higher and higher. After all, was it possible for them to just forget the law knowledge they had studied? Of course not. It's just that there wasn't any need for it anymore. For them, their specialization would more than suffice.

My situation was slightly more unique. Other people only had a single path, but I had four paths mingled together. If I were to diverge my efforts into training them one by one, not only would I tire myself to death, I wouldn't be rewarded greatly either.

Thus, I decided to pave my path like how the rivers lead into the sea. The four rivers would eventually converge together as one into the ocean. Thus, what I had to do was to find the point of convergence for the individual rivers. Then, extracting the strengths of each field, I would pave my own way, and this time, my goal wasn't just a mere SemiGod.

It was a difficult path to tread, but it wasn't an impossible one. That was also the reason why I made up my mind to research the magic swords.

After reaching a certain level in my path of magic swordsman, it was only a matter of time before I had to create a job advancement suitable for myself. Rather than being forced to make a choice when I come to a bottleneck, I might as well plan ahead of myself.

As for the reason why I chose to create a new job advancement rather than to utilize an existing job advancement for magic swordsman was because, although creating one's own path was

difficult, it was bound to be the most suited for oneself. On the other hand, one might progress quickly upon walking the path of another, but it would be difficult to surpass the strength of the creator.

Of course, from a certain viewpoint, it was a luxurious difficulty. Given the short lifespan of ordinary humans, it was sufficient as long as they could rise up the ranks fast enough. Such a difficulty was normally the privilege of the Elves and the other races blessed with longevity.

The appearance of experts whom even true Gods feared after Magic Machinery Research reached its advanced stage proved the unlimited potential in this path.

“Star Shatterer—Tonight, please remain with me. I will knock down the brightest North Star for you!”

“A single person fleet—Billions of cannon towers, billions of radiance. My final goal is the Milky Way!”

“The undefeatable passionate fool—My ship-slaying blade is capable of cutting through everything!”

“Using cannon bombardments to make friends, the Super S Mobile Calamity—That… Please believe me! I only wanted to make friends with you. I didn’t intentionally destroy your city.”

“The führer of the Jedi Order—How infuriating, all that hinder

my path are trash!”

TL: In China, Hitler is labelled as the ‘moustache’ for his moustache.

At this moment, when the light of the new generation was presenting itself before me, giving me an opportunity to lead the era, if I still failed to grasp it, I would truly be foolish.

Of course, the other Sword Saints were unable to see that far ahead. However, as long as they trust me and support me, that would be more than enough.

Under the efforts of the craftsman, the sacred sword Pale Justice had been modified. There was an additional aperture at the hilt of the sword to insert attribute magic cores, while the entire sword was an Olivia’s Magic Box that had a complete magic circulation system.

“Sword Seal of the Vermilion Bird!”

A red-colored attribute core had been inserted within and the complete magic box immediately activated. Under my control, an apparition of a crimson-red divine bird appeared on top of the seal and scarlet magic flames enveloped the sword, extending beyond the tip of the sword for several centimeters.

Every single slash was reminiscent of a shooting star severing the skyline, the radiance of the flames leaving a trail behind it while the fire sparks fell from it, creating an extraordinarily beautiful sight reminiscent of the Milky Way.

Furthermore, every single target thrown at me, upon getting struck by me, would swiftly incinerate. At the same time, the enchantment on the sword would be consumed and the apparition of the Vermilion Bird gradually darkened.

After dozens of blows, the sword seal finally vanished altogether. Along with a kacha sound, the empty attribute core flew out.

“49 attacks. That was better than I expected.”

“Is it possible for it to be improved?”

“There is a limit to the maximum capacity of portable energy sources. Unless we expand the magic box and the attribute core, which means that the size of the weapon will be increased, it will be difficult. However, if we were to do so, the value of it would be lowered. Anyway, in a practical battle, that much is enough. At most, one just has to bring more attribute cores to switch it out. Let’s go on into the second segment.”

The attribute core was an extremely miniaturized version of Olivia’s Magic Box (portable energy source) with a specific attribute to it. On the other hand, the larger magic box that it was slotted into was an attributeless energy source. When the attribute core was activated, the entire energy source would be converted into the corresponding element. When the energy source had consumed entirely (Most of the time, the attribute core would be expended while the attributeless energy source still have remaining energy.), it was possible to use the attributeless energy core to charge it up.

Allowing the magic boxes to maintain the sword seals by themselves let the wielder focus on using their weapons, thereby preventing the suicidal action of diverting one's attention onto multiple actions.

The researchers by the side burst into commotion, while the Sword Saints and craftsmen were looking over interestedly. From the very beginning, most of them grudgingly chose to help out either in deference to me or for the wages. However, upon seeing the technology take shape and gradually proving the worth of its existence through facts, the endless wonders of the new object started to pique their interest.

"Sword Seal of the Black Tortoise!"

Just like before, a snake-tortoise sword apparition was activated and a pale white frost started to diffuse. I raised my sword, and facing the target ten meters away, I swung the sword with great force.

"Sword Seal Burst Mode!"

Accompanied with a furious howl was the apparition of the snake-tortoise flickering, and a snow-white arc was released along with the swing of the sword.

The speed of the snow-white arc wasn't exceptionally fast, and cold air diffused from it during its trajectory, causing ice crystals to form along its trail. It was an incredibly beautiful sight.

Kacha! Cha!

The target was immediately sliced into two before freezing and shattering upon contact with the floor.

When the sword seal was activated, its default form was an enchantment on the sword, making it suitable for physical battles. On the other hand, this sword seal burst mode refers to using the remaining mana left in the energy source for a single long-range burst attack.

Currently, there were only these two offensive models, and the four sword seals that corresponded to the four classical elements, under my suggestion, had been named after the divine beasts which never appeared in this world.

Of course, due to this inconceivable persistence in the eyes of the others, I suffered much criticism, especially from the Goblins, who surrounded me to complain resentfully in an attempt to gain the rights to name it.

“I would be able to understand it if the Fire Phoenix was the divine beast of the fire element, but why did you have to name it the fire element sparrow (The Vermilion Bird in the view of the Goblins). This is obviously a low-level magic beast. That Black Tortoise is even more inconceivable. I have never heard of a magic beast who is a tortoise on one side and snake on the other.”

“As for the Azure Dragon, it probably refers to Green Dragons.

Their talents obviously consist mainly of manipulating the plants in the forest.... Alright, since it is able to fly, I can barely accept its relation to the wind element, but White Tigers are only a rare mutation breed. Even if its skin is beautiful, as an earth element divine beast... To tell the truth, we have always thought that Ruby Sword Seal, Gold Sword Seal and Jade Sword Seal sounded nicer! Please respect our opinion! As the craftsmen, we also have the rights to its name."

Facing all kinds of opinions, a single reply of mine settled all of the disputes.

"I am the sponsor."

Alright, this was one of the aspects I loved about the Goblins. Anyone who had money was the boss. The moment I said those words, every single complaint disappeared.

This was also the only explanation I could offer them. After all, am I to explain to those of a foreign world that the divine beast of the north, Black Tortoise, has a water attribute, and the ice attribute was an extension of the water attribute, while the divine beast of the west, White Tiger, is of metal attribute, so it had to make do with the earth element? As for the Azure... There was no wood element in the four classical elements, so I could only correspond it to the wind element.

The reason why it was named Four Element Swordcaster was because there were only four main sword seals, modeled after the four classical elements created. The fire attribute is called the Vermilion Bird Seal, the wind attribute is called the Azure Dragon

Seal, the water (ice) element is called the Black Tortoise Seal while the earth (metal) attribute is called the White Tiger Seal.

Of course, these were only the commonplace basic sword seals, there were still a bunch of additional ones. For example, I possess ice mana. If I were to use the Black Tortoise Seal, I could refill the energy of the attributeless energy core directly. As long as I were to swap the cores quick enough, there were no restrictions on my ability to conduct prolonged battles. Also, I had privately created some sword seals that were unsuitable to be released to the public.

"Pride Sword Seal—O' Holy Light, who gave you the authority to dictate what justice is, and to incriminate others through your own justice?"

"Wrath Sword Seal—Anger against villains and injustice is the propelling force of the Law. However, excessive justice will only harm you and others. Calmness is of necessity. Never allow wrath to cloud your rational thinking."

"Sloth Sword Seal—Death is the sweetest slumber. However, it is a pity that it isn't time for you to get off work yet. Thus, make good use of your time to continue living an exciting life."

These three sword seals were created in correspondence with my other three powers, Holy Light, Law, and Death. I was using Olivia's Magic Box and the job advancement to sort out my chaotic and diverse energy systems, so that I could make these rivers converge together into a single ocean, creating an even more powerful fighting prowess.

Of course, these three energy systems weren't suitable for public release. The current four sword seals were more than enough for those rookies to study.

In the midst of the development of the sword seal, I had some epiphanies. The future road of development for this job should be to develop a certain systematic combination of sword seals, to create and grasp new and higher-leveled sword seals, or to seek more and better ways to exploit greater use out of them.

For example, the Azure Dragon Sword Seal could be used to create a hurricane to propel or negate arrows while the Pride Sword Seal could be used to disperse Undead. I could already foresee these magic warriors gathering as one and turning the tides of a battle.

As for the Magic Gunner that was disclosed along with the Four Element Swordcaster, in actuality, it was only turning the Sword Seal Burst Mode into a model suited for common use, turning the sword seal enchantment into a last resort when the enemy happened to close in on them. If some conspicuous difference had to be pointed out about them from the Four Element Swordcaster, it was that most of the weapons they chose were bows, rifles, and staves.

Of course, the strength of an individual was limited. Thus, without any hesitation, I decided to dump this responsibility on others so as to pool in the wisdom of others.

“Fendark and Lani, didn’t you two complain about being unable form your own division? I will leave these original prototypes with you all. Fendark will be responsible for training the Four Element Swordcaster whereas I will entrust the Magic Gunners to Lani. Periodically, we will try out different variations and new battle styles. Together, we shall perfect this job!”

When Fendark and Lani delightedly accepted the posting, I jolted abruptly. The familiar sound of System notice rang out in my ear once more.

【Ding! Congratulations on triggering the unranked quest (At minimum Epic-class): My Struggle】

【Quest objective: To the greatest extent of your ability, perfect the abilities and techniques of the Four Element Swordcaster. Also, open up its job advancement, construct an army, and turn this brand new job into the new favored one of the era.】

【Quest rewards: It will be decided based on the level of completion of the quest. There will be no upper cap to the rewards. If you are able to uncover the potential of this job up to SemiGod-rank, then the rewards will be SemiGod-tier as well. (Notice: As this is a long-term quest, the rewards will be released irregularly.)】

【Quest failure penalty: None. However, this is your own path. The moment you fail, your road to the summit also comes to an end. Without any strength, you are unable to challenge those experts. As a result, your goals also become illusions. This is already the harshest penalty.】

【System Notice: Under your diligence, a brand new fighting class walks on the stage of history as well. The development of the Magic Machinery Research had been brought forward by

fifteen years and the strings of fate that lead to the end of the world have already been tangled up. All prophecies are destined to be unfulfilled.... Well done, please continue to overturn everything. Only through this can your insane goals be realized one day. Also, the massive amount of Fate Points you will gain as a result will allow you to stand up against any opponent, even if the enemy is the legendary Goddess of Creation!】

What else can prove that I am treading on the correct path than this rarely serious System notice? Thus, I smiled gleefully.

"Fendark and Lani, I will be depending on you two. Right, the name of the new division isn't fixed yet, so why don't we call it..."

"Please don't! Your naming abilities had too much of an impact on the morale of the troops! Even now, Lord Bastion still rages out instantaneously at anyone who dares to call him by that nickname, growing into a small mountain in an instant."

"Your Highness, it is better to leave such a minor matter to us. The name of Olivia's Vibrating Egg has already gotten out and, initially, she was happily going around bringing up this name you came up for her. That is until Tracy's adult toy shop opened.... The depressed Olivia holed up in her dwelling for ten days straight, and everyone is still trying to console her. Your naming abilities are way too formidable. What if we fail to recruit a single person after you named the division?"

"Indeed, if not for the name of our division being changed from Night Watchdogs to Red Hunting Hounds, everyone would probably be embarrassed to be walking around. It was all thanks to

Lord Bastian going all out to veto the name."

"Cough, Roland. I think you better give up on it. The names of the four sword seals may be slightly bizarre, but they are barely acceptable, so my impression of you just improved by a little. Everyone knows that your naming abilities are still stuck at the level of an elementary grader. If another Xiao Hong, Xiao Bai, Xiao Gou were to pop up, everyone's impression of you, which had just barely risen slightly after so much effort, would go down into the gutters once more. You must reconsider your decision."

Alright, the few knights who had been following me all along became agitated. Even Adam jumped out to join in the commotion. However, why do I feel some traces of gleefulness from his heart-rending expression?

Looking at the agitated crowd who were trying their best to persuade me otherwise, I swallowed back the name that was on the tip of my mouth helplessly, and grudgingly muttered silently.

"Twin-headed Chihuahua Division is obviously such a great name. Not only does it fit the concept of the division, it also sounds cute as well…. Or, since the first prototype of the magic engineered weapon is a silver sacred sword, why don't we call it Silver Sword Division?"

Looking over, although everyone had clearly heard my "silent mutter," everyone was busy doing their own things, pretending not to have heard my words. But when I walked out the door, the cheers of "Victory!" that sounded from my back made me harden my resolution.

“Later, I will go to the military barracks to register the name of the division. I choose you, Super Silver Sword Division!”

Chapter 136: Return And Reunion

“Fresh fruits and vegetables for sale at a cheap price!”

“Hey, you over there, the one who looks strong. Our engineering team is facing a lack of manpower. We provide food, lodging and favorable treatment. Are you interested?”

“Here! Bread fresh out of the oven! Buy one get one free! Knights get a fifty percent discount! Do you want one? Alright, it will be two bronze coins.”

“Tom? Your entire family has returned! Great, it is enough that you all have returned! This time, do you all intend to stay permanently?”

Strolling about East Mist City, I looked around at the busy crowds, the traffic flowing to and fro, and all kinds of construction grounds. Somehow, a smile crept onto my mouth, one that came from the depths of my heart.

Rome wasn’t built in a single day. Even with great funds pumped in without concerns for the potential returns, the rebuilding works of the city were still stuck at the phase of clearing up and renovating the older district. The resources we had obtained also only improved the living standards of the civilians slightly, and the difference in the overall standard of living wasn’t apparent. What made me smile happily was the faces of the citizens who were gradually becoming increasingly spirited and expectant.

The journey north towards the East Mist Communal Country had shown me much tragedy and suffering, and my mood gradually worsened.

When humans met with tragedies, they would often carry bitterness on their faces. Even more so, their eyes would reflect heart-rending numbness and confusion. I understood that when someone had no expectation for the future, when he believed that the future would only become more and more bleak as time goes by, no matter how mentally resilient the person is, his complexion and mental state would only grow worse and worse. When there was no hope for his future, he would naturally treat others colder and colder.

The reason? It was probably because this nation plagued with calamities would eventually just meet with another catastrophe.

That year, when the Mist Country crumbled, they did not fall. When they lost their homeland for nearly a century, they did not migrate. Two hundred years ago, the East Mist was annexed by the wars waged by its neighbors. Even so, they persisted on. Twenty years ago, after losing the final mine they were reliant on for their survival, they continued to fight on. A year ago, when the old emperor died, they gave their lives to follow behind a fourteen-year-old princess to charge against their enemies, achieving a miraculous victory in the war.

They weren’t superhumans with wills made of steel; they were just ordinary mortals who had a longing for their homeland. Perhaps in the eyes of outsiders, this barren land of the north was a useless plot of land in the wilderness. But for those whose

ancestors had lived here, there was too much nostalgia and longing for this plot of land.

Outsiders were unable to understand the sentimentality Northerners held for their homeland. Perhaps they were exactly like the glaciers of the Northern Lands. Just because their core was here, their souls adamantly chose to guard the homeland their ancestors had created for them.

“As long as we do not starve to death, as long as that flag doesn’t fall, we will clench our jaws and endure.”

However, not long ago, they finally found themselves unable to endure any longer. In the span of a year between the death of the old emperor and Reyne’s returning with provisions for survival in hand, a significant amount of the population chose to leave their homeland out of frustration.

I knew that they couldn’t be blamed for it, and neither did they break their vow.

The citizens of the Mist did not fear sacrifice and war; they only feared the unknown future.

When the shadows of war fade away, the tattered farmlands and the ruined villages became a sight of hopelessness. Facing the onset of winter, under the menace of the wolf packs, they did not have the provisions required for them to survive through the winter. When the neighbors they knew died of starvation and froze in the streets, when the life-saving rations allocated during winter was

insufficient, even the most optimistic of people had to consider their future.

“I don’t mind living this tragic life, but my child isn’t at fault. He doesn’t deserve this.”

No one could stand idly and watch as their children starved to death before them. No one could chastise the Mist citizens who left. Even if they knew that this would be a one-way trip, and that they would likely die in the midst of the dangerous journey, they could only leave their homeland reluctantly.

However, what was even more ironic and cruel about their departure was that it allowed more rations to be allocated to each individual, thus saving more people. Compared to the previous few years, the amount of people who died in last year’s winter was the least.

No one could be blamed for this cruel reality. If someone had to to take the blame, then one could only blame the Mist royalty who had failed in their duties for protect their people. If one had to go even further, it could probably be traced back to my generation, the generation which created many potential enemies for the country.

Thus, despite knowing that Auland was up to no good, as the descendant of the Mist, Reyne, who had yet conduct an official coronation ceremony, gritted her teeth and journeyed there. After all, death awaited them if they chose to do nothing. As long there was a ray of hope, she had to go through with it.

Should I say that when one door closed, another opened.... If I was even a year late in regaining my physical body and returning to the Surface, the East Mist Communal Country might have already disappeared by then. If not for the irksome Auland Empire forcing them into a corner, I might not have even met Reyne.

At this very moment, after the bustling Homecoming Ceremony two days ago, many things had changed. At the very least, in place of their confused gazes was expectation for a brighter future.

“Have you seen it? Barracks have been constructed in the old districts by the west of the city. That is the army of Prince Roland.”

“Back then, I was the first one to rush to the conscription point. It is a pity that I was just a bit off from being qualified.”

“Keep bragging. Who doesn’t know that even though they were recruiting significant amounts of manpower, the threshold to be accepted was very high? The very first test was already a physical one. Seeing how you are as skinny as a monkey, how many sandbags can you carry? You probably got eliminated in the first round, and you still dare to brag that you are just a bit off?”

“To know it so clearly, can it be that you...”

“At the very least, I survived until the third round! I, Aiken, do not intend to give up. As long as there are divisions that are recruiting, I will give it a try. If I still fail even then, I’m will make do with being a security officer! Right, there is the Church of Law

as well; they are also recruiting. I heard that they impart fighting techniques as well."

Despite being eliminated, the bulky man, Aiken, had a face full of pride and honor. The surrounding crowd was also gasping in surprise, as though they were looking at an amazing expert.

When a country is weak, the safety of its people are threatened. The citizens of a weak country are looked down upon. No one knew this logic better than the citizens of East Mist, which had been ravaged time and time again. Even after establishing the Church of Law as its national religion and, from a certain perspective, becoming a permanently neutral country, it was clear to see that East Mist was still in a dangerous situation. The Beastmen of the north could launch an invasion southwards at any moment, and the neighboring countries were eyeing East Mist with greed. Even if one didn't assault the other countries, there was no guarantee that the other countries would do the same.

In this world where the strong preyed on the weak, one had to possess formidable strength in order to become truly neutral.

Thus, the establishment of every single army division became a reason for the citizens to rejoice. After all, this meant that their country's ability to defend itself was growing stronger and stronger. At the same time, this new army also provided the younger population an opportunity to develop themselves.

Avalanche Guardian, Swift Wind Knight; one after another, these legendary jobs popped out from history. Their legends were attracting every single one of the youngsters and they craved to

create history with their own hands, just like their ancestors did.

In the past, citizens were also enthusiastic to join the army, but that was only to make a living. However, right now, they were building a future for themselves while defending their country. The motivation of the citizens between the two scenarios were incomparable with one another.

Furthermore, the fact that the citizens felt pride in joining the military was representative of their faith in the country. This was also symbolic of the faith they had in me, the legendary Holy Knight Prince Roland.

However, this wasn't the happiest and most remarkable news yet. Thinking about it, it had to be the migrants from the East Mist returning back to their homeland.

After the news that the legendary Prince Roland had returned with his vanished army and liveliness was returning back to their homeland, even though the situation wasn't looking too good, the Mist citizens still chose to return. Every single day, there were carriages and individuals returning back to their homeland.

Outside the city gates, the roads were packed with all kinds of carriages and travelers who were waiting to enter the city. The streets were packed with tired but happy returnees. "Is everyone still doing well? I have finally returned here." "You're back? That's great, that's great." Such conversations could be heard everywhere. The returning travelers were extremely curious about every single change that had occurred after their departure. Many of the crowd were pointing to the division flags and commenting

about them. In fact, some of them even grabbed familiar faces to interrogate them about it.

Furthermore, this was only the beginning. Those who had managed to return at this point were mostly those who had migrated to the neighboring countries. As the news traveled to the different corners of the world, those Mist citizens who had left within the past twenty to thirty years started to contemplate on whether they should return or not. When the Mist War Flags rose up high once more, the disparate Mist citizens would start to reunite as one.

Not too far away, a group of travelers had just arrived. Some of them were wearing thick cotton caps and others, light feather hats. Judging from their entirely different clothing, it was clear that they had just returned from different countries.

At the beginning, the returnees were discussing how they were getting along in a foreign land. Eventually, it devolved into a complaining session.

“...We were lucky to have not met with any wild beasts and bandits in our long journey to the other countries, but if not forced into a corner, who would be willing to leave their homeland? After all, do you think that speaking a foreign language and living an entirely life from what we were accustomed to is enjoyable? Those locals would always look at us as though we were savage barbarians, do you think that it was pleasant being treated as such? Upon opening our eyes every morning, the feeling of isolation when all we saw were foreigners speaking a foreign language sometimes made us despair. Sometimes, we would even think of

committing suicide."

That was a young man, but the heavy under-eye bags, depressed expression, as well as his callused hands and his rough skin made him look like a middle-aged man in his forty or fifties. Due to overworking himself and his constant low spirits, he seemed significantly older than his actual age.

"We were discriminated against due to our foreign accents. Even when we were bullied, despite holding the moral high ground, we did not dare to argue with them. Who can understand the indignation that we felt then? The loneliness we felt during the festive periods of our homeland, sometimes even suffering from insomnia due to excessive longing for our homeland, families, and friends—all those heart-rending emotions we felt while struggling to make a living, who could understand them? Furthermore, if we were to express them, we would only be isolated even further."

Despite being his prime where he should have been filled with ambitions, this middle-aged man was the same as the young man before. As he spoke, he recalled those past events and the anger he felt made him slam his mug on the wooden table.

"When we finally made new friends after much difficulty, in the midst of our conversation, a slip of the tongue results in 'East Mist? Oh, I know, it's that barbarian tribe that had been destroyed. Could it be that you are that legendary barbarian princess?' When those by the side are laughing, in order to fit in, despite feeling so furious that you could beat the hell out of the other party, you could only try your best to force a laughter and pretend as though it was nothing. That life was too aggrieving, too torturous!"

That indignant lady spoke impassionedly. From her seething tone, it seemed as though she had suffered many grievances.

After all the complaints, an abrupt silence suddenly settled over the atmosphere. Everyone had suffered quite a fair bit. After a moment of silence, someone suddenly led the group into raising their mugs towards the city's west, the direction where the military barracks were.

"Let's thank the princess who had been propping up the flag for so many years.... At the very least, we have returned, and there is still a place beneath the flags for us to return to. So, everyone, let's be more cheerful from now on. For our blissful future, cheers!"

Even though the heavy burden of life had crushed his waist, the young man's heart had yet to die. He still dreamt of a beautiful tomorrow.

"Let's thank Prince Roland for providing us a reason to return.... No matter what happens from now on, at the very least, we will be able to die in the land of our ancestors. Perhaps all we needed was a reason to return here."

The middle-aged man was much more pragmatic. His resolve to remain here even if it meant his death caused the atmosphere to turn heavy and dismal.

"Let's thank..."

Even though they were words of appreciation, the drinking toasts were becoming more and more sorrowful. Soon, someone found it unbearable.

“Hey, stop acting as though we are marching onto an execution platform. Didn’t you all see the Homecoming Ceremony that day? Prince Roland’s army is powerful and those Undead Knights are elites that have gone through countless wars throughout the last three hundred years. They are all the Heroic Spirits of our Mist Country! With them serving as the core of our military, our army will charge through battlefields undefeated! Our country will only grow stronger and stronger and our life will only improve as time goes by!”

The one who had interrupted abruptly was Aiken, who was boasting a while ago about how he had bashed through several trials but regrettably failed in the end. At this moment, he was walking over to the group.

“You all are overthinking it. Hehe, you all must be unaware of how powerful our new guardians are. That Bone Dragon the Dragon Knight was riding on was so massive that it was even larger than the city walls. Do you know who he is? He is the final Dragon Knight of our Mist Country! The Knights under Prince Roland are that incredible, he himself…”

Aiken began boasting about the scenes he had seen during the Homecoming Ceremony, speaking of it even more gleefully than his own glory. All kinds of rumors were mixed in with the truth in his words and all kinds of legends came bursting out of his mouth.

In a moment's time, I became a 2.8-meter wide, nine-headed, fire-breathing, winged, SemiGod monster from their gossipping.

From the very start, the returning travelers were curious about the things that happened on that day. Even though it was clear that Aiken's words were exaggerated and filled with nonsense, they were absorbed into his story.

Under the ceaseless questions by the audience, Aiken became more and more impassioned in his story. When he went overboard with his story, some of the onlookers would interrupt and correct him. With a word here and there, the atmosphere in the tavern heated up.

"Say, this is a hard-to-come-by opportunity! So many ace knights are building their own divisions and they are intending to personally train the soldiers. You can't imagine the sight of all of the nobles of the country being present for the tests. Even so, they were eliminated just like everyone else. I, Aiken, was always just a little bit off every single time. Perhaps if I were able to leap over this hurdle, I might become a knight under Prince Roland's direct command! That wouldn't just be my honor, but the honor of the future generations of my descendants to come! If my deceased father were to hear of it, he might even leap up from his grave in sheer joy!"

"Shoo shoo, you were unsuccessful for so many times already, to think that you would still try to brag about it! I don't think there's any hope for you anymore, you should just be content with serving as Town Security."

“Hmph, let’s wait and see. I vow to become a knight one day! After this toast, I will go to the newly established Silver Cross Division to take the test. Are any of you willing to follow me?”

“What is there to be scared of? Let’s go then!”

Alright, the more these few fellows spoke, the ruddier their faces grew and the more agitated they became. Waving their hands about furiously, they dashed out to register for the test.

“...The Silver Cross Division requires one to be capable of learning how to utilize the Power of Elements. This fellow’s intelligence doesn’t even reach 9, it is impossible for him to pass the test.”

Silver Cross Division was the Swordcaster and Magic Gunner division that Fendark and Lani were building. After my Silver Sword Division was mercilessly rejected by everyone, the image of an intersecting sword and staff into the shape of a cross representing the duality of magic and physical might became the insignia of the division, as well as the origin of its name.

I knew the basic requirements for admittance into the division and looking at the bulky Aiken, who was still boasting in the midst of the crowd, I shook my head. I highly doubt that he would meet the cut for the Silver Cross Division. With a smile on my face, I placed three bronze coins on the table to foot the bill and left.

“Aiken huh? I shall remember his name. At the very least, he has a glib tongue. I could ask Kelly to see whether they lack talents in

the public relations department.”

I strutted down the street, not fearing that anyone would recognise me at all. At this moment, a young man approached me.

“Uncle, a cup of fruit wine only costs two bronze coins.”

“Here, I will give you a tip since I’m in good mood today.”

Yes, that teenager called me uncle. That’s because my current outer appearance was that of an middle-aged uncle.

The Time Distortion Ring which changed one’s outer appearance in correspondence to the age it is set at served as an excellent disguise. After changing my age and donning a wig and fake moustache, I didn’t believe that there would be a single person who would associate this shaggy-bearded middle-aged Knight with Prince Roland.

I was happy. With such cute Mist citizens before me, how could I not be happy?

I strolled calmly along the streets. Even though investigating the plight of the citizens wasn’t my duty, looking at the country slowly progressing towards prosperity and the optimistic and spirited expression on the face of the citizens gave me confidence.

The living standards were still harsh and it was highly possible that we would face war in the future. However, as long as our

citizens believed that there was hope in the future, the country would take a turn for the better. As long as they could face their harsh lives with a smile, as long as they place their trust in me, I had the confidence to pull them out of the mud they were in.

"Yes, I am conducting an incognito inspection. I am not doing this to escape those endless documents. Damn it. By having me look through all of the army logistics and the crops that will be planted for next year, do they intend to tire me to death?"

Making a rough estimation, the royal palace should have noticed my disappearance by now. Kelly, who often gave people "surprises," was probably handling those endless documents in my stead at this moment.

Considering the resentment Kelly would build up after having bury herself in the sea of bitterness, she would probably look for some "enjoyment" afterward. At this moment, I was considering whether I should stay out for the night.

"Yeah, I am not shirking my responsibility. This is called trusting my subordinates and granting them the authority to make decisions. I will phrase it like that when I return back to the palace.... For my safety, I should bring back some snacks to humor her. If I remember correctly, there is a good cake shop somewhere around here."

Considering how there were no limits to Kelly's pranks, I thought it imperative to bribe her. According to notes I had jotted down in the past, she should be fond of sweet desserts.

However, before I found the cake shop, I saw something which caused my good mood to utterly vanish. Looking at the signboard in front of me, I didn't even know how I should respond.

【Prince Roland's direct subordinates, the Absolute Gentlemen Alliance, are recruiting. Do you wish to contribute to Prince Roland? Do you wish to be prioritized in the substitution of the position of the Royal Knights? Welcome to the Absolute Gentlemen Alliance! We are the most trusted army of His Highness and we are entitled to conversing directly with him!】

Alright, I hadn't really bothered with the mercenary band which I had created at a whim ever since reaching Diffindor. After withdrawing from the management of the mercenary band, the vice-captain, Beifeng, took over control. Looking at that three-story mercenary band headquarters and the population coming to and fro the building, it seemed that the organization had somehow grown massive and powerful!

I wasn't bothered with the idea of them using me as an advertisement for the recruitment. After all, I was still the head of this mercenary band. However, what that worried me was...

【As long as you can prove that you are an Absolute Gentleman who has comprehended true love, you can join our ranks directly without going through any tests.】

This recruitment notice left me at a loss of what I should start retorting at. Did they think of the number of freaks and Gentlemen

among them as insufficient? Furious, I stomped in. But the next moment, I heard a cry that left me even more speechless.

“Why? Why do you reject my application? I am a true big breast maniac! I am also unaccepted by the world!”

“Hmph, shallow! Do you feel passionate love over just a trait? Doesn’t that mean that you will accept anyone who fulfills that condition? Do you think that the Gentlemen are something that shallow? Your understanding of true love is way too shallow!”

Momo’s furious rebuke echoed in the corridors. In that instant, I felt an urge to turn around and escape.

“Such is the way: All that has form is illusive and unreal. When you see that all forms are illusive and unreal, then you will begin to perceive your true nature. Young man, you have strayed from the path. You are too obsessed with physical traits. A true Gentlemen loves the beauty within that illusionary outer shell. My kind has abandoned such illusions to view the truth, and yet, you have lost your core due to a trait, thus lagging behind.”

TL: 'Such is the way' is a phrase normally used at the start of Buddhist scriptures.

After hearing words that seemed to have came from an enlightened monk, I was taken aback. Only after a long moment did I manage to comprehend the profoundness behind those words. However, by then, Casio’s explanation was already by my ear.

“What Big Brother means is that you are a fake Gentleman who is

obsessed with a certain trait. When a true Gentleman loves something, he loves it from the depths of his heart, and not over a temporary and fleeting trait. True love comes from the within, not over outer appearances."

Much less the audience in the room, even I was stunned by his words.

"In the midst of worldly desires and attachments one comes and goes alone, is born alone and dies alone. One's happiness and bitterness is solely his, nobody else can take his place. Leave, our paths differ!"

"In the midst of worldly desires and attachments, one comes and goes alone, is born alone and dies alone. After death, one goes to a painful or pleasant state of existence. Each receives his karmic consequences and nobody else can take his place."

(This is the full saying as translated in the Source)

I edited it slightly as the Chinese version slight differs from the English one, the interpretation of it as well. This saying came from Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra, another Buddhist scripture.

Basically, what it means that even though one might be surrounded by friends and families, but one is, in a sense, alone. After all, it is nigh impossible to find someone who understands one, someone who knows what you are thinking and someone who you can share your thoughts with. In that certain sense, we might be surrounded by people who love us, but we are still alone. (In the Chinese version) Thus, we should pursue happiness. Whether it is happiness or bitterness, we have to accept them, and no one can substitute us in it.

"What my Big Brother means is that although we may live together in this world, our hearts are lonely. Our desires are too

unique, and as such, we are often plagued with worries, and it is difficult to find a soulmate whom we can confide in. However, you aren't one of our kind, so please leave."

Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer. What the heck is this? Gentleman is about to become a type of philosophy already! If this goes on, will a cult worshipping Beifeng be born?

"Speak human language!"

However, the moment I rushed in with a howl, I immediately regretted my action. The moment the door opened, Momo, who seemed to have been waiting for a long time for me to enter, immediately hugged me.

"Hehe, little Rolo, I knew that you were outside the door! I have been waiting a long time for you."

While pushing away the Dark Elf Knight who was latching onto me, the infuriating explanation and deciphering was still going on and traveled to my ears.

"All conditioned phenomenon are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, a shadow; like dew or a flash of lightning. Thus we shall perceive them! Excellent, my path isn't lonely!"

"What Big Brother means is that, look at that Momo. Without even using her eyes, just by using her intuition, she was able to see through all falsehood and tell that her beloved shota hides beneath

the shell of that middle-aged man! That is a true Gentleman. Wait… The shota that Big Sister Momo loves, isn't that… Prince Roland!"

"The wind presses hard, sound the retreat!"

"What Big Brother means is to quickly flee!"

Alright, even though these Gentlemen with guilty consciences were scattering before me as though a threatened flock of birds, it wasn't possible for me strike them down. Other than the female Elf who was clinging onto me as though an octopus, there was another familiar figure.

"Roland!! It has been a long time since we last met!"

"Amelia!"

"All phenomena are born of karma, and destroyed by karma. Prince Roland, this female peer has been chasing behind your fate for a long time and was brought here as a result of your doing. Excellent!"

"What Big Brother means is that you are in deep trouble…"

This time, Casio's explanation is finally interrupted.

"Shut up!"

“Shut up!”

Chapter 137: Sharal Autonomous Region

Even though the earth had yet to freeze, the wind blowing through the Northern Lands had already turned frigid. Based on how things were in the previous years, within two months, the first wave of snow would descend onto the world. The seven months of winter would become the greatest challenge of all lifeforms residing in the north.

Those who managed to adapt will survive; the strong survive while the weak are eliminated. Nothing was more suited to serve as the cold-blooded and merciless examiner than the harsh natural world.

In the Northern Lands, the short period before the end of autumn wasn't an optimal period for one to travel around. After all, one might very well end up getting trapped on dangerous terrain when the first wave of snow sets. However, I did not have the privilege to be picky.

When the warm spring sets in and the flowers blossom next year, the great army of the Beastmen will most likely travel southward. By then, it would no longer be possible for me to make this trip. The urgent thing to do now was to make use of the meagre remaining time we had to achieve more so as to earn more chips to protect ourselves.

"The autonomous region of the hybrids? That is truly a demeaning past. However, this seems to be the only way out for us."

The autonomous region of the hybrids is officially known as Sharal Autonomous Region. However, not a lot of people know of this name. After all, that land was an ignominious remnant of history.

Whenever different races warred with one another, the losing faction would often forfeit a large portion of their territory and people, especially the females who would then become the spoils of war of the victors. As such, extended periods of governance under a foreign tribe represented the birth of a large amount of shameful hybrids.

A large portion of the Northern Lands, including the Mist Country, was dominated by the Beastmen who invaded southwards. The Demons had also contributed a fair bit during their campaign against the Northern Lands. The Elves were also implicated in the mess, as multiple Elf Tribes made up a large percentage of the slave trade. As such, there were quite a few DemiBeastmen, DemiElves, Half-Demons and all kinds hybrids living on this plot of land. Of course, the majority of them were DemiBeastmen.

Naturally, the “quite a few,” when put in comparison against the population of country, was a negligible figure. However, when the human kingdoms managed to reclaim this plot of land and the enslaved humans were cheering joyously, these newborns who were stuck between the two were put in an awkward position.

Their identities as hybrids made their lives better than ordinary humans when they were under the dominance of another foreign race. However, on the other hand, they were destined to become

targets for people to vent their resentment.

When the foreign race was driven back to their homeland, these DemiBeastmen were unable to follow them back. The unique racial characteristics that they possessed made others remember the painful history they had undergone. With the slightest friction or intentional provocative words, an uncontrollable genocide would probably occur.

Furthermore, quite a few of those DemiBeastmen weren't kind-hearted souls either. During the years under the dominance of the Beastmen, in order to reiterate their stand, they treated their fellow human "peers" cruelly. Most of the shocking tragedies that occurred were a result of the doing of these bastards in awkward positions.

When the humans finally reclaimed the lands that they had lost a century later, a great judgement and bloodthirsty vengeance that occurred left most of these hybrids hanging on the gallows. As for the remaining ones, they were either unable to be convicted of anything or they were too young. In any case, they were still exiled. These were events that transpired before the East Mist Communal Country was founded, happenings in the generation of the founder of the East Mist, Charles the 1st.

In that era where one could be executed for the slightest association with the Beastmen, the only hybrids who were able to survive the unjust trials of vengeance were powerless children and women. Even those DemiBeastmen who were known for being friendly towards humans were only allowed to bring more personal possessions with them in their exile.

In that era where the desire to exact vengeance had clouded the minds of the population, no one dared to speak up for those “Beastfolk”. Otherwise, if someone were to accuse them of being a spy for the Beastmen, wouldn’t they die indignantly?

In that frenzied era, not a single country was willing to accept those hybrids. On the other hand, the borders to the Beastmen Highlands were sealed (The few who successfully trespassed over didn’t end up well either. Most of them became tools of frustration for the Beastmen who had lost the reclamation battle.). As for the supposed exile, to the powerless DemiBeastmen then, it was no different from a death penalty. It was just that they chose not to personally execute them and, instead, left them to fend for themselves against the harsh nature.

If the Mist Country was the dark history for the entire human society, then these hybrids were the dark history of the entire Northern Lands.

When all countries denied them entry and mobilized their knights to drive them away, they could only helplessly trudge forth toward the remote mountains. As time passed and everyone started to forget their existence, thinking they had died in the frigid snow and to the beast packs, in the depths of the mountains, in a miraculous valley, a new autonomous region appeared—Sharal Autonomous Region.

Naturally, the current Sharal Autonomous Region wasn’t the same autonomous region the hybrids occupied two hundred years ago. This nation still wasn’t recognized by the various countries,

but it had already become a haven for those who belonged to no country and criminals. Humans, Beastmen, and Elves could be seen on the lands, but the ones who claimed the majority were still the indigenous hybrids who had unique traits.

For example, the young warrior standing outside the carriage had cat ears and sharp claws belonging to that of the Feline Beastmen. However, he was dragging along the long tail of the lizard, not to mention that he had a lower body similar to that of the Centaurs. It was clear that he was the product of interracial mating.

The ranger in the shadows had beautiful white feathers, seemingly possessing the blood of a certain species of Avian Beastmen. However, the human hands he had on his left and the long lizard-scaled arm on his right were in disharmony with one another.

“This is heaven!”

A certain Beast Tamer, who was becoming more and more philosophical, upon catching sight of the plot of land and its residents, immediately threw aside that incomprehensible communication method of his and spoke so directly that it was hard to retort against it.

At this very moment, surrounded by numerous hybrids, he was overjoyed. He had been taking the initiative to strike up a conversation with another, and judging from the increasing intimacy between the two, it seemed that the hybrid warrior who carried the bloodline of the Centaurs would probably be unable to escape from the experienced hands of this veteran.

When we first arrived at this inspection point, the DemiBeastmen warriors weren't amiable to us. Leading their army forward, they tried to intimidate us with numbers. The sharp arrows of the rangers on the trees were also aimed at us.

When I whipped out the merchant identification to prove that I came from East Mist, not only did their attitude towards us ease, they were also more lax with the inspection as compared with the carriage before. My escorts even started to chat happily with the warriors, which gave a certain male an opportunity to make his move.

"The relationship between East Mist and Sharal Autonomous Region is not bad?"

Harloys, who was slumped over on top of my head, was forced to go on this journey right after she had just completed her evolution. At this moment, she was feeling sluggish and was reluctant to move. As a result, she spent her whole day slouching on top of my head with a displeased expression.

"East Mist has good relations with all powers who are viewed with hostility by the human society. Of them all, its relation with Sharal Autonomous Region was exceptionally good due to certain other reasons."

That was a dark history that had surfaced along with the passing of time. When the hybrids coincidentally found a suitable valley for living amidst the mountains, the Sharal Autonomous Region

was born. Lacking clothes and food, they led a tough life. Thus, the first king of East Mist, Charles the 1st, felt guilty and secretly aided them.

“Initially, I only intended to help those innocent exiles and the descendants of the Mist. However, as their state was simply too unbearable, I went the extra mile. Alright, most importantly of all, if you only provide the descendants of the Mist with food and clothes, it would be stolen away the moment you turn your head. It would be equivalent to bringing them harm. Thus, I could only help them all. It was fortunate that we were still wealthy then.”

When that line was uncovered from the diary of the previous emperor, the thirty years of assistance formed the foundation for the brotherhood between the Sharal Autonomous Region and East Mist Communal Nation two hundred years later from then.

Throughout these years, as the two were gradually isolated from the rest of the human society, they began to walk closer together. The close interaction between the two strengthened their mutual relationship. Merchants from foreign countries who wanted to enter Sharal had to find a way to obtain an East Mist merchant identification. Also, many of those who wielded authority in Sharal Autonomous Region viewed themselves as the descendants of Mist.

One thing worth mentioning was that the valley amidst the mountain was a rare granary for the Northern Lands. When the tides turned and the descendants of the previous Emperor Charles fell into difficulty, the residents of this land brought them aid. If it wasn’t for the “borrowed foodstuffs” without any interest from

Sharal Autonomous Region, perhaps the fall of East Mist would have already occurred many years earlier.

Packed in the carriages were a bundle of medicines and resources which the Northern Lands was in dire lack of. They were definitely luxurious goods which one couldn't buy in the Northern Lands even if they had money. They were also East Mist's interest payment for the many years of debt from the food they "borrowed" us.

Allowing the debt to drag on wasn't considered a favor? Drawing an analogy, they allowed a company that could potentially declare bankrupt at any moment to owe them money, and even more so, continued to loan them emergency rations when there were low possibility of returns. Looking at it from that perspective, it was truly a massive favor that they had showered upon us.

Since the Sharal Autonomous Region had not forgotten the kindness Charles has showed them previously, naturally, East Mist would return this favor generously.

The amiable relationship between the both was also a reason why I chose to visit this land first. In the other countries where I had no associates, I would unlikely be able to achieve anything within the short period of time that we had.

However, a coincidence had given me a new purpose for this journey.

"Senior Amelia, what do you think of this land? Is it suited for

the growth of plants? Do you think that you will be able to cultivate the new type of seedlings I want here?”

“It is impossible to achieve it so quickly! I still need time to experiment and analyze it. Right, don’t forget what you have promised me!”

“I won’t forget it.”

Alright, remembering that promise that I was coerced into, I couldn’t help but smile bitterly. To recount the entire incident, I would have to start from the coincidental reunion we had half a month ago.

“My Seven Deadly Sins are invincible! They are much more powerful than those weeds of yours!”

“W-weed? Hehe, you sure are audacious!”

With a lowered head, the great Mage laughed frenziedly. Countless shadows crept forth from her back. In an instant, the scent of danger and sweet-sour, venomous liquid reached my nose along with the wind and a blood-colored, man-eating demon plant began making its move from the shadows.

“Wuuuuu!”

Seemingly sensing the rage of its creator, a certain lifeform seemed to be weeping silently. Giant vines grew from the shadows and chainsaw-like mouths started appearing on the green leaves on it.

Even though the man-eating plant's saliva was already dripping right before me, and the venomous thorn on its thick vines were about to wrap around me, I still remained motionless, as though completely oblivious to its presence.

Even though she was the one who had committed the greatest amount of murders among those I knew of and she wasn't restrained by morals or those things, if she were to make a move now, she would be admitting defeat.

Those of the same trade were often nemeses of one another. When academics met, especially when academics whose fields of research overlapped with one another but their views differed greatly from one another met, they usually started off by greeting the other with sarcasm before proceeding to bellow at one another and eventually concluding with bricks being thrown.

However, if an academic were to achieve victory through murder, that would instead mean that he was unable to surpass the research of the other and could only resort to such methods to eliminate his competitor. Perhaps, this would mean a complete loss instead.

As expected, the Great Mage Amelia, who was prepared to get rid

of me upon our meeting, eventually suppressed her rage amid my sarcasm and pulled back those dangerous man-eating plants to bring the battle back to an academic one.

“Hmph, Seven Deadly Sins? You haven’t successfully put them together yet, right? Pride, whose seal was just released, Gluttony and Wrath, there are only three of them.”

“Recently, I have made Greed and Envy. I am just off by two now. What about you? Are your Seven Heavenly Virtues complete yet? Don’t tell me that you are still stuck with ‘Temperance’ and ‘Diligence’ as you were a century ago?”

“…I, I have also created ‘Humility’ to deal with your Pride!”

“Yeah? Interesting, but talk is empty. Bring it out for me to take a look.”

After which, Amelia fell into an odd silence. Based on my understanding of her, she wasn’t the type of person to resort to lying. Most probably, she truly had some other reasons for being unable to take it out now.

“If it wasn’t for that darned Adam destroying my darling…”

Alright, upon hearing those words, I was stunned for a moment before subconsciously wiping away the beads of sweat on my forehead. I couldn’t help but be glad for being able to escape a calamity. However, the next moment, my rage billowed.

If the toy of the other party was still intact, she would probably immediately whip it out to flaunt it in front of me. Given my current strength, I would probably be slaughtered in an instant. However, I had no intention of thanking Adam, because I had already understood the other meaning in her words.

“Great, you darned Adam. I was wondering who it was who leaked the news of my existence, prompting this shut-in who bothers not with worldly affairs to choose to go on a journey to hunt me down. I finally understand that bizarre expression you had on your face these last few days. You were intentionally keeping the fact from me, so that you could laugh at my misfortune then, is it?”

However, this wasn’t the time for my thoughts to stray. Making use of the temporary lapse of weakness in the opponent, I whipped out of trump card.

“Do you still remember our teacher, Harloys? Right now, she is my Greed! Hey, you darned cat, wake up! I need you to save my life!”

After consuming “The Dark God’s Breath of Death,” Harloys had been in a slumber, as though she was conserving her energy for a breakthrough. However, I urgently needed her presence to save me at this instant.

“Teacher Harloys? Isn’t she a Banshee?”

When I whipped out that darned cat, there was no longer any need for me to say anything else. That slime monster who was taking on the form of an alien cat was more convincing than anything else.

Thus, when Amelia's attention was focused on analyzing that darned sleeping cat, I finally had an opportunity to ask the others about the happenings that had transpired in my absence and why this fellow was here.

"Allow me to explain. Yesterday, right after we put up that signboard, this lady came and claimed to be your acquaintance. She said that she wanted to give you a surprise and wanted us to invite you over. However, my Big Brother sensed that even though she is our kind, she is your enemy, and thus, we had been dragging the matter out. Throughout this period, this lady had shut herself in her room, as though she was busy researching something. As time went by, we soon forgot to ask her about it. That is, until you came knocking today."

After hearing those words, I was speechless. Perhaps they really did it out of the kindness of their hearts, but by surviving until now, they were truly fortunate.

"You all actually dared to house the depraved culprit of the serial killings that occurred in the Mages' Country over a span of hundred years in the headquarters? In search of inspiration and lab rats, she dares to even commit murder in the Cloud Tower. You all... Wait, Big Brother? You are?

That was a tall and sturdy man. Underneath his tight leather

clothes were solid muscles that were reminiscent of a sculpture. Wearing sunglasses, his calm explanation of the situation gave others an impression that he was an exceptionally reliable person.

"He is Pierre Papin, the new number two of the True Love Siblings. We all call him Rina Papa-san!"

Alright, I shall retract that "reliable" evaluation I had of him. Being the new member of the True Love Siblings was the best annotation for him.

"Umm… May I ask if you have a daughter?"

"Yeah, I love my daughter Rina deeply. I love her more than myself and anything else in the world. That is also the reason why everyone allowed me to join the band."

After hearing this, I heaved a sigh of relief. He was just a father who had a daughter complex. It was still within acceptable range.

"Rina is a ship, a warship."

Alright, Momo's words made me realize instantaneously that Gentlemen were something that would increase exponentially if not kept in check! So this fellow was into ships.

"Um, I've heard that sailors who stay offshore for too long view their own ships as women. I can understand that. I really can understand that."

Even though I said so, I was slowly retreating backwards so as to stay away from this bunch of Gentlemen who were getting more and more ludicrous.

“Hehe, Second Brother Papin, I told you that you were overthinking it. How is it possible for His Highness to not comprehend you? He himself is the King of Gentlemen. You are only 0.4 Beifeng while he was already 10 Beifeng during his time in Liu Huang Mountain City!”

Momo’s explanation was unnecessary, because at this very moment, Rina Papa-san’s eyes were already filled with fanaticism.

“It is not that kind of shallow love for one’s shell! Don’t compare Rina with those vulgar things. Rina is the most adorable girl in the entire universe. Do the other ships have towering cannons like hers? Do they have such smooth and beautiful decks? Do the other ships have such elegant curves? Do…”

Looking at this different type of “daughter complex” going into a frenzied state, I couldn’t help but sigh helplessly. Indeed, it was impossible for there to be anyone normal in the Gentlemen Alliance! How can there be any normal existence among the True Love Siblings!

Alright, ignoring the new Gentleman who was still singing praises “Ah, that warm engine room~ Oh, that charming and hulking pillar~,” I set my sights on Amelia, who was squatting in one corner with a depressed face, muttering ceaselessly under her

breath.

“A half-dead, half-alive Undead? How is that possible? That should already be at the level of the Creator. He has improved again? Or could it be that I have fallen behind times?”

I felt exhilarated seeing her in such a state. However, if things were to drag on, she might give up the final shreds of her dignity and go on a rampage, forcing me to reveal the secrets behind the technology. At my current state, I was definitely unable to match up to her. Thus, I dropped her some bait.

“Senior Amelia, as long as you fulfill two tasks for me, I will bring you up to greater heights!”

Chapter 138: Zombies VS Plants

“Roar! A new wave of zombie is approaching.”

“My plants will tear you apart!”

Staggering, the gray-colored zombies inched forward. With a Gargantuar serving as the tank in front, a dense congregation of an army of zombies followed closely behind it.

On the opposite side, shrouded in fog, Peashooters popped out from the ground abruptly one after another and spat shiny green pea bullets furiously at the zombies. A raging Melon-pult catapulted explosive watermelons one after another. As the watermelons exploded, fatal shock waves gushed outward into the surroundings and mushroom smoke clouds appeared above them.

Lacking the support they usually received as close-ranged fighters, the zombie army could only trudge forward slowly while tanking the rain of ammunition. Even though they had suffered great losses in the midst of their advance, a massive number of them still remained, making them fearsome adversaries.

When the two armies came into contact with each other, an intense battle broke out between them.

When the zombies collided with the Wall-nuts, a brownish-gray Boomer exploded itself. Green and gray poisonous clouds rose up ceaselessly, and all plants that came into contact with the venomous liquid and gas rapidly withered and died. A no man’s

land swiftly emerged on the battlefield.

As for the plants, despite being immobile due to their roots, they, who were able to absorb energy from the earth, possessed unlimited ammunition. Although they weren't able to maintain nonchalant in the face of death, unlike the brainless zombies, at the very least, when their frontliners were sacrificing their lives to block the opponents, they were able to use their unlimited firepower to bury their opponents.

Soon, due to the overwhelming firepower, an opening appeared in the formation of the zombies and the plants began to counterattack.

"Will of Death! The speed of all members of the Undead Tribe is boosted!"

Upon realizing that the zombie army was in bad position, a certain mastermind behind the shadows expended the final Army Command he possessed.

When the black fog started to creep over, the zombies frenetically increased their speed. Furthermore, what was boosted for those zombies wasn't just their speed. On a rampage, they began to dig out their intestines to throw it on their opponents.

"The Protection of the Forest and Sun! For thirty minutes, the attack speed and HP of all plants will be doubled."

When the command was passed down, the interval between bullets of the Peashooters reduced to the point that it shot out in a continuous stream and the sound of explosions echoed ceaselessly on the frontlines.

Facing the frenzied bombardments of the plants, the zombie army could only helplessly trudge forward while sacrificing the ones in front of them. When newly born Cherry Bombs jumping out one after another to destroy the main army of the zombies, the frenetic zombies no longer possessed the might to break through the firepower of the plants.

Thus, I could only watch helplessly as my remaining zombies died under the bombardment and I fell in defeat helplessly.

“The victor, Great Mage Amelia!”

With the scattering of the radiance, the battlefield morphed back into the shape of a massive chessboard. The zombie chess pieces were dull and unlit whereas the plant pieces on the opposite end were shrouded in white radiance, seemingly ready to strike.

This was the currently most popular magic chess game—Zombies VS Plants. Naturally, the “inventor” and the manufacturer was me. The one we were playing wasn’t the usual game, but a true war edition which demanded a certain level of strength out of its players. The ones that were sold to the public were the normal editions which consisted of small chess pieces that were made of magic oak.

Just to add on, in less than a month, there were four different editions released. As such, the series had been labeled as the “Vampiric Money-sucking Master.”

“Sigh, this new version seems a little too imbalanced. Even though the zombies have the advantage in terms of quality, their winning rate is still way too low. On the other hand, the explosions of the plants are way too powerful, allowing it to whittle down the main force too easily. Looks like I have to do some balancing. Yeah, let’s cut the bombardment abilities of the Druid Faction in the next version!”

“Hah, losers sure know how to find excuses.”

“Or, why don’t we add two Bone Dragons and Liches to the Zombie Faction? However, that wouldn’t be zombies anymore, and it wouldn’t be considered as Zombies VS Plants 3 Sword and Magic Edition. Forget it, names are just like decency anyway, there is no meaning in it. Let’s just add it in the next edition.”

“Up to you, but based on the rules of balancing, in order to satisfy consumers, troops of equal level must be added to both factions. I will match your Lich with a Yggdrasil Tree and Bone Dragon with a Blood Bramble Wall. The one to win in the end will still be me.”

Amelia chuckled demurely. She was in love with the game because she was able to win against me frequently through it.

“However, will this really help me comprehend the profoundness of life and step into higher realms?”

After “inventing” this game along with me, she got absorbed in it instead. After which, we continued inventing Zombies VS Plants Tower Defense Edition, Zombies VS Plants King of Fighters Edition, Zombies VS Plants War of the Magic Beasts Edition and other money-sucking editions. After enjoying herself tremendously these last few days, she finally recalled her initial goal—Bringing her creation abilities to greater heights.

Facing this question of hers, I smiled.

“Of course… not! This is just a game. Alright, keep your man-eating plant, allow me to explain.”

“You… You scammer! You fooled me again! You toyed with my emotions again! I will never trust you ever again!”

After realizing that she had been fooled once more, the shrieking Amelia became hysteric. Manic blood tattoos flashed in her beautiful eyes, and her long smooth hair began to morph into plants. Vines grew frantically from the roots of her hair. The domain of the plants expanded and very soon, a real-life edition of the Zombies VS Plants was able to play out.

As the zombie who was about to be pummeled, I felt great pressure upon me.

However, I still had my trump card.

“I will split a tenth of the profits from the game with you.”

“That, how much is that?”

“This game is already a bestseller. As long as the pace of our manufacturing can keep up, adding up the total revenue from all of those editions, you would earn a few hundred thousand gold coins at minimum.”

Alright, in the next moment, everything calms down. That crazy witch from a moment ago appeared without a trace. All that was left was a gentle senior who was sipping quietly on her black tea in front of me.

It wasn’t that Amelia was greedy; rather, Mage was a job that burned through money. The more advanced a Mage was, the more money they spent. Of course, Mages were also able to sell the products of their experiments to earn a huge profit. However, putting aside how an experimenting freak like Amelia had zero financial sense, she didn’t even spend any effort on producing goods that could earn her profit. Even if she happened to make a fortune, she would immediately dump it into a new experiment. As such, she was exceptionally amiable to her investors. Now, upon hearing that she would be able to earn money, she immediately adopted the business facade she showed to her donors.

You say that I am mistaken? Should it be investors, not donors? Unfortunately, I am not mistaken. Given how she allocated her funds without any consideration of monetary rewards that could be reaped, one would make a loss equivalent to how much one invested. If this wasn’t a donor, then what was this?

According to Margaret, Amelia didn't even have her laboratory now (It was taken away from her when she went bankrupt.). After which, it was rumored that she had embezzled funds from the Cloud Tower. Upon getting exposed, she was expelled from her position as a Truth Overseer. At this moment, the wages she earned as a teacher went to repaying her debts.

It was a wonder how she, as a SemiGod Mage, managed to land in such a state. In the field of investment, her reputation was so poor that she was unable to coax any donors to finance her despite her efforts. In the end, she could only grab her students to serve as laborers and engage in lucrative research to finance her research.

"Besides, this isn't just a game. The functions of these plants should have given you quite a bit of inspiration. I do not believe that after these few days of war simulation, your ability to arrange the formation of your plant army and coordinate them as one has not improved. At the very least, it should have given you some inspiration in designing new plant troops."

Amelia nodded her head. After all, what I said was true.

"Furthermore, at our level, it is a daunting task to advance even a single inch forward. Be patient. After all, I have already promised you. Have I ever broken my promise?"

After hearing me declare my trustworthiness, the teacup the senior held in her left hand was immediately crushed. Even though her right hand had caught the falling teacup in time, even though

she still had a smile on her face, from the looks of her trembling arms and twitching eyelids, she seemed to be on the verge of a rampage once more.

"Junior, you sure dare to speak. Back then, who was the one who proposed for us not to be restricted by those dumb theories and we should dump them aside and explore the secrets of life together? I thought I had managed to find a hard-to-come-by soulmate, and I was overjoyed. Yet, in the blink of an eye, all of my research had disappeared without a trace and a letter of my misdeeds was sent to the Truth Symposium. I was almost exiled from the Cloud Tower."

"Ah, did I do all those back then? I'm sorry, the damage reincarnation did to my memories was way too great so I can't really remember it. Yeah, we should look to the future instead, let's just forget those pointless things of the past. Right, how did you manage to settle the affair back then?"

Can't remember? Of course that was a lie. Back then, this fellow had not a single shred of decency. It was so extreme that even I, who didn't have much decency either, couldn't stand watching on any longer. Who else should I do in if not for her? However, seeing her getting along fine now made me a little curious. Back then, I wrote a letter reporting that she was using her students and other living humans in her experiments to the Truth Symposium. There were at least five Truth Overseers on the spot when I reported it, so I was quite interested in how she managed to settle the matter.

"It's nothing much. Back then, my teacher helped me suppress the matter temporarily. Then, I got rid of a Truth Overseer who was biting on my tail relentlessly and I replaced him in his seat.

After which, I paid a small price to have the other Truth Overseers turn a blind eye to the matter. Dammit, if it wasn't for the fact that I could only use those on the death row for my experiments, how could I possibly lag behind you! You were probably able to break through that boundary because you were able to obtain experimental subjects on the battlefield. Indeed, one should collect as much experimental subjects as they can! Hee hee, now that there aren't any bothersome figures watching over my actions here…"

That hysterical laughter made my hair stand on end. I knew that she was the type to do as she said, so I hurriedly tried to persuade her otherwise. Of course, stopping her directly was impossible and she wasn't the type to restrain herself because of others either.

"Do you have a suitable research topic at this moment? If we were to collect a large amount of experimental subjects, we would probably have to escape. Thus, going through all the trouble for an ordinary research topic is a big waste. In two years, there will be endless experimental subjects available for your choosing. Furthermore, compared to those fragile humans, the resilient Beastmen would serve as much better experimental subjects. So, let's just tolerate it and work on some theoretical research within these two years first."

Upon hearing my words, she stared at me blankly for a long time before replying.

"Indeed, you are the one who understands me the best. Whenever others hear me say such words, they will either start to chastise me severely or be terror-stricken. Those fools are unable

to understand how honorable their sacrifices are to be able to contribute to my research of the truth."

"You are too soft-hearted to be conversing with your experimental subjects. Normally, I just seal their mouths and throw them onto the experimentation platform. After a few muffled screams, they go completely silent."

"Indeed, after all, I am a woman. I get too soft-hearted too easily. Previously, there was a death prisoner who insulted me nastily. In order to prevent him from dying from the pain, I even applied anaesthesia on him in advance before dissecting him. The cost of the anaesthesia was enough to trade for a bag of new seeds, you know!"

Hearing those words, even though I was going along with her to cajole her, I found it hard to continue. By saying that she was soft-hearted despite dissecting him alive, wasn't she afraid of getting punished by the heavens? It seemed like she was still a dangerous figure who viewed others as mere livestock, and that I was still overestimating her decency and restraint.

"Cough cough, let's put aside the topic of experimentation. Let's contemplate how we should earn more money to finance our experimentation. Do you think we need to make some changes to this 'Zombies VS Plants—Sword and Magic Edition' before introducing it to the market?

"Actually, I think that we could change our marketing strategy. It is foolish for us to sell all of the chess pieces and chessboard together when we can sell them separately."

“Hmm? But if the chess set isn’t complete, won’t they be unable to play the game? If so, will the consumers still be willing to purchase it?”

“You fool, you can just put the basic chess pieces and the most primitive chess board inside the set. If they want stronger and unique chess pieces, they have to purchase them. Of course, those stronger chess pieces mustn’t break the balance of the game. As long as they have a slightly more unique outer appearance and abilities, they could be sold for money. Right, since the original set is called the Basic Set, then let’s call this the Expansion Package! Also, we could add some elements of lottery into it. In every pack, there would be a unique chess piece. They will be trying their luck time after time again until they find themselves bankrupt and swear to never to touch it again. In order to appeal to the younger players, you can even give rarity levels to the chess pieces. The more valuable a chess piece is, the more one is able to brag about it. I don’t believe that after going this far, we are still unable to empty the pockets of those little kids!”

“Ohhhhhhh, my impression of you have improved. You are truly talented in marketing. Indeed, those rumors that you aren’t capable in management are lies.”

“Hmph, it must be Margaret badmouthing me again. It’s not like I am unskilled in managing businesses, it’s just that I don’t care to do so. Besides, this is also how I coax sponsors to invest on me. Selling the results of a research in different batches and to different people every time, this is the way to make a killing!”

Looking at that gleeful, degenerate Mage, I finally understood why, despite her incredible capabilities, her name in the investment field was horrid. If you just scam others once, it was still possible to regain their trust. However, if you scammed a few thousand people over a course of two hundred years, a person would truly be foolish to approach you and invest on you.

“Very despicable, but I like it! Let’s make a killing together!”

If such actions were aimed at milking money out of a minority, it would definitely cause an outrage among the public. However, given that it seemed like an attempt to venture into uncharted waters instead, there was no reason for me to give up such great innovation.

“As expected, you are my soulmate.”

Alright, let’s ignore how the sinister laughter of the accomplices frightened many of little children passing us by and how this ‘Zombies VS Plants—Sword and Magic Edition’ was cursed and sworn at by others while being a bestseller. The main reason why I created this game wasn’t just for money.

“One more round! One more round! This time the zombies will win for sure!”

“Mummy, I want one as well. Buy one set for me!”

“Oh, Undead don’t seem to be as scary as I thought. They aren’t

even able to defeat plants!”

At this moment, we were currently playing in an empty field and crowds were surrounding us to spectate our duel. Our simplified version of Zombies VS Plants was already selling like hotcakes, and the audience wasn’t satisfied with just watching a single battle. The passionate crowd demanded for us to play another round and thus, after chatting for awhile, we began another round.

“I’ve heard that the East Mist Communal Country’s national religion is the God of Law. As long as they do not commit crimes, even Demons and Undead are accepted among their ranks. It’s rumored that even Druids have established their own academy there. I have also heard that Necromancers were advertising and selling their products by the side of the streets. Perhaps the rumors are really true.... Will they accept hybrids too? I’ve heard that Diffindor had recently set up many advanced institutions for all kinds of experts to change their jobs. Perhaps we could send our third child there to study.”

Earning money was just an additional benefit. The reason why I chose to display Necromancy in a form acceptable with the public was to allow those of the Sharal Autonomous Region to understand and accept East Mist’s changes. This was also the main goal of my journey here.

“Diffindor has established all kinds of institutions and is currently recruiting students. We provide professional training for Druids, Engineers, Alchemists, Necromancers, Justice Knights, and other battle-oriented classes. There are only limited places, so if you want to change your fate, do not pass this opportunity by.

Quickly apply! We have an information pamphlet for new students here."

The shoutings of the admission staff members who I had brought here had earned the attention of the bystanders. There were already a few who were willing to head to East Mist to take a look. Eventually, an onlooker watching at the sight from the shadows could endure no longer and walked out.

"Prince Roland, Lord Gagalol invites you over for a conversation. These are his exact words: 'We have already felt your sincerity, so it's perhaps time for us to discuss an alliance.'"

After receiving the cold shoulder for a week, on the third day of our advertising, I finally received a formal invitation from Sharal's Lord. Looked like it was time for a negotiation.

Chapter 139: Hidden Currents

From the very start, we had agreed upon an alliance. After all, without an invitation with sufficient weight behind it, it was impossible for a top brass of another country to visit other countries so casually.

It is also within expectations that I would get the cold shoulder. They had only invited a run-of-the-mill diplomat, yet contrary to their expectations, I came. This was equal to baiting and preparing to fish for a carp, yet catching a whale instead. Naturally, the fisherman would find the situation hard to process.

Furthermore, if it was just an ordinary diplomatic visit, they wouldn't make such a big fuss over it. However, the East Mist's diplomatic party seemed to have ambitious dreams of this trip. The first thing they did after entering the city gates was unloading the goods of nearly a hundred carriages at the square, claiming to "thank Sharal Autonomous Region for their many years of help. In return, we are giving additional gifts on top of the ones used to repay their debt, and every resident can claim a complimentary gift" and such advertisement, creating a commotion and making everyone in the city aware of their presence.

The complimentary gifts that barely numbered three hundred were all snatched clean in less than a day. However, the citizens who came upon hearing the news had also spread the news, so probably everyone was aware of the fact that the diplomatic party of East Mist was in Sharal right now. Furthermore, the one leading the group was the legendary Prince Roland.

One's name and history always stays with them. When this legendary figure appeared from out of the epics and paid a visit to them, the Sharal Autonomous Region's reception unit panicked.

It was common knowledge that someone of equal standing in the country had to receive the diplomats, and the receiving host being of higher standing than the guest was a form of respect towards them as well. For example, the hosting side's sovereign can personally receive a fief lord of the diplomatic party, and it wouldn't seem out of place. However, if the king of another country came, and the hosting side welcomed him with a fief lord, that would be disrespectful.

Furthermore, although I had no official authority in East Mist, as the ancestor of the founder of the nation, my standing was significantly higher than that of Queen Reyne. Perhaps, even their sovereign who had the bloodline of Mist flowing in him could only be considered his junior. This was a difficult situation for them.

"If Princess Reyne came, Lord Gagalol coming to welcome her personally would already be a great honor on her part. However, now that it is Heroic Spirit Roland, going by seniority, even Lord Gagalol's retired father isn't qualified to welcome him."

Do they really have to dig out the ancestors who found Sharal Autonomous Region and say, "This is His Highness whom you have always spoke of. You are the only one who is qualified to welcome him. Right, he has already said that we will count each other as individual entities, so please don't treat yourself as his citizen and don't insist on greeting him as a subordinate." After all, this was probably the only way they would not be considered as

disrespectful.

Not only were those of the foreign affairs department distressed about it, even the top brass of Sharal Autonomous Region felt gloomy about this incident. They had only invited a diplomat to negotiate an alliance to counteract the Beastmen army, which was likely to invade southwards, so why did this fellow come instead? Not to mention, he was extremely high profile about it.

All of Sharal probably already knew that East Mist was here to negotiate an alliance by now. Furthermore, given the amiable relationship between the two countries and the massive gifts that we have brought, we created an impression that something incredible was about to happen. On the other hand, there was no news from the lord on their side.

In an alliance negotiation, when one party came prepared while the other party was completely ignorant about what was happening, it was very easy for the unprepared to be disadvantaged. They had already held meetings for three days straight to figure out what was going on. On the other hand, I had been dawdling about the embassy before I decided upon carrying forward my next step, swaying public opinion.

At this point, Gagalol finally made his decision. It was impossible for them to come to a conclusion with those doors closed, so they decided to invite me over.

The moment I stepped into the Lord’s Residence, just as I was about to prepare a surprise for the other party, I was surprised by them first.

Based on the information I had received, Gagalol Haber was a plump man. However, the toned man before me who had his upper half bare and had an eagle tattoo on his chest, which fluttered along with his breathing as though it were alive, definitely wasn't him.

"Respected Lord Roland, I am Gars, the eldest son of the Chieftain of Eagle Tribe. I represent my father and the tribe in paying respects to the immortal one."

The passionate handshake of barbarians (if it was in the mountains, it would likely have been a hug) wasn't that pleasant to accept. In the face of the 2.4m tall giant, I was like a bean sprout. Whether the other party was capable of bearing their passionate welcome and innate brute strength was also an important factor barbarians used to evaluate whether the other party was worth making friends with.

"This strength should be around 18 points. Possessing such strength despite being at Silver-rank, how fearsome. As expected of a battle tribe whose members were all of Bronze Bloodline."

However, compared to me, who had strength exceeding 20 points, it was as though his strength was entirely negligible. No matter how hard he squeezed me, his hand would just end up aching.

As expected, Gars released his grip first, shaking it forcefully to get rid of the aching sensation. On the other hand, Gagalol stepped

forward with a smile, saving him from this difficult situation.

“Prince Roland, welcome to Sharal Autonomous Region. I am the lord here, Gagalol. Our ancestors from 300 years ago should have been your people as well. Your arrival here is an unexpected surprise, as well as an honor. Please be seated, please be seated.”

At this moment, I was trying my best to suppress myself from laughing impolitely. Gagalol’s protruding stomach, stout stature, fish-like ears, and bulging eyes were exactly as what was stated in the intel. He did resemble a standing frog.

In response to the passionate welcome of the other party, I chuckled.

“We were a family 300 years ago? Then, are you willing to become a family with us 300 years later?”

If creating new armies gave an instantaneous rise to a country’s military prowess, then education was aimed at grooming new talents, talents that would bring the country to prosperity.

In this world, “knowledge is strength” weren’t just empty words. Building a high institution to groom the growth of a certain occupation was a reflection of the history, overall strength, and accumulation of a country.

The Mages' Country was difficult to deal with because of all sorts of established Mages' institutions around the country. When the Mages, who were known to be difficult to deal with among the battle classes, gathered as one, when the immortal top-tier Mages chose to conduct their research there, no one would be so foolish as to provoke them of their own accord.

Olivia traveled over a thousand miles to Auland to study because Auland was well-known in the world for its alchemy, and its alchemy institutions had groomed countless master alchemists. As a result, they had attracted numerous apprentice alchemists to study with them. In turn, this also helped solidify the Auland Empire's position as the leader in the field of alchemy.

Up until today, other than rebuilding the army barracks, Diffindor had built all kinds of schools, such as the Kindness Faction Garden Art Academy, Diffindor Life Medical School, Beast Tamer Technical Academy, Nanxiang Law Academy East Mist Branch, and West City Engineer Academy.

TL: The first word for Druid means kindness (Kindness Faction -> Druid Faction)

If you evaluated them based on their names and thought that they were ordinary institutions, you couldn't have been more wrong.

The full name of Kindness Faction Garden Art Academy is Druid Forest Art of War Academy (Garden Art Class—We also teach you how to cultivate plants as well!). All those selected as lecturers were all some kind of leader figure in the Druid Faction. In other

words, most of the lecturers were dangerous terrorists wanted all over the continent.

Most human kingdoms were hostile towards Druids. As such, they often lived in mountains and forests, isolated from the rest of the world. However, the various denominations among them had a unique and swift way of communicating with one another. Under Eaglestorm's guarantee, quite a few outlaws were willing to try out "a life without sinning."

As for what kinds of students such a dangerous teacher would teach, that was an enigma to me as well. At the very least, from the very beginning, I had already been rebuked by those ill-tempered Druids.

"What? Cultivate a new crop that could endure the cold? Do you know why we all became outlaws? Because we punished those bastards who went against the will of nature. Are you sure you want us to cultivate such aberrations of nature? We will really beat you up!"

As expected, when I brought up my request, I received a blunt and rude response.

Among the raging Druids, at least Eaglestorm's reply was more pragmatic: "Lord, I doubt that anyone would be able to do so. We can accelerate the rate of maturity of plants, allowing it to mature a year or two earlier. That is the privilege that nature has granted us. However, changing the unique traits of a plant from its core is unnatural, so naturally, we are unable to do so. In theory, there is not a single Druid who is able to do so. We have to obey the rules of

nature. These kinds of actions that go against the laws of nature would only be attempted by Dark Druids."

If Druids were the public enemies of the continent, then the Dark Druids, who had fallen into depravity, were fanatic worshipers of the Chaos. Similar to ordinary Druids, they found anything unnatural a mistake, but Dark Druids behaved much more extreme in all aspects.

Without doubt, man-made cities were unnatural. Ordinary Druids would only try to stay away from city life, only retaliating furiously when the forests they lived in were being invaded. On the other hand, Dark Druids would try to create a hurricane or a flood to destroy the city. However, their greatest insanity was that they denied the existence of the Gods. They found the Jurisdiction of Gods unnecessary, and the existence of the various Churches of Gods was a sin by itself. They believed that everyone should return back to the fundamental elements.

Not easy to understand? Let me give an example. When they thought that the Sea God was an existence that shouldn't exist as the conscious controller of the seas, and was a threat to nature, they would grasp every single opportunity to attack the Priests of the Church of the Sea God.

In reality, the Church of the Sea God wasn't the only victim. Almost every single Church of God was on their blacklist. Thus, the Gods of both factions unanimously gave these extremists the beautiful name of Dark Druids, and these Dark Druids had constant appearances on the wanted lists.

The other Gods could still accept East Mist giving Druids the green light. However, if they were to invite the Dark Druids into their cities, they would immediately suspect that Wumianzhe had gone mad.

Alright, in the end, I could only give up. However, it was fortunate that Amelia's arrival meant that I wouldn't have to seek out those dangerous Dark Druids. At the same time, the Kindness Faction Forest Art Academy also found themselves a magnificent principal.

"What? You mean those little Druids who refuse to come under my command? I didn't see any of them though. Oh, that day, I pummeled all of the teachers. He should be one of them."

Given how violence-inclined the principal and teachers were, this Garden Academy, which should have been a propagator of harmony and camaraderie, would produce generation after generation of terrorists.

Furthermore, based on what I knew, the Kindness Faction Garden Art Academy was the most normal of the numerous institutions that were about to begin lessons.

The principal of Diffindor Life Medical School (I was the one who came up with the name) was Harloys, nicknamed Xiao Hei (still named by me). Other than imparting recent medical knowledge and techniques, it also focused on all kinds of Necromancy skills. It was probably the one and only formal Necromancer Institution in the world of the living.

TL: Xiao Hei -> Little Black (Xiao Hong -> Little Red)

In fact, I was also a visiting lecturer of the study of Undead Creation of the academy. Of it, its Plague research was probably the top of the world. After all, Kakana and a group of formidable Undead Alchemists were stationed there.

Alright, due to this, the Holy Church had sent us a stern warning. Numerous countries also protested against it and sent letters of censure. Even so, I threw all of those into the trash can without hesitation. In any case, our relationship was already hostile, so I could protest however I wanted to. What about the Anti-Undead Covenant agreed upon by majority of the continent? All along, I had thought of agreements that I never signed as a waste of paper.

As for Nanxiang Law Academy East Mist Branch, there was nothing to be said about it. It was just a surface version of the main school in the Underground World. However, with Krose as its mascot and Xueti as the honorary principal, the number of applicants they received this year exceeded that of other institutions.

As for the West City Engineer Academy, it was divided into two main factions—Goblin Self-destruct Study and Dwarf Suicide Study, and the principals were the self-destruct expert of the Goblin engineers and the suicide expert of the Dwarf engineers. Alright, I confess I gave my biased views about those who were stated previously, but I have always thought that these were the fundamental, unique traits of this institution.

Alright, that's all for the introduction of the institutions. What? There's still one more, Beast Tamer Technical Academy?

Seems like I was unable to omit it. I will do a brief introduction then—the principal of the technical academy is Beifeng, and what is being taught is "All kinds of techniques to interact with beasts." There should be nothing else that needed to be said about it.

When I saw this proposal, I almost stuffed Beifeng into the main cannon of the Borealis and blasted him out of Eich. However, this was the reward he demanded after he miraculously managed to accomplish the mission of taming the Winter Wolves. Furthermore, facts had also proven that it was highly possible that we would need Beifeng's abilities in the Northern Lands filled with Magic Beasts.

In the end, under the seduction of solid power, I compromised helplessly. However, I threw the building to the outskirts of the city to prevent it from being an eyesore. I also arranged their office to be on the dozen story-high clock tower so as to help them train their bodies.

【You want powerful warriors? Sure, train them yourselves, develop them. —You expect soldiers to pop out just by building barracks? The Star Wars next door is beckoning you.】

Fine, since the System had retorted that just building the barracks itself was insufficient for the production of troops, I created a bunch of institutions to train the future core of our military. In any case, for every single person I threw into the institutions, I would receive a powerful soldier in a few years'

time. There wasn't much of a difference from this and the unscientific barracks. It was just that the duration required was slightly longer, and the resources required were greater.

At this moment, when I was busy negotiating important matters with Lord Sharal and the barbarian prince, my companions, under my orders, were busy spreading those recruitment pamphlets all around Sharal Autonomous Region.

They should be traveling through the alleys of the villages and the squares in the cities to bring in new students for their institutions. Of course, it was highly probable for them to fight over them as well.

"The hybrids will be discriminated against? Rest easy, madam. Such a thing has never happened in East Mist, not to mention that the God of Law's Forbidden Spell, The Sinless City, had also guaranteed it. There is no need for you to worry about your son being bullied! Right, please accept this pamphlet. There is my serial number on it, and if you take this and sign up at the West City Engineer Academy, you can save five gold coins on the school fee!"

"No, it's true, I didn't eat into the discount. I'm not lying... Fine, madam, I give up. Alright, seven gold coins then. However, you must introduce other students to me. For every one that you introduce to me, I will give you a discount of two gold coins!"

Currently, Goblin Kabala's performance was the best. He had already developed a multi-level marketing network and at the current moment, he could already sit back and wait for money to

roll in.

“Um, is there an academy for alchemists? I would like to daughter to learn alchemy, but we don’t have any good alchemy academies here.”

“We don’t have any alchemy institutions at the moment, but you can consider having your daughter apply for Diffindor Life Medical School. Their Anti-plague research’s (the public name for Plague research) Dean Master Kakana is a Legend-rank alchemist. Her two students are also Legend-rank alchemists. Under her tutelage, your daughter will surely become an outstanding alchemist.”

Alright, a young lady, who had set her goals on being an alchemist, under the coaxing of a student trafficker, had started walking on the path of becoming a Necromancer.

“East Mist’s best Navy Command Academy is recruiting! Do you wish to become an admiral and possess a harem of countless warships? Welcome to the newly established East Mist’s First Royal Naval Academy!”

Alright, no matter how much effort Rina Papa-san put into his advertisement, his recruitment results were destined to be worse of all. To date, he had only recruited two dark-skinned admirals who refused to admit that their skin tone was dark. In a certain sense, they seemed to possess some level of cognitive disorder.

The reason? East Mist Communal Country was a landlocked nation, it had no navy at all. That was the reason why most people

thought that he was joking. The crux of the problem was that I didn't allow him to reveal the fact that East Mist's Air Fleet was in the midst of construction.

He had already been confirmed for last place. As for second to last, it would probably be Garden Academy. For those who were unaware, this Garden Art Academy sounded overly inclined towards the aesthetics, and it was unlikely for one to make a living out of it. As for those who had received explanations on what it was—sending their own children out to be groomed by outlaws and become Druids, public enemies of the continent—, it was a little beyond them.

What left others speechless was a certain Dracon who stepped onto the front lines personally. Without preparing any pamphlets for recruitment, all he did was prepare a feast and a barbecue on the square and chat with those guests who were on the same frequency as him. Just like that, he somehow took second place in the number of students recruited.

"Hey, you have already recruited so many people. Share two of them with us."

"Let me look at the rankings…. It seems that we have 20 additional students. How about this, one for a hundred gold coins. Take it or leave it."

It was no wonder that they would strive so hard in this recruitment drive, to the extent that they had begun selling and purchasing students from one another. After all, I had intended to use the results of their recruitment to determine the budget for the

respective institutions next year, and that was a huge sum of money.

At this instant, this wasn't just occurring in Sharal. All kinds of recruitment activities were being carried out all over East Mist. My goal wasn't a short-term improvement, but for this weak country to change from its very core and grow stronger.

Of course, I had my own reasons why I was willing to dump so much money into Sharal to motivate the recruiters.

At this very moment, I was looking gleefully at the two dumbfounded top brass of another country.

What caused them panic, let alone bothering about diplomatic etiquettes at this point, were two photos in front them. One of them was of the sacred lands of the Beastmen, Orsolovan Summit. In the photo, the lands had been ravaged by the flames of wars. As for the other photo that was placed right before Gagalol, it was one of Sharal Autonomous Region. There wasn't any autonomous region of any sort in the photo, just a plot of barren land amidst the forest.

Without my existence, East Mist Communal Country wouldn't have rose up; without East Mist's support, the hybrids wouldn't have been able to survive and reach Sharal; Sharal Autonomous Region wouldn't have existed.

This kind of logic was comprehensible to me. However, in the eyes of the lord of Sharal Autonomous Region, those photos

represented a frightening future that could possibly be realized: “Can it be that Sharal has been totally erased, to the point that not a single trace of it remains?”

“These two photos are images that I have foreseen through divination techniques. I can assure you in the name of the Holy Light that these photos are real. Take a good look at what will happen to your people and your land in the future. Think about it before you reply to my suggestion.”

Looking at the two top brass whose faces instantaneously turned pale, I smiled gleefully.

Chapter 140: The Lies Of The Demoness

“If you only met that lord once, it would be hard to imagine him as an influential figure who would leave his mark on the world. With a dashing face framed by his golden hair, which was as radiant as the sun, he always wore a tender smile. Even towards subordinates like us, there wasn’t the slightest arrogance in his tone, nor was there the regal air great aristocrats spoke of with great relish. He directly said what he wanted. Sometimes, he would lower his head shyly in contemplation, like an amateur who had just begun his job.

“However, everything changes the moment he speaks. In that negotiation which decided the fate of the three countries, the situation had been within the grasp of the ‘amateur’ from the very start. ‘Sharal Silver Fox’ Lord Gagalol and ‘God of War’ Lord Gars were, indubitably, incredible heroes. History had also proven their astonishing strength and wisdom. However, in the negotiations with Prince Roland, their nervousness made them seem like newcomers to the scene. Eventually, the situation came under the complete control of His Highness. However, in a certain sense, that was also the reason why the Alliance of the Northern Lands could rise so quickly. It had the alliance between the three as the foundation, with East Mist serving as the core of the alliance

—Extracted from the diary of Sharal Lord Residence’s Secretary, Kasorla.”

“This… This is impossible!! You are lying! This… must be forged. An imitation means nothing no matter how lifelike it looks!”

The surroundings mountains were familiar, and just from the scenery itself, it was clear that it was their homeland, Sharal. However, unlike Sharal's usual bustle, there was nothing but a barren land in the image.

There were no fools here. Gagalol already understood that if the image were true that could only mean that either there was either no civilization here from the start, or that the civilisation had disappeared along with the wind. Furthermore, such barren land would only occur a few hundred years after complete destruction.

"Hmph, think about your own identity and his. Would he come up with such a lie to fool you all? You all are putting yourselves on too high a pedestal! Take a look at your own reflection in the mirror!"

While I was touching my nose and smiling wryly at the suspicions of the hosts, Amelia had begun to chastise them arrogantly.

"This is?"

Without a doubt, Amelia, who just leapt out of nowhere, was extremely conspicuous. According to the intelligence Sharal had gathered, she was only an accompanying Mage. She doesn't even have a robe or insignia representing her level of strength, so they thought of her as a wild Mage without any identification. Yet, the attitude she arrogantly chastised Gagalol with was absent of the humility and prudent attitude a member of the entourage should have.

“Amelia Milan. Maybe none of you have ever heard of this name. However, you should know of the Truth Overseers of Arlodante. I haven’t been out for around a century, so I am not aware whether the youngsters of this generation still remember me.”

They had heard of it. No doubt, they have definitely heard of it. From how they subconsciously backed their chairs away to maintain distance from her upon hearing that name, it seemed that her vile name had left quite an impression.

“Um, Senior Amelia, may I ask you what you have done recently?”

I felt a little exasperated. No matter how ludicrous a shut-in who had confined herself to her home for a few hundred years was, it should be impossible for her to be so notorious.

“I didn’t do anything recently. I was only commissioned to do some sales.”

“Um... is that Thorned Forest of Bayer Empire your doing? As well as that famous Deep Slumber Curse?”

The secretary at the side interjected abruptly. His words caused Amelia to smile gleefully.

“Of course. Despite being relatives, they actually failed to invite me to the young princess’s birthday celebration. Thus, I took

revenge on them. When the young girl turned 16, a thorned needle was placed by the spindle outside her room. Naturally, the Poison of Deep Slumber I had prepared beforehand was smeared on it."

At this point, I vaguely realized that my perception of the world was about to be torn apart. On the other hand, Amelia was already laughing frenziedly in glee.

"Haha, as expected, her finger was pricked by the needle and she fell into a deep sleep due to the poison. Initially, seeing how we were relatives, I didn't want to go too far, so I prepared a remedy. Yet, they sent an order of knights on a crusade against me? They were suicidal! Thus, I created a Thorned Forest, trapping all of them inside, causing all of those knights to starve to death."

"Is that the legendary true love's kiss? How romantic! It's like a love story out of a fairy tale!"

Sometimes, I really find myself unable to comprehend women. Even though it was clearly an act of terrorism that almost destroyed a kingdom, it became a romantic legend in their eyes. At this moment, the female secretary looked at Amelia with reverence.

However, Amelia shook her head.

"True love? Little girl, magic isn't omnipotent, and a human's heart cannot be fathomed. If I could tell whose love was true and whose was false, I wouldn't have been scammed so tragically by another."

At this point, a gleam flashed across her crimson-red pupils. It was apparent that she was on the verge of going on a rampage, and her killing intent seemed to be directed towards me. A chill ran down my spine. However, it was fortunate that she returned back to normal in the next instant.

“It was just some insignificant magic. I’ve customized the spell so that anyone who fits my requirements can unravel my magic. Back then, I had already lost all confidence in men and thought of them as beings driven by physical lust. Thus, in order to find an honest husband for little Nana, I set it so that only people who were interested in corpses could unravel the curse. Yep, going by the words of the human society, it should be called necrophilia.”

“AHHHHH!”

That pitiable little girl dropped her pen and book in fright. How could she accept it when the truth behind that romantic and legendary love story was something that would topple her perception of the world?

“Hmph, I have already left them a note on the solution. That was just a kind joke. Did they have to launch a crusade against me? They could solve the problem just by looking for a necrophile. If not for our relationship as relatives, I would have long ago knocked on their doors.”

Amelia spoke so gleefully that it seemed as though the one at fault was someone else. However, I think the reason why Bayer

didn't start a war against Arlodante was on account of them being relatives.

"...I remember that Princess Fiona Milan married the prince who awakened her in the end. After which, the prince became the emperor of Bayer Empire two generations ago. That is to say..."

Gagalol quickly covered the mouth of the secretary. How could he allow her to finish her words? Bayer was a powerful empire. If news that their emperor two generations ago was a necrophile were to spread out from here, that would mean massive problems for them.

"Actually, the Poison of Deep Slumber and the Thorned Forest weren't my greatest masterpieces. However, the poisonous apple given to Seere Kingdom's Snow Queen is."

Somehow, I vaguely sensed that the information that I would hear would definitely ruin the perception I had of the world once more. However, I was too late in covering my ears.

"I had good relations with that queen, and she specially looked to me for a poisonous apple. The poison on it was similar to the poison on the needle as well; the cure was the kiss of a necrophile. However, it is really unfathomable why all passing princes are necrophiles."

"Snow White and the Seven Gold-Armored Dwarves!? That is my favorite fairy tale. I beg you! Do not go on! You will ruin my childhood!"

Alright, where should I start retorting from? Should I start from the passing necrophile princes or the Golden Dwarf warriors? Damn it, Amelia. Can you do something normal instead? Why did you have to choose to create parodies of the fairy tales, taking the role of the villains, to ruin the childhood of others?

"What about that 'Little-footed Cinderella and the Crystal Slippers Only She Could Wear'? It can't be that you..."

"Oh, that. This time, I am on the side of the protagonist. Do you know the pumpkin carriage in the story? I am the witch who created that carriage. Right, this time, the prince isn't a necrophile but a podophile. Because of this, he couldn't remember Cinderella's face, insisting on using the glass slippers instead. I had to intentionally get her to leave the slippers behind. As expected, princes are a bunch of perverts."

"Do you have such a large grudge against princes? Marrying a prince riding a white horse should be the dream of every little girl!"

"Hmph, that was what I thought back then as well. Truth has told us women that princes are a bunch of bastards and perverts! However, it is a pity that not a single printing press was willing to publish my book that is filled with numerical data and case studies named The Truth Behind Princes. Those cowardly bastards! Those were actual events that I went through personally, yet they refused to print them even though I was willing to pay them to do so!"

Alright, this childhood destroyer wants to publish a book to ruin the image of princes in the minds of everyone else! What deep-seated grudge was this!

Thus, after realizing why Amelia's reputation was so horrid and why Gagalol retreated far away upon hearing her report her name, as the only human prince in the room, as the one responsible for her resentment towards princes, I backed my seat far away without any hesitation.

"Hmph, I will tell you all directly now. In the circles of SemiGods and true Gods, the Indestructible Roland is much more famous than me. You doubt that he would lie to you? You should first consider whether you are worthy of him going through the effort to."

"Indestructible Roland?"

This was the first time I was hearing this nickname. Hadn't I been killed many times before already?

"Yeah, it is saying that you are similar to that certain black creature, unable to be completely killed no matter what happens. Even after getting destroyed, you were able to pop out dozens of years later and cause a huge uproar. Even though being difficult to kill was a common trait among top-tier experts, you are the only one who managed to revive time and time again despite the complete destruction of your physical body and soul. Most importantly of all, you are a vindictive, shameless jerk who uses all means to accomplish your goals. When failing to get rid of you, one has to be careful of your vengeance and thus, no one was willing to

provoke you.”

Alright, upon hearing this, I paused for two seconds. Indeed, not disappointing my expectations, the System leapt out.

【Ding! SemiGod-tier honorary title ‘Indestructible Roland’. After equipping this title… There is no effects. This time, it is really just a title. At most, you can use it to scare others. It isn’t a product of the System, so there isn’t any special effects to it. However, I can help you create an illusionary outer appearance of a cockroach, so that you can become a standing Martian Cockroach in the eyes of others. Do you want to give it a try?】

Are there cockroaches in Mars? Continue spouting bullshit then, System! Did you think that I didn’t study before transcending over? It was obviously octopus aliens, alright!

OK, back to the topic at hand. No matter what Gagalol and Gars had prepared beforehand, no matter how they had agreed to advance and retreat as one, their alliance wavered due to such unforeseen circumstances.

In a certain sense, it was a wise move to bring Amelia to the negotiations. Even though we had yet to start negotiations, it was clear just by looking at the two of them that they were cooperating with one another. One of them was playing the carrot while the other was playing the stick. By throwing consecutive information bombs at the other party to tear apart the primary arrangements of the other party, I had managed to gain the initiative in the negotiations.

When the information that both parties possessed weren't symmetrical, it caused the positions of the two sides negotiating with each other to be asymmetrical as well. It created a false image that it mattered not to us whether we negotiated the deal or not (when in truth, it mattered a lot), while the other party required more information about the prophecy of destruction. As such, the other party would be forced to take the initiative to plead with us.

We managed to play out this show just by exchanging a glance right after walking into the room. At this moment, we exchanged looks once more and smiled. At this point, we had already won.

"Excluding the other traits of her that are difficult to deal with, Amelia's strength and cunningness make her an ideal partner, especially when I need to protect my image as the heroic Holy Knight prince. She, who dared to do anything and say anything, is my best avatar."

Right after these thoughts appeared in my mind, they were buried securely in the depths of my mind. "Perverted serial killer; frenzied professor without the slightest bit of decency," just these two difficult aspects made her a ticking time bomb.

However, this wasn't the time to be preoccupied with such thoughts. It was imperative to continue pushing the stakes while the negotiators of the other side were still unsettled.

"Esteemed lords, I have a small proposal. Perhaps, to deal with the future threats we face before us, we should solidify our channels of communication. Or perhaps, an alliance where we huddle together for survival might be a good idea. After all, you all

don’t have to give in much, but in return, you will earn everything!”

After an arduous negotiation, when I stepped out of the Lord Residence, I was so happy that I felt like singing.

However, when I recalled my musical talent that was comparable to Gria’s Throat of Death, I dispelled that thought. Even so, my footsteps became lighter.

Since the alliance had been settled, all that was left was for the negotiators of both sides to slowly tug and pull on the contract. This alliance would become the foundation for the rise of East Mist.

“Provisions and manpower from the Sharal Autonomous Region will just be additional gains. Rather, the rights to mine from the mountains of the barbarians will become the new core to this alliance!”

Indeed, even if Prince Gars didn’t come, I would still pay a visit to them. I had already long since set my eyes on their lands.

The Northern Lands were publicly acknowledged by the continent to be the richest in mines. However, the shallow mines of the various kingdoms had already been dug out and thus, they weren’t the main targets of contention. East Mist had lost its final

mine twenty years ago, and as a result, it had lost its very foothold in the Northern Lands. That was the main reason behind its downfall.

To reverse all this, just cutting down on expenses wasn't enough. East Mist had to find a new source of income, and after it had established the Church of Law as its national religion, it was no longer an option to use war to vie for mines. If so, there was only a possible course of action—seeking new mines.

In truth, that was a nearly impossible task. After all, every single plot of land in East Mist had been repetitively probed for potential mines. Even if there were still hidden mines within its territory, it was clear that they were beyond the probing and mining technique of East Mist, so it wouldn't make a difference to East Mist's plight either way.

However, in truth, there was still another mountain rich in minerals that hadn't been mined yet. Furthermore, many people knew of it, but none went ahead and excavated it. The technology required to develop the mine was too advanced, making the cost exceed the potential revenue.

"For outsiders, gaining the trust of the barbarians was something inconceivable. However, for the Mist royalty and its thousand years of history, given the brotherhood they had with them amidst innumerable years of war and mutual assistance, gaining their trust wasn't too difficult a task."

"However, that isn't the greatest problem. Even if you could mine the minerals within, how do you intend to transport them

down the mountain? Those mountainous paths aren't something ordinary humans can tread on. Conventional methods of shipping are absolutely impossible. That is the main reason why no one had tried to develop the mines in the mountains."

"Hehe, perhaps I should introduce to you my prided creation—Envy, Borealis!"

When we left, the anxiety Gagalol and Gars had expressed a moment ago disappeared without a trace and they instead started to calmly discuss the results of the meeting.

"Brother Gars, do you think what Roland said was true?"

The word "brother" means a lot to the barbarians. If one were to casually try to establish intimacy with them, losing all of one's teeth from a single punch was considered minor. However, judging from how Gars accepted the phrase so readily, the relationship between the two didn't seem as distant as they had previously displayed.

"Brother Gagalol, being careful and meticulous may be your strengths, but you are truly overthinking it this time. I can feel the kind intent behind the other party's words. Furthermore, I am willing to bet my life that what he said is true."

The truth was that these two were sworn brothers, and there

were many interactions going on between the territories of the two. Simply put, though, few knew about this secret.

"Hm?"

"I don't know about that image of yours, but the prophetic image of our sacred land being wrecked is definitely true. Look at those giant statues. They have been shattered into rock pieces. However, only a few people of our tribe know that these rock statues are defensive mechanisms for our sacred mountain. Ordinary tribesman don't even know that these rock statues were the doings of our ancestors. Their destruction can only mean that they were forcefully destroyed by a powerful enemy, which means that the tribe had fallen into danger."

"That isn't enough. It is possible that he might have received news of it from some other chieftain within the tribe."

"You are overthinking things. Look at that giant."

It was a massive, golden giant. At this moment, its chest had been impaled with a gigantic spear and it was on the verge of death. However, the engravings on its chest were still gleaming.

"This is definitely a secret which no one knows about. That giant is almost certainly me. My ultimate talent, War God Avatar, allows me to sacrifice my life to turn into an invincible War Giant before I return to the embrace of the God of War. This is a legendary talent of the Ancient Barbarians. Not even my father knew of it, so it is impossible for him to have heard of it from any other source."

This meant that not only was Doomsday going to befall them, it was approaching quickly.

“You appeared in the prophecy as well? Looks like Doomsday is coming much earlier than we expected. I think we should talk with that Lord Roland.”

“Yeah? You no longer doubt the words of the other party?”

Hearing those words, the one who would become known as Silver Fox in tribute to his wisdom smiled bitterly.

“Just as the insane demoness had said, think about our own identity and his. Are we worthy of the lord personally visiting us just to deceive us? I have overthought it. What we have to do now is quickly mend our relationship with him. I can sense that he is slightly dissatisfied with us.”

“Yeah, get your man to prepare some extravagant gifts. Tomorrow, we will personally pay him a visit.”

Chapter 141: Greenhouse

Looking up from the valley where Sharal was located, the sun was peeking over the clouds. The mountains around reached up to the skies and it was these mountainous ridges that created this rare warm granary of the Northern Lands.

The bizarre and mystical workings of nature had created this land of miracles. The mountainous ridges and forests had blocked off the cold drafts while the rain, dews, and underground streams gave life to the ground. As a result, this unique granary of the Northern Lands was created.

The Northern Lands weren't suited for growing crops. At maximum, its lands could only enjoy a harvest once a year whereas in this valley, with the assistance of a spellcaster, it could enjoy a maximum of three harvests per year. Furthermore, due to the rich nutrients in the ground and the suitable weather, the quality of the harvest was rather high.

This was also the reason why we had to come here. Ten years of work on some other land would mean around ten generations of crops to choose from whereas in the same period of time, thirty generations of crops could grow here. There was a huge difference between each generation in cross-breeding crops, let alone twenty generations.

"Can't we just use magic to hasten their growth?"

"...I really have no idea how you managed to pass the Theoretical

Life Examinations back then. Normal crops and crops whose growth have been hastened by magic are actually two totally different things. Crops hastened by magic carry with them the spellcaster's will, which warps the crops' growth. If we want to see the normal growing process of life, we have to do it step by step."

"Are you sure you really don't know how he passed the examinations? It was all cheating. Back then, if not for his outstanding cheating skills, given that nonexistent elemental comprehension ability of his, he would have long ago failed most of his homework and exams, resulting in his expulsion."

After waking from her long slumber, Harloys possessed a state of vigorous energy. At this moment, she was talking bad about me while crouching on my head and tugging on my hair to make furballs.

"Teacher Harloys. Your habits... could it be that your physical form affects your soul?"

That reminder caused the darned cat to freeze. Only at this instant did she realize that her actions were no different from a real cat. She immediately covered her face and went into silent depression.

"Pu! How is that possible? That cat form of hers is just one of her mimicries. She is just addicted to playing the role of a cat.... Darned cat, how dare you bite me!"

Alright, the moment I used my physical actions to display what

“disaster originates from one’s mouth” meant, Harloys also used her physical actions to display what “embarrassment warping into anger” meant.

“A pet cat attacking its owner? Are you rebelling, you Meow Alien! You all have not conquered the world yet!”

After which, I got into a fight with that darned cat. Just when I was about to achieve victory due to the advantage of my physique, I heard Amelia’s faint words.

“Seems like your relationship is pretty good.”

“Who would have a good relationship with him/her!”

Alright, at the very least, our opinion in this aspect was aligned. In order to prove so, as well as to verify Harloys’s testimony, I grabbed the cat by her neck and did an Eighteen Hell Rotation and received a pleasurable, shrill scream and a dizzy-headed darned cat in return.

Compared to before, the movements of the awakened darned cat were much more like a real cat. As for the outer appearance, she seemed to have grown from a Meow Alien youngling into an adult black cat, and her stiff cat fur had become glossy and smooth.

After successfully absorbing the SemiGod Equipment “The Dark God’s Breath of Death,” Harloys finally began to display her potential as a top-notch Magic Pet. On the surface, she became

much more elegant while beneath the surface, a much greater change had occurred.

【Magic Pet: Harloys (Main Body of Greed)Race: SlimeStrength: 14Agility: 10Stamina: 35Intelligence: 30Will: 25Charm: Depends

Job: LVL 37 Mage

Overview: Position, Racial Ability: Transmogrification (Legendary), Child of Greed Division (Legendary)】

【Innnate Ability [Transmogrification (Legendary)]: Transforming to a harmless kitten is just its weakest ability. It can choose to change to weapon-form and the current choices are Staff (Breath of Death) and Magic Sword (Counterfeit, Pale Justice).】

【Innate Ability [Child of Greed Division (Legendary)]: Divides to form a small Child of Greed. The Child of Greed will inherit a portion of Harloys's abilities and stats. As long as the Child of Greed is within a certain radius around Harloys, it will be under her total control, serving as her eyes, ears, hands, and legs. The total amount of divisions: 15,417—Before misfortune strikes, one would somehow find the inauspicious omen of a black cat roaming about, and for Harloys, being everywhere isn't a difficult task. She always arrives in time in the form of a crow/black cat to laugh at your misfortune.】

【System Evaluation: This is your Magic Pet, but she is constantly thinking of how to get rid of you within the limitations of the contract. Do not be fooled by her outer appearance. As a grandmaster in magic, even though she only possesses the strength of a Bronze-rank at the moment, she is able to easily destroy those Gold-rank rookies. Furthermore, her incredible base stats and her transmogrification ability has made her even more dangerous than before.】

【System Evaluation 2: She definitely isn't as weak as she portrays herself. As for why she hides her strength, is there a need for me to explain it to you? Perhaps the recent interaction with you has pleased her, so she decided to leave a path for you after a successful revolt.... So what are you still waiting for? Hurry up and get rid of this foolish Meow Alien while you still have the upper hand.】

The tier of the Breath of Death Staff had been lowered to Epic-rank, and the consumed Power of Death had allowed Harloys to become powerful and dangerous. Looking at the various figures on the interface and the increasing numbers of Child of Greed, I started to suspect whether I would be a match for her if I really fell out and had to exchange blows with her.

To tell the truth, the current situation of the cat thinking that she had concealed her strength well when it was all laid bare, out in the open, was enjoyable for me, given how I could bully this darned cat openly. Furthermore, in order to make me neglect her fighting power, she could only record the scores one by one.

Harloys's experience and wisdom were what I most valued about her, and she had helped choose the first batch of crops to plant.

Naturally, due to the complete lack of decency and common sense between Amelia and me, we needed her to correct us.

"I have a good idea! Why don't we plant rice on the back of frogs, which have moist skin? We can create a hybrid animal-plant. I even came up with a name for it! I choose you! Wonderfrog Seed!"

“Rejected! Putting aside the technological aspects, the frog would probably die in a few days. Furthermore, how can something like this reproduce?”

“Then, why don’t we plant it on zombies? It is said that the decomposing bodies of the Undead serve as good fertilizer for plants.”

“Rejected! Who would dare to eat rice planted on a zombie!”

“Then…”

“If you dare to say zombie wheat or zombie biscuit, I will smear your entire face with slime goo.”

“Fine, I’ll return and give it some more thought.”

Should I say, “as expected of a professional”? Initially, I thought that Amelia would be like me, coming up with interesting projects to try as well as experimenting with the newest technology. In the end, she decided to settle the matter seriously.

“Special breed Hewert barley and Siere rice… Is that enough?”

“Yeah, we will just use seventeen genetically-modified plants for the first batch. We have to find the most suitable genes for cold and dry conditions. After finding the most suitable breed, I will use my magic to modify it once again and use the ones that were modified the best for the second batch.”

“Obtaining good crops through genetic modification isn’t something that will bear results within the short-run. Even if you provide me with this greenhouse technology of yours, at the very most, it can only hasten the process in awaiting the germination and growth of the plants. For the safety of the population, we have to proceed prudently…. Why are you all staring at me like that? Did I say something wrong?”

I hurriedly shook my head. There’s nothing wrong with your words, but this seemed a little off with your image.

“‘One should face Mother Earth with gratitude for the blessings she has showered upon us, and appreciate her gifts.’ Back then, when I was the Sacred Maiden of the Church of Mother Earth in Xyntherar, my teacher taught me so. A pity…”

Sacred Maiden? Furthermore, the Sacred Maiden of the Church of Mother Earth that had an incredibly good reputation? I couldn’t help but be impressed by how colorful Amelia’s life was, as well as curious as to how she managed to come to such a point.

“A pity?”

“It is a pity that she was duped by a man. As a Sacred Maiden who lost her purity, she was expelled from the Church. Furthermore, that man even abandoned her, saying that ‘I was only playing with you. After all, men always bear some level of interest for Sacred Maidens, but you aren’t a Sacred Maiden anymore. Why should I give up my honor to accompany you for

life?' Not long later, my teacher committed suicide. Due to her dishonorable death, she was regarded as a stain on the Church of Mother Earth's history. In fact, even I, her successor as the next Sacred Maiden and her adopted daughter, was unable to attend her funeral. She truly lost her standing and reputation."

Her calm and casual words carried an undercurrent of bone-chilling hatred.

"You avenged her?"

"I killed that man's entire family, but he managed to escape. To date, I am still unable to do anything about him...."

"To date? He is still alive?"

"'Dragon Hunter' Deimos. He is the first generation Deimos. I have already killed the second generation Deimos, and one day, I will..."

This wasn't the first time I had heard this name. Didn't Marsolit's enemy go by such a name as well? Remembering the intelligence I had gotten from that old emperor of Auland, I smiled.

"...bury his bones amidst Undying Grass and cut off a portion of his flesh everyday to feed to him..."

She had already begun to talk about the torture scenarios she had

come up with. The more she spoke, the more agitated she got. It was clear from her red eyes that she was on the verge of losing control once more. At this moment, I patted her shoulders.

“One day, you will have your revenge. I will help you. I will make him die in greater dishonor and despair than your mother.”

Amelia froze for a moment before taking two steps away from me. She stared at me warily.

“Don’t try to act intimate with me. You aren’t any better than him. I know your history well. Even though you don’t have any confirmed relationships with the opposite gender and there aren’t any cases of you toying with their feelings, the number of women you messed with and the emotional debt that you owe them is much greater than that bastard.”

My jaw dropped. Where did this rumor come from? I have been a virgin for three generations now, and if I really owed that much emotional debt, I would have just made up for it to shake off my single identity.

“I, I don’t have any…”

“Hmph, don’t bother trying to convince me otherwise. You playboys are skilled in planting expectations into women. Can you remember the number of women who have cried over you? Right now, we’re only working partners, so don’t even dream about gaining my trust once more.”

Staring at the figure of Amelia, who turned to leave right after she was done saying her piece, I couldn't find a response.

"Playboy, playboy. This virgin is actually treated as a playboy.... Pu! I can't stop laughing!"

This darned cat actually started rolling all over my head in laughter, inducing in me the urge to throw her. Yeah, the next moment, I did it.

Even when flying in the air, she was still shouting.

"So dizzy! You are really annoying! I will be back!"

"Hmph, what is truly disgusting is a Meow Alien who can talk."

Turning around, I saw a bunch of fawning faces.

"Lord, can we take a rest? It is almost noon now."

"No, continue working. This is punishment!"

Naturally, for the crops experiment, we required diligent farmers toiling in the fields. The "farmers" whose entire bodies were covered with mud at this moment, after working for an entire morning, were the group who were about to be promoted as the bosses of different departments.

“Eaglestorm, I am very thankful for your support. However, you can’t behave like this just because you are unable to find any students.”

After hearing those words, the Legend-rank Druid’s face flushed. Yesterday, after they were unable to recruit a single student no matter how hard they tried, they used a certain someone’s idea and began to morph into bears, wolves, and other animals. They carried the children around to win their goodwill. However, by the impetus of some inconceivable primitive will, the unique culture of Liu Huang Mountain City started to show on the Surface.

“Mum, what’s that! A bird?”

“Your head that it is a bird! It is obviously an elephant!”

“AH!! Let’s go, don’t look!”

“...Xueti, I heard someone call the Church of Law the Church of Nude Running yesterday.”

“Boss, leave it all to me! I will show you the innate talent Taurens have in farming. One of my Race Talents is in Herbology! I can’t understand why Taurens require this Race Talent, but perhaps, it was in preparation of this day. Ohhhhh, I’m burning up! I will work hard!”

After being hung to make beef jerky, this fellow managed to keep himself in check for two days. However, after going through

forests to come to this valley, his passion had been ignited once more. When he caught sight of the familiar wave of nude runners, how could he contain his urge?

As for Clint and the other Goblins... I should have stopped them the instant they started to demonstrate their abilities in assembling machinery. In the end, someone even had to fill up those craters by the mines.

As for Beifeng... Right, what did Beifeng do? Why is he being punished?

“Beifeng, what did you do that day?”

“Lord, I was framed! Back then, I was only chatting with someone. But somehow everyone just pulled me here.”

“Ah? Beifeng, you didn’t commit any mistakes? I’m sorry, it’s a habit. Somehow, I just pulled you here upon catching sight of you. Alright, I will deduct one from your future exploits then.”

Diana’s apology had not an ounce of sincerity. Even so, the deduction of one punishment was accepted by the crowds. Apparently, everyone thought that Beifeng would commit more crimes.

“Impossible. Beifeng actually didn’t make any mistakes?”

“Bullshit. We must have just overlooked it. How can it be

possible for him to not do anything at all?”

“Sigh! The world slanders me, deceives me, insults me, mocks me, belittles me, debases me, loathes me, and scams me. So what? I need only tolerate it, allow it, permit it, avoid it, bear it, respect it, ignore it, and, after a few years, look at it again.”

Eventually, under the criticism of the crowd, the innocent Dracon sighed, spouted a few words that tempted others to pummel him before working diligently alongside Xueti.

Chapter 142: Ominous Clouds And Changes

“For menial labor, household chores, construction, and even dangerous mining jobs, there’s nothing that it can’t do! What can be more suitable and trustworthy than an indefatigable zombie worker as your assistant? Not only do they not need rest, they also don’t need a wage! It only costs ten gold coins for one, and you only need to pay two gold coins every year to charge up the Power of Death in it. You will benefit your entire life with this purchase!”

“Don’t listen to the nonsense of that fellow, zombies easily become smelly! It might still be acceptable in winter, but when spring and summer come, that stench will stink you to death! Hey, uncle. Why don’t you take a look at my mummy maid? Not only will it never rot, its insides are filled with top-notch fragrant spices that give you an aromatic scent even when you hug it to sleep at night. You should know that only those of noble standing can be mummified after their death. This cutie of mine used to be a noble princess before her departure.”

“He is just spouting bullshit! Do you think that he would dare to dig the graves of royalty given his appearance? That is most probably just a normal female villager with fat thighs.”

“…A Goblin princess should still be considered a princess. Furthermore, she is the princess of a massive tribe with a population exceeding three hundred!”

Even when the battle between these two Necromancers quickly elevated from a verbal one to a physical one, not a single customer had the intention of patronizing their stall. Instead, they chose the

Skeleton Worker not too far away. That's because Skeleton Workers are cheap and hygienic. Furthermore, even when the Power of Death dissipated in them, they could be treated as a clothes hanger or be fed to the dogs.

"Undead War Mounts for sale! It knows not of weariness and is eternally loyal!"

"You have to think of your weight before riding on a Skeleton Horse which falls apart easily. I have a Skeleton Beast that can be used to pull carriages! Feel free to choose among a variety of them!"

This was Diffindor's 7th Market as well as the newly-established Undead Worker Trading Center. Necromancers had finally found their livelihood aside from slaughter in here.

When the news of the Sinless City spread across the entire continent, the most delighted group was probably the Necromancers.

In this cruel world, the weak never fared well. Most people already had an instinctive desire to pursue strength, even if the strength was taboo. However, it could give them better lives, and at the very least, they wouldn't die ludicrously by being caught up in a fight. No matter what, it was a risk worth taking.

By training step by step, not every single existence who practiced the depraved demonic arts would become demented. But the Holy Church didn't consider what the Undead, "whose existence is a

sin," had done. They persisted in cleansing every single Undead. Necromancers who were capable of creating them were absolute heretics they had to destroy.

Some of them were coincidentally compatible with Necromancy; some of them fortuitously happened to inherit it. Even so, it mattered not. When their true identities were revealed, they were still outlawed in the same way as heretics and villains. Such prejudice made every single Necromancer go all-out to conceal their existence. If they were revealed, they might even resort to silencing the witnesses directly. In another sense, it caused them to fall into a deeper nightmare.

In the eyes of the world, it was impossible for Necromancers to be the cheerful neighbor boy whose face was full of acne. Necromancers must have a gloomy face and savagery must be reflected in their eyes as they planned their vile schemes to destroy the world in the demented Xiluo Empire. The truth was that it was a misunderstanding.

Xiluo was a country for the deceased. Their nobles and fief lords were all Undead. On the other hand, no matter how bizarre Necromancers were to the eyes of the world, they were still living beings, and in a certain sense, living beings were equivalent to slaves in Xiluo. This made the identities of the living Necromancers in Xiluo awkward.

Unless they were willing to give up on their physical body and convert into a Lich or if they possessed incredible talent that allowed them to become an apprentice of a Lich, their lives would most likely be difficult there. At the very least, their sustenance,

accommodation, and numerous other living conditions were not what they deserved. If a bloodthirsty member of the Blood Tribe was enticed by the scent of their blood; a bellicose Death Knight found a sudden urge to use them as his practice target; or perhaps their Lich mentor wanted to use them as his new experimental subject... Actually, as long as they did not reveal their own magic, most Necromancers were able to blend into the crowd. Furthermore, they were still able to use their own abilities to better their living conditions.

All along, Necromancers and Warlocks were the favored mercenaries of the nobles. After all, they were figures who were unable to come to the surface and they struck quickly and ruthlessly. Even if some secret were leaked to them accidentally, they were unlikely to spread it.

As such, the reputation of the Necromancers worsened. It didn’t help that Necromancers required corpses to improve their skills. They could only murder others personally or rob graves. This gave rise to numerous bizarre city sightings and ghost stories.

As such, the graves of every city were under the surveillance of a watchman dispatched by the Church of Holy Light. It was natural to leave some traces behind in the midst of robbing corpses as well.

Even if they reached Silver-rank or Gold-rank by sheer luck, allowing them to earn big bucks with their strength by serving as mercenaries, if they were to accidentally slip up, they would still be exposed. Even a beggar by the roadside might report you in the blink of an eye for the sake of ten silver coins.

The moment a Necromancer was exposed, no matter how many good deeds one did in the past, the Church of Holy Light would instantly send their forces over to surround the Necromancer. Even if one escaped from their encirclement, due to the worldwide arrest warrant, one could only wander around the world aimlessly to avoid pursuit. Less than ten percent of these people were lucky enough to escape to a rural countryside village or Xiluo Empire.

When Wumianzhe's declaration resounded across the entire world, these hidden Necromancers were taken aback. Uncontrollable, frenzied joy followed.

"Undead do not represent evil? Perhaps I'll be able to live with dignity from now on. Maybe I might even be respected and revered!"

As such, half a month after the declaration was made, numerous disguised Necromancers entered the city before disappearing abruptly. There were even more of them who chose to sneak into the city by scaling the city walls.

These days, there were always people trying to fly across the wall. Some of them were of the Blood Tribes. Some of them were Gargoyles. Most of the time, a person would be hanging beneath them. Their appearances made the city guards wary as well as hesitant about whether they should shoot them down or not.

Did they really have to shoot them down? However, something was obviously wrong. Soon, the guards understood what was going on, but why did those people avoid the city gates?

Most of those who flew in, upon landing, would find themselves surrounded by Knights.

“Are you a Necromancer?”

“No, I’m just a fanatic of extreme sports. Today, I saw a passing Gargoyle and wanted to experience the sensation of flying in midair. Thus, I grabbed its legs and happened to fly in here.”

Even a fool wouldn’t fall for these kinds of crappy lies. However, the ones speaking them never got sick of it.

The Knight Order in charge of defending Diffindor eventually succumbed to these slippery Necromancers. As a result, they pasted a notice on the city gates.

“Gate 7 of the city’s west side will be specially allocated for the usage of Necromancers. It will only take half an hour for the numerous administrative paperwork and identification verification. Furthermore, it comes with three job recommendations. Necromancers who enter the city through any others means will be fined 300 gold coins upon revelation, and stripped of their job permit for two months.

Note: Please station your Gargoyles and all Undead beings of middle-scale and larger outside the city. Alternatively, you can pay a fee at Gate 7 for it to be kept there. Of course, you have the freedom to infringe the rules written above. However, Diffindor’s airspace is guarded by Bone Dragon Rider Lord Timier. You can try

to play cat and mouse with him, but if he and his mount strike too heavily against you, your remains may become a popular auction item for your peers the next day. Presently, Skeleton Mages and Undead Sorcerers are expensive commodities in the city."

This was already utmost sincerity on our part. At the very least, we didn't hunt them down and instead, we expressed kind intentions to them.

After someone led the way and confirmed the passage was safe, even my Undead Knights were surprised by the number of Necromancers entering.

After entering the city, while rejoicing over finding so many comrades, a new problem appeared.

Just when they were treading into a new life, they found themselves jobless.

The newly established Diffindor Life Medical School (School of Necromancy) needed many lecturers and teachers, but that was for the elites. Most of the Necromancers were self-taught and their standards were only slightly better than apprentices. Rather than teaching others, they wanted to find a teacher to guide them along.

"Doing what we did previously? Do you mean an assassin or a mercenary?" There were quite a few bloodthirsty ones among the Necromancers, so they naturally thought of resorting to how they made a living in the past.

I had to admit that there was no lower limit to the foolishness of the humans. They actually dared to commit such severe crimes in the Sinless City, a phenomenon created by the God of Law. When their corpses were hanged on flagpoles to be dried, it served as a warning to the others, and explained the Judgement Spell and Sinless City.

Even so, the mass unemployment would eventually lead to social instability. As a result, I had already made preparations for it in advance.

The first solution was joining the army. After all, Necromancers were powerful weapons in war. This was where their expertise lay. My army had many years of experience and were well-versed in effectively utilizing Necromancers in battle. However, there were also weaker Necromancers who were unwilling to step onto the battlefield. This was another area that I had to look into.

“Bringing in all kinds of magic into our daily lives? Converting the products of Necromancy into tools for the convenience of daily living?”

This subject seemed to be an absurd and impossible one, but it was by no means a new one. Many human kingdoms had already started to use magic lamps, and magic kettles were a daily necessity for nobles. The numerous products of alchemy also came from the crystallization of the wisdom of the magic civilization. Since it was already proven probable with other magic and alchemy, why should it be impossible for Necromancy? In reality, Necromancy was all-encompassing, though the materials required for it were slightly unique.

The main job of the summoned Undead was serving the Necromancer who summoned them. It was within my expectations that a labor market would be started. Of course, there were technical difficulties to it as well.

The instincts of Low-tier Undead had determined them unintelligent and bloodthirsty. Unless the Necromancers kept a close watch on them, no one could guarantee that these brainless Undead would not go out of control. However, an invention had changed all that.

“Sloth Sword Seal—Death is the sweetest slumber. However, it is a pity that it isn’t time for you leave work yet. So make good use of your time and continue living an exciting life.”

The Sloth Sword Seal was a sword seal that represented all products of Necromancy. Its use wasn’t any different from the other Elemental Sword Seals. It was activated through Olivia’s Magic Box. Through the sword seal, one could manipulate the Power of Death. However, based on the current level of research, it could only allow its user to control a few Low-tier Undead.

I left certain concepts and theories to Olivia and company for them to develop into sword seals. Soon enough, a new Olivia’s Magic Box customized for Undead usage was created. Its only use was allowing one to control a Low-tier Undead through contracts. Thus, when ordinary humans wielded this black magic core, they were able to control their Low-tier Undead through it and get them to work for them.

As a result, the Undead labor market became a reality. Skeletons did household chores, zombies mined minerals, and mummies served as maids. Only the people's imagination stopped them; anything could be realized.

Of course, there was limit to everything. The "genius" who thought of the concept of a cute and disgusting Abomination by complementing it with a sexy maid costume had been stripped of his job permit for three months due to excessive complaints about how the product blinded people's sight.

On the other hand, phantom carriage rental, the Gargoyle Express, and the Zombies VS Plants series became the talk of the town, as predicted. With technology nearing perfection perhaps an entirely new magic civilization would be born.

Maybe these little things seemed like nothing, but they had huge repercussions on the future. The unknown had always brought fear to humans. However, when these beings were willing to be enslaved, the fear and sense of estrangement was hugely minimized. Eventually, when these became acceptable to the world, Necromancers would be able to enjoy normal lives.

"Sometimes, the era treads somewhere unfathomable to you. Perhaps even the inventor, Prince Roland, did not expect that this obscure and unaccepted invention would be the impetus to effect change on the world."

However, some things would never change. For example, the unpredictable minds of sentient beings and the seeds of resentment.

Looking at the headless corpse, Reyne sighed.

The two corpses were extremely young. One of them was a Silver-rank DemiElf Hunter whereas the other was a rookie Necromancer who had managed to sneak in. When she was patrolling the city walls, they, disguised as passersby, suddenly assaulted her. However, in the next instant, her guards had already decapitated them.

“Master Fayde, Teacher Ferdinand, and Teacher Sina, thank you for protecting me. You all have worked hard.”

“There’s no need to thank us. This was Prince Roland’s order.”

Before leaving, I had the two Sword Saints and Great Mage protect Reyne. Back then, Reyne thought I was overreacting. But facts had proved my judgement correct. This was already the seventh assassination attempt this month, and it was clear that this was only the start.

“The younger the seedling, the easier it is crushed. Even if we put aside your identity as the descendant of the Mist, just by the fact that you are the knot tying East Mist Communal Country and me together, you are absolutely important and irreplaceable to the country in its current state. If something happened to you, everything would fall apart. If I were the enemy of East Mist, assassinating you would be the best way for the country to fall into disarray.”

“We should have no enemies in the Northern Lands, right?”

Back then, I only chuckled, not pointing anything out. At this moment, Reyne remembered her indifference back then and could only lament her ignorance and immaturity.

“Send them over to the 7th Market and submit a report of the Soul Interrogations to me, even though it is highly likely that they were sent by that kingdom once more. Seriously, the Beastmen are going to be invading the Northern Lands next year. Instead of diverting their attention towards assassinating me, they should be reorganizing their army and making preparations for battle.”

No enemies? They were probably all enemies. On a state level, as long as there were conflict of interests, it was impossible for two countries to have an amicable relationship. No one would want to have a powerful neighbor, even if the country repeatedly claimed that they would not invade the other countries. How would it be possible for them to entrust their safety in the words of others? Furthermore, these countries also had ambitions of their own, and the newly rising East Mist was an eyesore for their plans.

I, who was at Sharal, also met with similar experiences.

“One, two, three, four, five. Five top-notch assassins, not to mention a Saint-rank hidden in the shadows. They sure do view me highly.”

Beside me, Amelia shook her staff with a furious expression.

“Yet another group trying to assassinate you. This is the thirteenth time this week! I have almost been reduced to a free bodyguard for you. Compensate me!”

“Hmph, I have no money for you! My life isn’t for your taking either!”

Winter often came earlier for the highlands. When most of the countries of the Northern Lands were preparing for the invasion of the Beastmen next year when spring came, the lands of the Beastmen were already shrouded in ice and snow.

However, as usual, the Beastmen had no intention of shrinking their area of activity to prepare to tide through the winter. On the contrary, the Wolf Knights and Lightning Roc Knights were traversing across the highlands to hunt down hidden human spies.

The closer one got to the base camp of the Beastmen, the more frequent these patrols passed by. Such abnormal behavior attracted the attention of the various countries, but even after they paid a heavy price to infiltrate the Beastmen’s camp and listen in on their discussions, all they got was that the Beastmen were preparing resources for war.

In reality, that was only a smoke screen.

There were only two conventional, narrow paths down the highlands where the Beastmen resided, and both paths were blocked by the fortress cities of two different countries.

The entrance leading to the various human countries of the Northern Lands was a barren and remote land called Erole Highlands. At this very moment, smoke was billowing ceaselessly from the innumerable tents established on that plot of land, indicating the presence of the Beastman army.

The Chieftains were currently gathered at the highest peak of Erole Highlands. At this moment, news that made their tribesmen thrilled was currently spreading amid the tents.

“Let’s toast to the glory of the War God! By next week, our Beastman army will be able to begin its invasion. Finally, we can settle our old scores. This time, let’s catch the humans off guard! Activate Plan Thunderbird!”

Chapter 143: Short Letter

"A swordsman of Zhao wears a plain helmet, his curved blade bright as rime."

俠客行 (Song of the Cavalier)The poem was by Li Bai, an extremely famous poet in China. It has inspired many works afterwards, a noteworthy one being a novel called Ode to Gallantry by Jin Yong, a famous wuxia writer.The poem is incredible in the sense that you can really picture the sight of an awe-inspiring swordsman slaughtering his enemies before flinging his sleeves and leaving gallantly.

Wearing shabby leather armor made of python skin, a swordsman of the Northern Lands wielded a silver longsword and created snow-white afterimages in the air. Wherever the radiant longsword struck, a bone-chilling wind issued, even covering the ground in a layer of thin frost.

"A silver saddle shines on a white horse, galloping swift as a shooting star."

Pointing the longsword to the heavens, a silver winged horse galloped over. Carrying the knight, the apparitional mount charged forward as if a silver shooting star.

"Robbing a life every ten steps, never turning back in the long journey."

Wherever the sword passed, the heads of the enemies flew. Just with the sharp sword in his hands and the mount beneath him, the lightly-dressed Knight could tread dominantly across the Northern

Lands!

“Flicking his sleeves when all’s done, casting his reputation into the shadows… I seem to have forgotten what comes afterwards. Forget it, I am unable to conceal my reputation anyway. Boys! Pay close attention! I, Roland Mist, have come! I am the Lich King!”

When Pale Justice was abruptly stabbed in the ground, magic gathered and the Black Tortoise Sword Seal, represented by an amalgamation of tortoise and snake, activated. A snowflake formation lighted up on the ground, and as the hidden, frigid current beneath the ground burst outward, Ice Magic froze everything in the surroundings.

My actions were too sudden. Along with the creeping of ice, the feet of the assassin in the shadows were frozen, rooted to the spot before he could even react. If he could react swiftly, he could amputate his leg and escape. If he were slow, he would enjoy the luxury of being encased in ice.

“I am truly impressed with those protagonists of novels. They always manage to look dashing when reciting poems in the midst of battle, but in actuality, it isn’t something plausible for a human to do! How did they manage to chant magic incantations, contemplate fighting strategies, and adjust their rhythm of battle while recalling the poems at the same time? Aren’t they worried about forgetting a phrase and ending up being embarrassed? What if they happened to choke on air and cough uncontrollably? Wouldn’t their deaths end up ridiculous?”

While I was retorting, a snake-shaped dagger with a green gleam

on it suddenly appeared in the shadows behind me. That menacing dagger slowly moved towards the nape of my neck without the slightest movement of wind.

Just as the blade was about to come into contact with me, the body of the assassin who wore a cruel smile suddenly jolted.

“An upgraded ability of Shadowstep—Temporary Elemental Concealment? This seems to be a rare ability that only a master assassin with Elemental Bloodline can learn. What a wonderful experimental subject.”

How could it possible for the veteran assassin to slip up at such a crucial moment? However, his hands were already numbed.

“AHHHH!”

Pale Justice was just inserted into the ground, but a rampaging flash of lightning was crackling as though thunder was traversing through the sword. The frenzied flow of lightning caused the unfortunate assassin’s body to convulse ceaselessly.

“Pitiful child. I doubt you can understand why a magic sword which had no contact with its wielder was able to attack you. I should remember this skill and teach those rookies when I get back so that they can use it on others.”

The lightning from the Azure Dragon Sword Seal that I activated wasn’t too strong. The assassin whose body was convulsing was

still able to grit his teeth and climb up. He had intended to bring me down along with him, but I simply patted the black cat on my shoulder.

"Gather a blood sample so that we can run an analysis on it. He is a rare specimen, so keep him alive. We'll extract his soul when we're back at the experimental lab."

Upon hearing these words, the elegant cat lowered her head and licked her paws, not moving from her spot whatsoever. I knew that she was just waiting to negotiate the terms with me.

"I will split a third of it with you. If senior doesn't want it, I will split half of it with you then."

"You lunatic! To think that our Phantom Serpent Bandits were destroyed by you lunatics, a person who talked to his cat... AHHHHHH!"

Upon seeing that I still facing the other way, the furious assassin dashed forward to assault me. However, in the next instant, an ominous black shadow blanketed his vision.

"Cat... Cat demon!"

A queer smile crept onto the corners of the lips of the cat-shaped figure on top of the assassin's head, as though it was mocking something or someone.

The assassin could no longer suppress the fear which penetrated straight into his bones. He immediately turned and ran. However, in a flash of light and a piercing scream, the assassin disappeared without a trace. All that was left on the spot was the elegant cat who was still tidying up its face.

Pah.

With a snap of a finger, the three corpses of the three bandits who had died from excessive bleeding stood up silently. They would bring the other frozen bodies with them.

With Necromancy no longer outlawed, the corpses of experts have become valuable trading commodities for the nobility. Naturally, we can't waste such precious goods.

While I was still admiring my actions, the battle on the other side had also reached its final moments.

A black, man-eating flower was chewing on something. Taking a closer look, it was the right arm of that Saint-rank assassin nicknamed Hellfire....

After sacrificing his own limbs to feed those frenzied plants, the great assassin Hellfire finally got into proximity to the Mage. However, what met the cruel smile of the assassin wasn't a panicking rookie Mage, but an insane demoness who grinned even more happily.

“You’re the 76th assassin who thought that I was an idiot at close combat. How do you think your predecessors fared?”

The will of a Saint-rank assassin was unfaltering. Even though he vaguely felt that something was amiss, the words of the other party was unable to affect his mind. He immediately stopped on the spot and executed his movement technique, creating a series of mirror images that surrounded Amelia on all sides.

However, all the female Mage did was take a deep breath and drop her flamboyant sapphire staff. Ignoring all of the mirror images around her, she sent a punch towards her rear.

Boom!

Amelia wasn’t as weak as she seemed on the surface. Just the wind pressure from the fearsomely forceful punch created a deep gash in the ground. Even though Hellfire reacted in time, he was still hit by it. He instantly kneeled on the ground and threw up blood.

Pah!

Wearing the ruby bracelet, Amelia flung her hand lightly. Accompanied by a shout of agony, a massive crater formed around him. Hellfire was lodged into granite. At this moment, all of the air within his body was forced out of him.

Perhaps a bystander might think this some kind of gravity magic.

However, I knew that this was just a simple swing of her hands, and what had pushed the assassin into the ground was just the wind pressure generated by her palm.

“You really can’t offend a Mage with 42 points in Strength. Even more so, a genetically-modified human whose eyes have the ability of True Sight cannot be offended. After all, she had to possess an incredible amount of strength for her to still be alive after messing around so much.”

At this moment, Amelia stroked her hair and her peculiar silver irises hid their radiance. Her lips were moving, as though she was muttering something.

Long, light-green hair fluttered along with the wind; a young lady recited a poem. Just by her outward appearance, Amelia carried the aura of an academic.

However, I couldn’t be fooled because I could tell what the other party was speaking through lip-reading.

“Darling, it’s time to eat. It’s a feast this time.”

The next moment, the smooth, light-green hair came to life. Her countless strands of hair extended with the tug of the wind before transforming into blood-red thorns. After the tip of those thorns opened a massive dragon-like mouth, when the assassin who was being chewed on was screaming in agony, I knew that the remaining images were rated Mature 18+.

“Temperance, huh? Truly a monster with a lack of any sort of temperance. Perhaps the reason why she named it Temperance was so that this monster wouldn’t eat too much and affect her figure.”

Senior’s research direction was similar to mine. The information and results of our research could be traded, but the method which it showcased itself was completely different.

In a certain sense, I was integrating Biology, Modern Medical Studies, and Necromancy for my Undead Creation. Naturally, what I was creating were other powerful Undead.

On the other hand, as a master of Biology, what Amelia studied was life itself. How could she possibly give up on the physical body that she was the most familiar with and understood the most, her own?

It was likely that she was unable to remember how many times she had modified her body. Even when I first met her, she had already said that she was more like a plant than an animal.

In fact, two of her Seven Benevolent Virtues, “Abstinence” and “Diligence” were part of her body, plants that shared life with her. Their existence and growth made Amelia stronger.

Amelia’s combined total of 42 Strength after enhancement by her equipment was something that had already exceeded the limits of ordinary life-forms. I had never heard of a single race that had Strength exceeding 40. Perhaps even the Titans couldn’t to match

up to her. Her bloodline was already something that was unable to be evaluated. From her very core, she was a being that exceeded common sense.

Of course, given how her ability to cause trouble was in no way inferior to mine, it was impossible for her to live until now without capabilities of her own. As far as I knew, her regenerative abilities and unkillable qualities were in no way inferior to mine.

After that group of assassins had been completely cleaned away, I felt a little regretful. I wasn't in the midst of completing a mission now, and the Saint-rank assassin which senior killed didn't allocate me any Fate Points at all.

"Why are you looking at me like that? I am lacking high-quality fertilizers at the moment. Even if you begged me, I wouldn't share any of it with you."

Her guarded gaze was really depressing. Ever since that unpleasant chat back then, Amelia seemed to be even more on guard against me.

"Later, I will pass you a third of the blood and flesh of an Elemental Descendant possessing the ability of 'Temporary Elemental Concealment.' However, I will keep the the soul and skeleton of that fellow, I have some uses for it."

"...Such rare material. Your luck sure is good for you to always meet these kinds of unique existences. However, you seem to lose out in this deal. Are you scheming something?"

That wary gaze sure did break my heart. I shook my head. I knew that if I didn't provide some reason, she, who was already agitated, wouldn't feel at ease…. Speaking of which, making that incredible senior of mine so wary, should I be proud of it?

"Since someone wants our head, we must naturally repay the favor. However, my strength is lacking at the moment, so senior, help me."

"It's a small matter. There is always a lack of fertilizer and experimental subjects. Deal!"

By this time, having received news of an assassination attempt on me, Xueti and the others had rushed to the scene. However, upon realizing that there wasn't anywhere for them to interfere in, they became onlookers.

"Exactly which side is the antagonist? Why do I get a feeling that our side is the evil boss who intends to destroy the world whereas the ones facing us are courageous heroes challenging the evil?"

"Agreed."

"Seconded!"

Alright, upon hearing the discussion of the late rescue army, I was taken aback for a moment before chuckling.

“Looks like the days of living together with old friends like Amelia and Harloys has made me younger and livelier. However, this doesn’t seem to be a bad thing. Of course, to my enemies, it was bad news.”

After enjoying such a long, peaceful life in Liu Huang Mountain City, I had clearly toned down. Perhaps this was something good for those around me.

However, considering the cruel future we were about to face, a scheming Yongye who utilized everything in his grasp to achieve his means was clearly much more effective than a righteous Holy Knight. I had also never intended to sit still as Doomsday befell us.

“Wish to destroy an evil and cunning opponent? Then, you have to become even more unscrupulous and frenzied than him.”

To my opponents, a scheming, lunatic avenger who was willing to cut away his limbs at crucial times posed the greatest threat. Also, I wasn’t a moral ablutomaniac who was was reluctant to dirty his own hands.

An ablutomaniac (a word that technically doesn’t exist) would describe a person with ablutomania, that is, obsession with bathing and washing.

“Senior, Harloys and I... This is perhaps the most interesting (dangerous, frenzied) group of researchers in the entire world. Maybe we can create something interesting together.”

It was the annual Hunting Festival once more. The Beastmen Tribes were gathered around the Orisen Mountainous Range. Upon receiving the support of the Earth Elemental God

Emordilorcan, the Blood Axe Tribe had become the most powerful tribe of the lot. Its leader, Eron Bloodaxe, had become the Great Chieftain of the new alliance of the tribes.

Perhaps a familiar title might be much more appropriate for him, Beastman Sovereign. However, for him to don this crown stably upon his head, he had to win the upcoming war first.

At this moment, the Chieftains from the various tribes were discussing their future military plans. Rather, arguing would be a much better phrase.

“I object! The first snowfall is just around the corner, and launching an offensive at this moment is suicidal.”

The Centaurs around the mountainous region were usually slightly slimmer and agiler than their brethren living in the Underground World and the Elven kingdoms.

However, the Chieftain of Kaerci Tribe, Haer, was an exception. With a height of three meters, he wore a massive halberd on his back. He was well-known for his unparalleled brute strength among the Highlands Beastmen.

“I object to it as well. Sleuweir Kingdom and Karsomi Communal Country have fortresses blocking the entrances to the highlands. By attacking them in winter, we would suffer overwhelming and additional losses. I don’t fear sacrifice, and I understand that war demands sacrifice. However, I am unwilling to have my sisters become meaningless pawns of war.”

Kamala was the Chieftain of the Blue-feathered Harpy Shamanic Tribe, as well as the most famous witch in the highlands. She held in high esteem across the entire mountainous range and her opinion was acknowledged by many other Chieftains.

Forcefully invading a well-defended human fortress in winter wasn't a good idea, no matter how one looked at it. The Blood Axe Tribe's obstinacy finally resulted in an outburst of resentment by the various Chieftains. If this matter wasn't settled properly, the alliance would likely fall apart.

The Chieftain of the Blood Axe Tribe, Eron Bloodaxe, was a towering Eagleman. Their tribe was known for their Lightning Eagle Riders but Eron himself wasn't that well-known. On the contrary, those who knew him thought of his capabilities as merely average. At this moment, challenged by the various other Chieftains, Eron only knew to scratch his head in frustration, unable to find an answer to their questions. It was clear that he was at his wits' end.

"... I'm returning."

The Chieftain of the Bearman Tribe, Ronde, was known to be reticent as well as stubborn. He would definitely bring his men back now that he had also spoken of it.

Finally, after making up his mind, Eron decided to speak of his plan. However, before he could start talking, a hoarse voice echoed from beyond the doors.

“Chieftains of the various tribes, allow me to introduce myself. I am Daimon Riley, the representative of your alliance army.”

The one who had entered inconspicuously was a short Ratman. Their kind usually lived in the sewers of the cities. Even though they were known to be cunning and difficult to deal with, they were sidelined by the Beastmen who valued strength.

However, even though the tent was packed with experts, no one dared underestimate this short Ratman. Other than the fact that he was able to silently enter this tent, his scales and the horn on his face reflected his identity.

“A Hellbreed? Are you of the Demons or the Devils?”

There was also an entrance to the Chaos Abyss in the Northern Lands. Beastmen weren’t strangers to the dwellers of the Underworld. However, there wasn’t a single sapient tribe that bore goodwill for these two races.

“My identity matters not. What is important is that I can help you. With the assistance of the Earth Elemental God, the geographic obstruction your army faces isn’t a problem from the very start. There is no need for you to besiege those two fortresses at all.

Daimon walked to the map and casually pointed out a path. It was an inconceivable path crossing over numerous steep mountain ranges and cliffs, straight to the core of the human world.

“As for the gelidity of winter, I bring you all good news. With the assistance of the Will of the Chaos Abyss, the Inferno Marquess has promised to grant you all the Blessings of Flames, allowing you all to remain unhindered by the cold gale of winter.”

The various Chieftains stared at one another, unable to fully grasp the situation.

“Inferno Marquess? The Inferno Dimension is a part of the Chaos Abyss, so that Marquess should be a Demon Lord. I am slightly knowledgeable in Demonology, but I have never heard of the great name of the lord. Could she be a new Demon Lord who has emerged in the past few hundred years?

“Haha!” Daimon laughed gleefully.

“No wonder you haven’t ever heard of the name of that lord. That lord had only returned to the Chaos Abyss last year and she was instantly promoted to the position of Demon Marquess. This bears testimony to her strength. Furthermore, she is granted the noble title of ‘The Devourer,’ and it is precisely due to the fact that she has devoured the God Power of the Fire Elemental God that she is able to grant you all the Blessings of the Flame.”

Upon hearing those words, the crowd was delighted. On the other hand, upon seeing that there was hope in accomplishing his mission, Daimon’s gleeful grin widened.

“Look, this is a keepsake from that lord.”

It was a silver-plated bronze ring, with flames circling the ring slowly like some sort of decorative pattern.

“Lord Elisa! Please grant me your blessings.”

The Hellbreed Ratman Daimon raised the magic ring up high and the strength of the Demon started to creep forth, summoning the will of a superior existence through an artifact.

“Who is the one summoning me! Who dares interrupt my beauty sleep! Hm? So it was an ugly Ratman! Die!”

The consequences of enraging a Demon Lord were severe, and it was even worse when a female Demon Lord was roused by a hideous man. In an instant, the flames of the Demon shrouded the summoner.

“Lord!! Please spare me, I am inno… AHHHH!”

Alright, the words of an unfortunate fellow who had already been reduced to ashes didn’t hold any power. Looking at the magic ring that fell to the ground, everyone was taken aback.

What kind of show was playing? To think that the intermediary would be destroyed by the mastermind all of a sudden? How can the negotiations go on after that?

They had heard that the Demons were irrational and illogical, and they had just had the honor of witnessing it first-hand. However, what were they supposed to do next? Return to their tribes?

“Chieftain Ven, you are well-known for being suave among the Beastmen and your social skills are good. Why don’t you try communicating with that Marquess?”

Instantaneously, the complexion of the Werefox Chieftain whom Eron had pointed out paled. The Ratman intermediary had died right in front of them. How could he possibly dare to step forth at such a point?

However, the Werefox weren’t reputed as the sages of the Beastmen for nothing. He immediately found a solution to the problem.

“You have already heard it as well. This Daimon here was sentenced to death for interrupting the Marquess’s sleep. Thus, we just have to communicate with her after her nap. Yeah, regardless of the time difference between the Chaos Abyss and the Surface, eight hours should be safe.”

Alright, this was clearly an attempt to drag things out, but this conclusion was something everyone could accept. Thus, they heaved a sigh of relief.

On the other hand, I, who was far away in another country, received a message from the silver ring on my hand.

“The Beastmen intend to circumvent the geographic limitations of the Highlands and directly assault Sleuweir in the midst of winter?”

Chapter 144: Chaotic Situation

In a blizzard before dawn, the dense congregation of the Beastmen army packed their items, donned their tattered platemail, and began their journey.

Massive Behemoths used their footsteps to awaken the sleeping highlands. Amidst the drumbeats, Wolf Knights began traversing the darkness while the aerial units who had just returned from their hunt carried the heads of human spies with them.... What that was just described was impossible!

According to the original plan, the Beastman army should have set off long ago. However, a small “accident” occurred.

“Scram! What I want is top-quality cosmetics from Yadosven! Do you think that you can fool me with these inferior products? Do you believe I won’t burn your entire basecamp?”

“Lord, please don’t be angry! This is the top-quality Elven Springwater. It has the ability of restoring youth and vitality. It is definitely much better than those inferior man-made alchemy products!”

“I don’t care! If you want my assistance, you have to fulfill to my requests!”

The Dimensional Window leading to the Chaos Abyss closed and the flames on the magic ring dissipated. The will of the Demon Marchioness had already retreated. Looking at the pile of ashes on

the ground, Witch Kamala shook her head helplessly. She slowly placed the magic ring down and left the tent.

Upon stepping out of the tent, she saw countless faces waiting outside. They were all influential figures from the various tribes. Their worried looks were reminiscent of examinees waiting for the release of their results. Based on the frowns on their faces, it seemed that most of them didn't hold out much hope in the results.

When the witch lightly shook her head in response to the gazes of the various Chieftains, she received a wave of helpless sighs.

"She is too difficult to deal with. The previous time, she said that the war songs of the Beastmen were too noisy, so she wanted us to find something more soothing. Thus, we found Sparrow Shaman singers and wandering poets for her. Even though the collaboration of the two had produced a piece of melodious Soulsong, that Demon said that it was a countryside folksong and they were off-key. This infuriated the proud Soulsingers to the point they almost charged to the door leading to the Chaos Abyss to teach her a lesson. I had to expend great effort before managing to appease them."

"That is nothing. What that happened two days ago was even worse. She actually said that she wanted to eat the Red Jadefruit, a fruit unique to the west of the continent. When I told her that there was none of it here, she almost killed me. And that 'Don't you all have Dragon Knights? You should be able to get them if you tire a few of them to death. At the very least, I didn't make you all buy lychee.' What the hell is lychee?"

“More than thirty attendants have died waking her from her sleep. There is already a rumor going about that we are feeding a powerful Ogre with our attendants…. Alright, not mentioning how this affects the moral of the troops, the amount of food our army consumes everyday isn’t a small sum. Are we supposed to continue stalling the matter like this?”

“Forget it. Even without the Fire God’s Blessing, it shouldn’t be a problem conducting a sudden attack and taking down two cities to tide us through the winter with the assistance of the Earth Elemental God. At the very least, it would be much better than idling here like this. Yesterday, another thirty tribes chose to depart from the alliance.”

Women were difficult to deal with, even more so for Demonesses. In the past half a month, the Chieftains had already had enough of the endless demands from Elisa. Beastmen had their own pride as well, and the movement to go on with the invasion without her was gaining momentum.

As one of the few people who were able to converse with Marchioness Elisa, Kamala naturally became the middlewoman for them. During this period of time, the other Chieftains viewed her highly. However, as time passed, she became an outlet for the frustrations of both sides, causing resentment to accrue in her.

“We can’t wait anymore. Who knows what she will come up with tomorrow? The first snow is rapidly approaching, and by then, it will be too late.”

“Sigh. I’d already heard that the Demon Lords were fickle-minded and did everything based on their own interests. This time, I’ve had the honor of witnessing it first-hand.”

“Shhh, this is a Marquis-level Demoness who conquered an entire Dimension by herself. She is an existence equivalent to a true God, so it is understandable that she would be slightly haughty. She has an eternity before her to play with us, but we can’t afford to go along with her.”

“We can’t wait any longer, let’s just throw in our chips tomorrow…”

While the Beastmen Chieftains were getting frustrated and infuriated over the Demon Lord, they couldn’t have possibly guessed that the difficult Demon Lord they were talking about was currently speaking impassionately with their greatest opponent. Furthermore, her tone wasn’t the irritable and impatient one that she spoke to them with.

“… They are probably getting impatient. Even without the Fire God’s Blessing, they will probably go it alone.”

“Stalling them for half a month? That’s already quite an incredible feat. Is the pressure from the Chaos Abyss piling up? Are the other Demon Lords complaining about it?”

“The Demons wouldn’t bother about such insignificant figures. It is the will of the Chaos Abyss to allow the Power of Elements to wreak havoc in the Main Dimension. It doesn’t care about the

Beastmen's success. It is sufficient as long as the Power of Elements causes the Elemental Tide to rise."

At this point, Elisa paused.

"There seem to be some other intentions behind this invasion. Most probably, there are intermediaries from other Demon Nobles in the camp. There are many Great Demons who intend to utilize this opportunity to please the Will of the Chaos Abyss. As long as I continue to refuse to grant them the blessing, others will probably take my place."

"Just grant them it then. Grant them the blessings when they show all of their cards to you."

"Yeah?"

This was different from what we had discussed previously. A Beastmen army who did not fear the cold would become a difficult enemy to fight against, but I had other ideas.

"It would be problematic for us to deal with them if they were granted the complete Fire God's Blessing. However, if something were to happen midway through and the blessing didn't possess the effects they had expected, no one would be able to blame you…. You get it."

"You are evil, as always. Right, have you been philandering recently? If so, be careful of my sudden assaults."

After dealing with the official matters, all that was left was our daily small talk. Honestly, I, who had been single all along, wouldn't know how to face Elisa if she had remained by my side. Rather, making small talk like this as we usually did felt more comfortable to me.

"How could I? If only I had such luck. You don't know how eccentric Beifeng and company have been recently. The more Gentlemen there are, the more difficult to keep them in check..."

Furthermore, I didn't even know how I felt towards her.

Lovers? Partners? An adopted daughter felt much stable than the previous two relationships. At the very least, I knew whenever I recalled that familiar silver hair and the features on her face, that rare hint of warmth and sweetness I felt was nostalgia for my family rather than love between a couple.

"I understand that Elisa had forked out a lot, and I know what she intends to achieve by doing so. However, whenever I try to view her as my lover, I somehow recall her voice and features when she was six or seven. I am not a beast, so how could I possibly lay my hands on her? Maybe it's because she is too important to me. That's why hesitation halts me.

"Sigh, the more I think about it, the more complicated it gets. Forget it, I will stop mulling over it. After all, I have never been able to make sense of it, and it is unlikely that I can in the future anyway. So let me just muddle my way through this."

I knew that this was an irresponsible attitude similar to a cowardly ostrich. But my past experience had proven that settling the matter by burying my head in the sand was effective, even though awkward.

After all, not everyone could live as long as I could. As long as I was able to drag on until the other party's death, their emotions wouldn't matter anymore.

"However, even if I wanted to be philandering trash, I have to at least be in a position to do so. In my first life, I died too early. In my second life, just when I had barely dug out something, I triggered a war and died pathetically. In my third life, for the sake of vengeance, I turned myself into a Lich…. Sometimes, looking at the couples who appear during Valentine's Day, I feel like I have lost. I can't help but to shout the FFF slogan and throw a Fireball at them."

However, I would sometimes ponder the possibilities that could have occurred if I hadn't pursued strength vindictively. Perhaps I might had already found a suitable candidate to start a real family with, and at this moment, my children and grandchildren could have been surrounding me. At the very least, my adopted daughter (depending) wouldn't pity me and ridiculously develop a crush on me when I was already more than three hundred years old. However, most baffling was my descendants appearing when I hadn't even settled my romance.

Perhaps it was precisely because of Elisa's deep understanding of me that she played these little tricks, leaving me with no way to

reject her at all. Somehow, I ended up falling into a deep emotional debt, resulting in the current state of affairs.

“She didn’t say so, but the Chaos Abyss can’t possibly be a comfortable place to live in. Demons are the incarnations of Chaos and the Demons below often revolt. Demons of the same tier often devour one another to evolve, and as such, battles are never ending. Maybe, from the moment she stepped into the Chaos Abyss, her fight had never stopped. It is truly difficult for her.

“However, Elisa’s help is something I cannot do without. It is useful to have a spy amidst the higher echelons of the Chaos Faction. Just a single piece of news at a crucial moment can serve as the determining factor in a war. If we were attacked without any prior notice, we might have ended up losing the initiative right from the start. By delaying them for half a month, we managed to reverse the situation…. Seems like I am sinking deeper into debt. There is no way I can repay it anymore.”

After ending our conversation, I heaved a sigh of relief. Putting aside the emotional debt I owed her, the invasion of the Beastman army was quite troublesome to deal with.

The one to face the brunt of the first wave would be Sleuweir Kingdom. I had complicated emotions about this country.

They proclaim themselves as the true heirs of the Mist. I had many comments just on this itself.

After all, in my generation, Karwenz and I were the only

remaining royalty of the Mist Country. If that darned father of mine hadn't left behind an illegitimate son, Karwenz and I would have been the only remaining main bloodline. Due to Karwenz's horrendous reputation, Reyne could only call herself my descendant even though it wasn't spoken of explicitly.

History is history. However, since they acknowledged themselves as the descendants of the Mist Country, this made the situation interesting.

If the final remaining prince and the sacred sword that represented the royal authority of the Mist Country returned, then shouldn't Sleuweir Kingdom, who had proclaimed their royalty to be of the Mist bloodline, come under the command of Mist's emperor? If so, didn't that mean that Pavill the 3rd would have to hand over his crown and be satisfied with the position of an ordinary fief lord?

Of course, everyone knew that it was impossible for that to happen. However, if I really brought the Roland Sacred Sword to their capital and demanded him do so, no one could know for sure what would happen. At the very least, ever since the rise of East Mist and the return of Roland and his knights, the Mist citizens migrating from Sleuweir had never stopped.

As a result, they made a decision, and what was presented before me was a "gift" of theirs to greet their ancestor.

"Sigh. On one hand, they proclaim themselves to be the true Mist bloodline, while on the other, they send a bunch of assassins to get rid of me? What filial descendants I have."

Chapter 145: Torch Festival

Hailatedum. In the language of the ancient civilization, it meant ‘Sage’.

In the ancient times, it was the name of a civilization which dominated an era. It branched off from the Ancient Humans, but from a certain point onward, it somehow became the main branch instead.

“Colossus Civilization,” “The Miraculous Era of Gears and Steam Engines,” “The Inconceivable Society Where Everyone is a Wise Man.” There were countless other names and glorious titles for them. In that era in the distant past, they and their creations were once commonplace around the world.

As the most advanced society then, they dominated the entire world. Massive floating islands and towers amid the clouds unveiled the secrets of the sky. A giant barrier erected on Island Turtle became a underwater city and colossal Titan Magic Statues were the guardians of their home. Even the Dragons had to remain humble before their wisdom and strength.

Even today, traces of the race could be seen, be it the Floating Island of the Blackwings, the Air Fleet of Auland Empire, or the Colossus Legion of the Solo Federation.

Modern engineering and alchemy originated from it, and the ruins of Hailatedum were fought over by all countries. After all, it was hard to say if a new discovery found in the ruins could be

awakened from its dormancy to become an integral part of a revolution.

During their peak, they even dared to debate about truth and reality with the Gods. How such a powerful civilization abruptly ceased to be was always a mystery of history. Research papers on the civilization were written in various countries, but when it came to their history and the reason for their extinction, it simply wasn't clear.

"Was it a calamity? Or an invasion by aliens? Ice Aeon struck once more? A catastrophic plague? An update patch? It was none of them. The truth is actually quite simple, they had stepped on the line!"

To some existences, Hailatedum's destruction wasn't a secret. On the contrary, it was warning to them, telling them that there were some things that could be done, and there were some things that one shouldn't even think of.

"Perhaps, you might become a powerful as the Gods, but please, by no means step into the realm of the Gods. At the very least, do not allow those fellows above you to see it."

Hailatedum was destroyed due to a God Punishment, and this wasn't any incredible secret. At Cape Glyte, the entrance to the Spiral Empyrean Tower, there was a glyph inscribed in ancient words with the greatest crime of this race.

"Life Creation, man-made souls, racial immortality."

These were the three greatest taboos that the Gods didn't allow anyone to commit. The proud Hailatedumers had indeed trespassed into the domain of the creators. As a result, they had received divine retribution.

However, this was only on the surface. "An endless proliferation of their race would have exhausted this world of all its resources." But to those who were aware of the situation, they only had one crime.

"They managed to bypass Reincarnation."

When the death rate fell significantly and no new souls crossed the River Styx and entered the Heavenly Pillar, when Life Creation and man-made souls were able to create their own brethren, the original system of reincarnation was broken.

Without a doubt, they had crossed the line for the two sleeping Goddesses with such an act. As such, a God Punishment fell upon them and they went extinct. Everything was that simple.

In order to prevent others from uncovering such techniques once more, the black glyph outside the Empyrean Tower constantly reminded mortal experts they should never touch such techniques.

Thus, even if someone discovered the route to immortality, they dared not utilize it to mass produce immortals. As for the second clause of the Three Great Crimes, man-made souls, the technology for it had already been lost for countless years.

Of course, if there was oppression, there would naturally be those who fought back. The more the Gods tried to suppress the mortals, the more people tried to fight back and trespass the barriers they set.

The Holy Church had used the notion of heresy to sentence many people to death, and in reality, there were also numerous cases of heresy. The more forbidden something was, the easier one would grow curious of it. Throughout the years, the number of alchemists who were burned at the stake for challenging Life Alchemy was uncountable. Furthermore, some of them were part of the core of the Church. After all, the sweet fruit of immortality was difficult to resist.

The previous lunatic who neared the barrier was probably me. However, unlike my other predecessors who sought immortality, my goal was slightly different, causing my means to differ from theirs as well.

“When eternal night descends, all living will disappear from history. From then on, the Undead shall last forever!”

If a Country of Dead were to be established and all living beings were converted into Undead, then reincarnation would become a joke. In another sense, the world would be saved from its doom.

Whenever I recalled the grade-schooler like words of mine, that embarrassing dark history would play in my mind. I couldn’t help feeling relieved about my decision to halt it abruptly back then. If a

Country of Death were established, I would probably be destroyed by a God Punishment the next moment.

After which, Ayer had also personally verified my conjectures. It would be impossible for the Gods to look on as a world belonging to the Undead became established.

However, there was a good reason why people still chose to fight back against the oppression of the Gods even so. Those three technologies contained great potential. I had been researching it all along and had achieved a certain level of results with them.

However, I am not so foolish as to display my works before the Gods and incur their wrath. Alright, I admit that the Seven Deadly Sins had already touched on the sensitive nerves of certain existences, but they also heaved a sigh of relief when they realized that I had no intent of mass producing them.

Most likely, I am already on their list of individuals to be wary of. If I had not started from the creation of powerful beings and instead, like some other Undead Lords, choose to achieve racial immortality, those up in the heavens would probably have come after me long ago.

Of course, I wasn't the only heretic. While I am highly talented in the study of souls and Undead Creation, Amelia's Life Creation field was a direct challenge to the authority and dignity of the Gods of Creation. It was a simple feat for her creations to achieve immortality.... If not for her cloaking the results of her study through plants and subconsciously circumventing the study of souls, she wouldn't have been left out when the others underwent

God Punishment.

However, there were some things that were beyond the control of Gods. For example, not all of Hailatedumers died back then.

Yes, there were still remnants of them, and they numbered more than one.

In that “history,” if Olivia has solved the greatest bottleneck regarding the energy core, the most outstanding creation of Timmy Lade, then the “Master of Magic Engineering” Timmy Lade, one of the future founders of the Magic Engineering field, was a control system that allowed ordinary humans to wield supernatural abilities easily.

In theory, an ordinary human who had never undergone specialized training could never wield supernatural abilities. Thus, he gave the magic-engineered gears an independent soul such that they were able to manipulate the Power of Elements by themselves. All that the Warrior wielding it had to do was pass down orders to it.

If Olivia had given magic-engineered gears blood and nutrients for them to operate, what Timmy Lade granted it was a new soul.

However, quite a few people had noticed it even though he went in a roundabout manner in an attempt to camouflage the technology. His research was taboo from the very start. He had infringed the taboo of man-made souls!

When I learned of Timmy Lade's achievements, I was surprised as well.

After all, I am quite well-versed in the field of man-made souls as well. Any research relating to souls was extraordinarily difficult, and in order to achieve results, the researcher would probably have to abandon him humanity and conscience. After all, it wasn't possible for them to remain moral given the experimental materials they required for their research.

I had spent several centuries with countless experimental matériel before me, and yet, my research was still stuck in the phase of stitching together old souls through extreme emotions to create powerful but twisted warrior souls. On the other hand, he managed to reach the level of mass production of man-made souls. The difference in the level of our technology was truly massive.

I had the advantage in terms of the creations' individual prowess, but it was a clear loss in the theoretical and technical aspects. Such results made the usually haughty me surprised.

"Could that snotty brat really be that much of a genius? Could he have skipped past the stage of knowledge and data accumulation? Or, just like Olivia, that shocking invention of his originated from a coincidental miracle?"

Thus, I paid more attention to little Timmy Lade and heaped high expectations onto him.

Eventually, I realized that I was wrong from the very start. There

were some things that could be explained by coincidence and talents.

“1897 AD, the summer of the Year of the Griffin, on the seventh day of the seventh month... At least it was still summer in Auland Empire. The weather in the Northern Lands was gradually growing colder and it seemed like it was about to snow.”

In the children’s coloring book, an oddly mature handwriting could be seen. However, the words written were completely different from the current languages existing in the world. The words written resembled numbers overlapping one another.

If one looked at the pictures on top of the words, he would conclude that those weren’t words but a series of pictures stacked over one another without any logical pattern among them. There were triangles, circles and twisted numerical digits. Perhaps to some, it was no more than a nonsensical abstract drawing, but to Timmy Lade, they were just some words he used usually—the Hailatedum Language.

“Big Sister Dana has been quite happy recently. It seems like her work is going well. The students in the school respect her greatly and a smile has been on her face recently.... Yeah, Big Sister’s smile has nothing to do with those male cats in heat surrounding her. On the contrary, she must be really annoyed by those flies buzzing around her. Looks like I have to find an opportunity to teach those despicable lads clinging onto her a lesson.”

From a certain sense, the reason why this Miss Dana hadn’t been married yet was truly due to her little brother serving as baggage.

However, he was holding her back in a way different from what she expected.

“Those toys of the Goblins aren’t mature yet, but they provided me with quite a bit of inspiration. I should be able to complete XT-2 by next week. Let’s start by sacrificing the son of the boss of the bread shop to it first. Hmph, to dare to cling to Lord Big Sister like that, even gifting her flowers yesterday!”

Upon recalling the bright smile on his elder sister’s face when she accepted those flowers, Timmy Lade’s rage flurried.

In certain aspects, the young Timmy Lade was much more mature than others expected him to be. However, in others, he was like an ordinary orphan who had lost his parents, holding great attachment and fondness to his elder sister who brought him up. This wasn’t hard to comprehend and it was completely normal…. Alright, I understand that this wasn’t normal in any way, but I am just trying to convince myself that there were normal people by my side. Couldn’t you all just go along with it for once?

Timmy Lade, Haku Evon the 17th. The former was the name everyone knew him as in this life whereas the latter was the name of an ancient soul.

When the God Punishment descended, the Hailatedum met with its end. However, a master of man-made souls was unable to simply accept death like that. He wished to use his own knowledge and strength to avoid the unavoidable destruction. He wished to pass down the heritage of his civilization.

“A person’s personality is simply forged by a soul with memories. Since souls return back to the world in the form of reincarnation, if I inscribed my memories onto a brand new soul, wouldn’t that be equal to resurrection?”

In a certain sense, Master Haku succeeded. Every time his soul underwent reincarnation, along with the growth of his soul, a certain apparatus would be activated and his soul would regain the memories of his previous life.

However, from a different point of view, he failed miserably.

Once a person entered the path of reincarnation, he could be considered dead. A new soul meant a new life. Even if the soul had acquired the memories of its past, it would only be able to view it in a third person perspective, as though looking through someone else’s life.

He had already succeeded in reincarnating 17 times, but unfortunately, with the exception of the memories of his first life, which had been stored over and over again, the memories from his other sixteen lives had been washed clean by the River Styx and whatever remained of them were negligible. He was still the same shut-in who isolated himself in the research lab

He was unable to remember how many times he had reincarnated. Even more so, he was unable to remember clearly whether he was the reincarnation of that legendary sage. All he knew was that the memory transfer system had detected souls

identical to his and activated sixteen times.

Alright, since that was the case, the reason why that little adult was able to mature so quickly could be understood. The reason why he was able to create complete man-made souls was because of his previous inheritance.

In a certain sense, Timmy Lade was the true protagonist of the currently popular “transported to another world” novels. Putting aside the fact that he had a mobile “grandfather” he brought about alongside him, his parents had died and he had an elder sister whom he was mutually dependent on. Furthermore, he was destined to achieve greatness.... Alright, at the very least, the current little Timmy Lade wouldn’t think too much into it. He was only a child who matured earlier than others, and in order to protect his beloved elder sister, he was currently putting all of his efforts into designing the machine known as XT-2 so as to destroy those pesky flies.

“Life has been fulfilling and it is good that big sister is happy. Even so, war is coming. Yet, this city remains so peaceful. Does everyone really have that much confidence in Roland?”

Thinking of the man who always wore a smile on his face, Timmy Lade couldn’t help shivering with the jitters. His Race Talent “Ultimate Eyes of Wisdom” allowed him to see through all disguises to peer into the true nature of a person.

That day, when he first opened the door and saw Roland, he was almost scared to death.

“Too fearsome. Life and death exists simultaneously in a single person. To think that Chaos and Order could be fused together to form a single bloodline, his physical body is truly ridiculous. His soul is even more so.”

Remembering the apparition of the black skeleton, Timmy Lade shuddered.

“Countless obsessed and demented soul fragments pieced together to form a normal one, and the might I feel from the black skeleton obviously points him as the legendary Emperor Yongye. Yet, this kind of ultimate incarnation of evil is actually the legendary hero of this country?”

Back then, Timmy Lade was in one of the last carriages moving to the secret base. Yet, no one would have thought that little Timmy would be the first person to recognize Emperor Yongye.

“Sigh, I’ll just see how it goes. At least life is not bad here. However, if war broke out… It is truly a wonder how they can be so self-confident. Is that Roland so trustworthy?”

Roland, who was out for diplomatic affairs, had sent news back: “The Beastmen army is about to begin their winter assault. The Sleuweir Kingdom is going to be invaded.” This news had already traveled through every single street and alley. Without a doubt, it would make the difficult winter even more unbearable.

The Beastmen army invading in winter was something that was

illogical and inconceivable. Furthermore, the notion proposed of them traversing across the difficult terrain to launch an attack was treated as a joke by many southern nobles. As such, Sleuweir thought that the envoy sent by the Mist Country was up to no good and evicted him from their borders. News of that had already spread.

Yet, amidst countless criticisms, the Mist Country was still able to remain quite confident in their sovereign. This in itself was inconceivable.

Even when everyone thought that the Beastmen army was going to invade next year, the citizens of Mist Country acted as though they were going to invade during winter and made preparations for battle as such.

On the other hand, with the shadow of war looming right before them, while the East Mist military divisions were busy preparing for war, not only did the citizens not panic, they even continued carrying on with their lives leisurely, even conducting a festival today.

“Torch Festival? What a bizarre name.”

Opening the windows, the city square was already filled with tourist groups. It was said that this was a traditional festival from the Liu Huang Mountain City of the Underground World. Every year, when the evening of this very day came, all young and single men and women would have to cover their features with a black robe and carry war flags and metal chains marked with the FFF logo. They would prowl about the streets to hunt down their

“prey.”

Yes, prey. The prey of these FFF members were the young “couples” engaged in romantic actions in public!

On this long night, all black-robed FFF hunters would scavenge for loving couples and tie the man onto a burning stake.... Of course, they were only strolling around town. The FFF members and passersby could smash food on them to bless the couple, as well as to pray for a better harvest next year. Actually, carrying torches and touring around town was the same thing as a parade float procession; it was more of a cultural thing.

It was said that this festival was created by Lord Wumianzhe. And the hunter who managed to hunt down the most prey would receive official prize money and a present. There was also an urban legend that the winning hunter would be proclaimed as the Love Hunter and he would soon capture his long-awaited love.

On the other hand, there was also another urban legend saying that “the couple who survives the attack of the FFF members to the very end will earn the blessings of the Goddess of Love. They will be together forever!”

Of course, most of these legends were just hearsay. Of the fellows from Liu Huang Mountain City, the “Love Hunter” from year to year were either be Adam or Wumianzhe himself, but they were still unable to rid themselves of their bachelorhood.

However, the romantic legend of the blessing from the Goddess

of Love still moved many of the young ladies' hearts. Many young guys also made use of this opportunity to muster their courage and pursue the one they loved.

"It is only a game. Perhaps we might even survive until the very end.... If we do survive until the very end, will you listen to my words? You don't have to answer me, I will be content with you just listening to how I feel!"

Alright, the escapes were, indubitably, a method to win the other party's affection. Also, one was more likely to succeed with one's confession when one confessed in the midst of chaos. Furthermore, if they did survive to the very end, they would very likely become a couple.

In the end, a certain someone was extremely disappointed. Quoting from his words, "How can so many couples appear right after such a sacred day of flames? Are the damned heavens really blind! Those heretics must be subjected to the judgement of the sacred flames! Eyesores everywhere! The next month, we will be conducting a cultural check of the city and all couples who display their affection in public will be fined!"

Alright, as usual, Wumianzhe's sudden outburst was suppressed by the Four Heavenly Kings and his external conscience (Elisa). However, this festival became celebrated by countless young men and women.

With Princess Reyne's approval, this year's festival was even backed by Diffindor's officials, the scale significantly larger.

Little Timmy stared out from the windows. A large amount of black-robed figures were waving scythes and torches, preparing for the start of the hunt. On the other side of the square, countless men and women were holding hands with one another.

“Damned couples!”

“Snuggling together right in front me, look at how decadent our society has become!”

There were some sentiments that didn’t require many words to express. Looking at those blissful couples, regardless of gender or age, the new generation of FFF members lit the torches in their souls.

“Burn! Burn! Burn!”

Without anyone leading them along, their rage exploded into a furious roar, trembling the heavens.

Of course, there were also many people in there who added fuel to the fire.

“Look at how the lazy Adam was able to win the affection of Magaret. This is the magic of the festival. If you’re single, how don’t you give it a try? You might even be able to win your future spouse.”

This was the handwritten advertisement slogan by a certain prince. Under the board on which the slogan was written was a rental store by the Undead Knights under his command.

“Renting torches, whips, stakes, scythes, nooses, and many other commonly used tools. It only costs 3 bronze coins for each equipment per day! Glue, inked eggs, and stink bombs cost a bronze coin each. In order to thank our beloved customers, as long as your purchases total more than 10 bronze coins in our store, we will gift you free FFF uniforms and flags! Long live the FFF army!”

Looking at the agitated young men and women, Timmy Lade shook his head. This world seemed so far away to him.

When he was about to shut the windows to focus on his research, he suddenly recalled something.

“Big Sister Dana should be off work early today, so why isn’t she back yet? Could it be…”

When a certain possibility struck his mind, the shocked Timmy Lade quickly took out a small gadget and checked it.

It was a mini-GPS. At the current moment, the position of the bright dot was the city square before him!

After a moment of silence, Timmy Lade walked over to the wardrobe which was taller than him and patted on it lightly. The wardrobe door immediately opened.

It was a black robe. The original use of the robe was for Timmy's choir classes. However, Timmy, who didn't like singing, hated the robe and had never worn it. At the current moment, the silent Timmy was finding the robe more and more pleasing to his eye.

"Yeah, you'll be it!"

However, as he stared at the robe, he couldn't help thinking that something was amiss. After pondering for a moment, a thought struck him and he used a red marker to scribble on the back of the robe—FFF!

"Hah, burn them all!"

The childish sounding voice carried in its undertone the determination to kill. In the center of the room, countless machines came to life. The flickering green light in those man-made irises seemed to bear testimony to the young boy's ability to turn his words into reality.

Chapter 146: War Breaks Out

【Top Student's Glasses: These are ordinary silver-rimmed glasses and wearing them will make you seem slightly smarter. Yeah, just slightly. Let me tell you, these are obviously ordinary glasses that the top students use to blind their competitors!】

【Top Student's Decayed Teeth: "Yes, it's these teeth. Wuuuuu, it's this one! It almost killed me!"】

【Top Student's Dentures: "My dentures are actually poisonous teeth filled with venom! Don't force me to bite you. Lick... AHHHHHH, it's poisonous!"】

【When you gather the full set "Top Student's Glasses," "Top Student's Decayed Teeth," and "Top Student's Dentures," you will gain the special effect "Dunce Masquerading as the Top Student". Your retorting abilities will be increased by 30%, integrity score will be lowered by 30% while your Cuteness Might will be increased by 30%—System hasn't eaten my medicine yet, but I still feel cute!】

"Where should I start retorting from? Should I start from how the three top students' equipment would turn one into a dunce? Or should I start from how I can equip those two teeth? Furthermore, if I put those poisonous teeth into my mouth, I would probably die! Further, what's with those additional abilities? What the heck is Cuteness Might? Do I need better retorting ability or a decreased integrity score? My integrity already has no lower limits, alright! I have already long given up on treatment, alright! There are too

many points to retort about this, there is no way I can retort on them all, alright!”

Everytime I see those Gachapon rewards which were filled with numerous retort points, my desire to retort would skyrocket. At this moment, after a whole series of ripostes, I panted heavily with the System interface before me, my gaze fixated on it.

“I will kill you with my glare, glower you to death!”

Alright, I knew that I looked foolish like that. However, what could I do to an existence I couldn’t reach but kept doing me in? Nothing, except killing them with my glare.

Perhaps I had spent too many Fate Points reconstructing my body; the recent Gachapon reward was getting worse and worse. The items that I had obtained were mostly objects that left people speechless.

【The Wordless Book of Heaven: The unparalleled Way of Heaven is contained within it.】

Alright, I didn’t know what the Book of Heavens was about, but if a book had no words, how could one comprehend it?

【Balala the Fairies Transformation Wand: I ate a lot of medicine today and feel cute! If you sing “In the name of the moon, I’ll punish you” and dance while transforming, there will be bonus enhancement to your stats! Furthermore, it is pink!】

Alright, I don't think that I need to go any further than that. After managing to get this non-mainstream magical wand, I immediately walked over to my window, opened it and threw it out.

"Who would say such embarrassing words! Farewell!"

【Sacred Sword: Togashi Must Die—The new member of the "One Shot One Kill (Must Die)" sword series, the product of the resentment of readers and editors. The One Shot One Kill (Wrecking Their Ass) effects apply to those who submit their manuscripts late and tour in the name of finding inspiration for their work. Also, it would be an incredible sight if you use it along with the one above.】

Alright, putting aside those obviously ill-humored, bizarre objects, the System did give some "good items" as well.

【DF-41 Intercontinental Ballistic Missile: Don't say that the System didn't give you anything good. As long as you are able to use it and dare to use it, this object is definitely formidable.】

When I saw the object, I was shocked. However, when I saw the user manual that came along with it, I knew that I have been duped.

"It requires specialized equipment for the launch of the missile? I can still find a way to solve that, but what do you mean by the missile will be locked if the password entered is incorrect? Where can I find the password required for the missile launch? Do I have to rip it apart to examine it? However, if it explodes on me, will you pay me? Furthermore, how can there be an intercontinental

missile in a world revolving around magic? I dare you give me something normal, like the incantation of a powerful Forbidden Spell!”

And the System really did it. In the next draw, I got a powerful, otherworldly spell incantation.

【Dragon Slave: Darkness beyond twilight, crimson beyond blood that flows, buried in the stream of time is where your power grows…】

When that incantation from my childhood appeared before me, my entire body started trembling in anticipation.

“Ohhhhh! As long as I chant the incantation, I will be able to borrow strength from the otherworldly Demon Lord to cast this ultimate-level Forbidden Spell? Without using much mana, I will be able to use this highly destructive Forbidden Spell? Awesome!”

Thus, I looked for a remote location to experiment it myself.

Did I fail? Was there a problem with the incantation? No, the items from the System were all authentic. I succeeded and the incantation was the official one and it worked. I managed to connect with the otherworldly Demon Lord.

“Welcome to the Otherworldly Demon Lord Summoning System…. The Demon Lord whom you are calling is currently unavailable, please try again later. Dududu, I thank you for your support of the Incantation System.”

Alright, the Demon Lord was busy and he was unavailable.... I could understand that the Incantation System was the exclusive privilege of a certain other world and it was normal for me to be unable to get into contact with him, but what was with the reply afterward!

"After which, please rate our services. Are you satisfied, or are you very satisfied? Of course, it is also alright for you to choose the completely satisfied option!"

Of this "Dear customer, I am father. If you don't want to use my services, feel free to leave" customer service, what can I do? I hung up and stared speechlessly at the blue sky.

Actually, this wasn't the worst. Once I managed to draw a bunch of legendary treasures. Looking at those orange-colored artifacts, I almost died from delight.

"Hah, One-Star Ball, Two-Star Ball... Seven-Star Ball. If I gather all seven, can I really realize my wish?"

Back then, I hadn't been duped by the System too badly yet. After drawing 6 Dragon Balls straight and receiving confirmation from the System about the effects of the Seven Dragon Balls, I waited expectantly for the final Dragon Ball to fall into my hands. In fact, I even started to plan on how I should make use of my wish and how I should achieve the greatest benefits through it. I even filled an entire journal with my plans.

However, in the dozen or so Gachapon draws in the next year, I never received the final Dragon Ball. Eventually, I could only howl helplessly in anger.

“From the very start, you were trying to scam me, right? Is this the darned game lottery system that our country came up with? There is no prize at all, right!”

“…Due to the karmic effects regarding the Four-Star Dragon Ball being too great, I can only arrange a mission for you. If you are able to triumph over its guardian, it will be yours.”

I had watched the Dragon Ball manga back then. Who was the owner of the Four-Star Dragon Ball? Wasn’t it the protagonist of the manga, Son Goku?

Challenge Son Goku? Recalling those ridiculous experts in the manga who destroyed planets as they pleased, I shuddered.

However, I soon remembered how the manga was when it first started, when the plot was still normal. Back then, the Seven Dragon Balls had already appeared and perhaps, the one to appear before me wouldn’t be such a ridiculous existence. There was still a chance for success.

“It is the young Goku from the start, right? It can’t be that it is the Super Saiyan who destroyed planets with a single strike in the later part of the manga…. Why aren’t you answering? It can’t be that it is the even more ridiculous Super Saiyan 3?”

“Don’t worry, it’s not 3, it’s 33. Super Saiyan 33!”

“Don’t try to fool me, I read the manga! There is no Super Saiyan 33 in that world!”

“Cough, it is a parallel universe that we live in. Due to the overwhelming popularity of Dragon Ball in the world, the editor didn’t allow the manga to end. As such, the show dragged on from Super Saiyan 3 to Super Saiyan 33. Sigh, you don’t know how ludicrous the power system became in the end. At the very start, they destroyed worlds and planets, but eventually they went on to destroy galaxies and universes.”

“Furthermore, since you already know that it was taken from that real parallel universe, given the plot the Dragon Ball world was going at, how they were breaking their limits here and there, do you think that it was possible for even more powerful antagonists to not appear later on? If I were to say, not just Super Saiyan 33, as long as that world doesn’t get destroyed, even Super Saiyan 333 is possible!”

Alright, there’s no need for me to say anything. Even the normal Super Saiyan transformation was able to kill me in an instant; if Super Saiyan 33 came, wouldn’t the heavens, earth, and even the air be destroyed with a single flick? I didn’t wish to die that pathetically yet, thus I rejected the “goodwill” of the System.

As time went by (and the number of times I got scammed increased), I roughly comprehended a general rule.

It wasn't that the System had dedicated its soul fully to pranking others, but its abilities were limited. Distorting the future required one to bear its karmic effects. The laws governing equivalent exchange still needed to be obeyed.

Thus, my dream of obtaining powerful treasures by drawing with minimal Fate Points was shattered.

For a period of time, I dedicated my soul to drawing "mystical secret manuals." "Godly equipment" and "unique and rare treasures" were struck from my list of options.

"If I obtain strength from the 'otherworldly knowledge' and change the future, it would be my own doing rather than the doing of the System. Thus, the System only need to bear minimal karmic effects. This was like a conspicuous loophole left behind by the System. If I don't choose you, who else will I choose?"

Thus, even though I drew numerous objects that left one speechless through the "mystical secret manuals" choice, such as the "Wordless Book of Heaven" and "Dragon Slave Incantation Manual" and other books which were in the wrong universe, as well as the "Art of Nine Negations," "Sunflower Manual," "Manual to Cross Dressing as a Beautiful Lady," and "Photoshop: Manual to Creating a Beauty." They were all authentic, but it was completely inconceivable to me what they could be used for.... Alright, let's forget all of those. At the very least, those research notes of the otherworldly Mages were indeed good stuff. They were much more useful than those unreliable otherworldly treasures and I had benefitted greatly through them.

The reason why I used my Gachapon draws recently to get unique and rare treasures was to draw a Spring of Drowned Man for the unfortunate Krose as compensation. However, it was a pity that the entire roulette was filled with the Top Student series's objects and there was no sign of the Spring of Drowned Man appearing at all.

"Forget it, timing is important in Gachapon. If one's complexion, hand, and luck are bad, one shouldn't treat himself as the protagonist of the world. I should try giving it a change and drawing mystical secret manuals instead."

As Fate Points were pumped in, the rapidly spinning roulette stopped. Looking at the "secret manual" which popped out, I couldn't help gasping in shock.

It was a game walkthrough. On its cover, roaring Beastmen armies and countless Beastmen heroes could be seen.

【Ding! Congratulations on obtaining《Highland Beastmen Invasion Game Walkthrough—The Hundred Powerful Tribes Information Guide》. System Notice: Not only does it list the unique troops of each and every tribe and their fighting prowess, it even tells you about the personal preferences of each Chieftain and heroic figures. If you still fail to achieve victory in the war, carry your head to meet me.】

"System! Can you not be so obvious when cheating? However, you did well this time, I like it! I give you thirty-two likes!"

"Prince Roland in the East Mist Communal Country is a fake. He

isn’t some awakened returning Heroic Spirit, but propaganda East Mist uses to calm the hearts of their citizens!”

When I heard the report Sleuweir Kingdom sent to the other countries and churches, I wasn’t surprised at all. This was within expectations. Even so, I was still enraged by their actions.

“Feimer Carson, is it? Since you were willing to send assassins to get rid of me for the sake of holding onto your authority, then what could coming up with lies to deny the existence of your ancestors count as?”

I could understand that they were denying my identity to maintain the integrity and legitimacy of their sovereignty, but they were clearly trying to stab themselves in their own foot by the latter part of the report.

“The Kamo’s Tear Fortress is still completely calm. I have just signed a peace treaty with the numerous Beastmen Tribes. Yet that fake Roland spread rumors about an impending Beastmen invasion. This shows that he has bad intentions in mind! He hopes to tear apart our amiable relationship with our Beastmen allies!”

From a certain sense, Sleuweir could be considered as the successor of the Mist Country’s legacy. However, they denied the traditions and values of the Mist Country. They chose to employ goodwill diplomacy, siding with the other larger kingdoms on most occasions, even willing to resort to bribing the Beastmen Tribe whom they bordered.

One must say, from a certain perspective, they truly did well. In human society, Sleuweir Kingdom's reputation was much better than East Mist Communal Country and Mist Country.

Considering how difficult it was to capture Kamo's Tear Fortress, the Chieftains who had received large amounts of bribes would also direct their attention to the other human territories. They had enjoyed more than two decades of peace and they had not been embroiled in most major historical wars.

For the Beastmen Tribes, as long as it was en route to their ancient homeland, it was the same no matter whom they invaded. The current situation was different from the past Mist Country and the Beastmen bordered with more than one human country. Since Sleuweir had decided to employ the carrot and the stick, it was much wiser for them to choose an easier target to work on.

Of this method of diverting the catastrophe to the other countries, the Karsomi Communal Country which faced greater pressure from the Beastmen's assault was full of complaints. Even so, it didn't affect Sleuweir's diplomatic strategies in any way, so they had no choice but to tolerate it.

It was true that the Karsomi Communal Country was a nail stuck there to deal with the pressure from the Beastmen. After East Country's fall, they had borne the brunt of the impact from most of the brutal Human-Beastman wars.

The motive for the Beastmen's invasion southward was simple. In the short-term, their goal was likely to annex some land so they could hunt for food and resources. As for the long-term, they

probably only had one ultimate aim—to recapture the original land of the Beastmen, the Blanluya Plains.

Currently, the Blanluya Plains weren't part of the Beastmen's territory. It belonged to a powerful human empire, Saint Antonio, and it served as its granary. The Karsomi Communal Country was a vassal state of Saint Antonio Empire.

It was said that the emperor of the Karsomi Communal Country was a high noble of the Saint Antonio Empire, and most of the powerful troops of the country originated from Saint Antonio. Every year, young generals would suddenly appear in their ranks and display their talents; most of these talents were Saint Antonian.

There was even a tale about how they crushed their own foot with the boulder they lifted.

The Beastmen army had never given up on their dreams to return back to their homeland. Back then, when the Beastmen had occupied the previous territory of the Mist Country, due to their powerful reproductive abilities, they were able to engage in numerous large-scale and small-scale battles. This made those countries who were pestered by them start to miss that "smelly and tough country of barbarians," which they destroyed with their own hands.

"Thirty to forty Wolf Knights may not mean anything much in a frontal assault, but if they snuck into our territories, they can cause countless civilian deaths. Those cockroach-like Beastmen who reproduce at an insane rate can't be completely killed no

matter what we do. We need a barrier against them!”

As such, under the combined efforts of countless empires, the Karsomi Communal Country was formed.

To date, this newly established country only had two hundred years of history behind it. After its founding, it nailed itself firmly at the entrance of the Beastmen territory. Large amounts of resources and talent were continuously supplied there from the core of human society, thus forcefully blocking the Beastmen off at the highlands.

Karsomi Communal Country’s Haulus Fortress and Sleuweir Kingdom’s Kamo’s Tear Fortress became important fortresses of the human society in hindering the army of the Beastmen Tribes after the fall of the Mist Country.

With the Fortress Cities’ natural terrain advantage and the support from countless human countries behind them, in the past two hundred years, they had managed to drive the Beastmen army back to their lands. The Kamo’s Tear Fortress was named after the previous Great Chieftain Kamo who died there.

However, the situation was different this time.

“Urgent news! War has broken out! The Beastmen army has invaded Sleuweir. It has circumvented Kamo’s Fortress and four midsize cities have been massacred! Sleuweir has currently been placed on full alert!”

Chapter 147: Overture

In the view of most humans, the Highland Beastmen were deprived of spellcasters. However, to the armies guarding the Northern Lands, such a saying was obviously far from the truth. The Shamans and Witch Doctors of the Beastmen were spellcasters which left people with headaches.

The former were skilled with connecting with the Elemental Spirits to induce all kinds of natural phenomenon to attack their enemies or to support their comrades. Not only was the consumption rate for their spells low, the effects of their spells were also apparent. Their offensive abilities were in no way inferior to Mages, and their support ability was comparable to Priests and Holy Knights.

Even more so, the Shamans were skilled at working with one another, and as such, they had a natural advantage in creating strategic-level magic spells. Their Earthquake Spell was an incredible weapon for raiding cities.

On the other hand, as a highly threatening spellcaster job which had few means of protecting themselves, if a powerful close combatant were to get into proximity with the Shamans....

“We can give him ten seconds to plead for Mother Earth’s blessing, five seconds to draw his weapon, three seconds to do meaningless retaliation or to chant an incantation, and the final second to end him.”

“Every minute, there are fourteen Shamans who are being killed! Please do not slaughter Shamans and support the law allowing Shamans to instant-cast Earth Drifting Spell (Teleportation Spell)! Support the cancellation of the Shamans as a job! —Shaman Self-Help Fund.”

Putting aside their individual prowess and their obvious flaws, the reason why Shamans were often prioritized as a target in battle said much about their powerful support and long-distance offensive ability. This happened to be what the Beastmen, who specialized in physical brawls, lacked.

If the Shamans were the ideal combination with Beastman Warriors, then Witch Doctors were the best backup. They specialized in concocting poisons and antidotes alike, casting all kinds of curses and witchcraft, as well as dispelling curses and healing the wounded.

Even though their treatment methods were a little ridiculous—they used bloodletting to treat all ailments, after all, regardless of whether it was a common cold or a migraine. Even though they didn’t know what went into the medicine that they concoct (there were lizard droppings, pitch-black grass, and many unexplainable ingredients in it), it was a fact that they had saved many lives in the Highlands which lacked doctors and medicine. (Naturally, the ones whose treatment failed had died and the dead were unable to complain.)

Spellcasters were always lacking, and that fact rang even louder for Beastmen Tribes.

For the Beastmen who were skilled at physical brawling, it was difficult to find a clan member who had a good head. Furthermore, the person had to have talent in spellcasting as well. In each tribe, these two spellcasting jobs were severely lacking and highly valued. Shamans and Witch Doctors possessed high standing in all of the Beastmen Tribes and many of them even became Chieftains.

However, at this very moment, the precious Shamans and Witch Doctors became menial laborers. They were walking up and down the altar to check on it while the furious onlookers were frustrated to the point that they started using whips to lash them.

“Dammit! We were already so careful! How could a problem still occur?”

The Blood Axe Tribe’s Eron Bloodaxe wore a grim expression. The tribute ritual had been conducted by his own tribe and most of his tribe’s elite Shamans and Witch Doctors had been devoted to it. The amount of tributes used for it was massive, yet it ended up like this. How could they not feel disappointed?

Was it a failure? No, that’s not it. At the very least, the warm flames in the surroundings lighted by the red-orange light bore testimony to that.

Was a success? That was clearly not the case. The tightknit eyebrows and frustrated expressions on the Chieftains explained it all. At the very least, the results were not as they initially hoped for.

“Lord, the results are out. The blessing was a success and it had the effect of warding off the cold, but…”

Even though the old Shaman reported as such, nobody’s expression relaxed because of it. That was because during the crucial period, that brilliant flame was suddenly cut off and the Demon Lord’s furious howl echoed in everyone’s ears.

“You hope to earn my blessings despite giving tribute to me with such filthy objects? To dare to place fake souls upon my altar! This is blasphemy! You all are challenging my dignity! I curse you all, I curse that you all will face destruction! To think that you all would dare deceive a Demon Lord…”

Upon realizing that there was a problem with the tributes presented to her, the furious Demon Marquess sent the flames of her wrath over. The massive flames morphed into a giant golem with a spear in its hands and it started to wreak havoc in the base. Furthermore, the opened Demon Doors meant that the Demon army was about to arrive at their base.

Fortunately, the old Shaman, who was heading the ritual, closed the connection with the Chaos Abyss in time, making the inferno avatar of the Marquess return back to the Elements and closing the Dimensional Gate. Otherwise, it wouldn’t just be a matter of the failure of the blessings. If things went badly, the entire camp might have even been destroyed by the furious Demon Marquess.

Given such circumstances, for the ritual to not be a failure, the various Chieftains were surprised.

“Huh? The blessing didn’t fail?”

Eron was astonished. He knew how difficult it was to deal with Elisa and he had prepared himself for failure.

“The effects of the blessing aren’t complete and they can only ward off the cold temporarily. Also, based on the rate the Element is dissipating at, the blessing will cease to be in thirty days.”

Hearing those words, the Chieftains heaved a sigh of relief. When the ritual failed, everyone was prepared for the worst. Even though the original three months of blessing was cut to less than a month, this was much better than the worst case scenario they had prepared themselves for.

“Have you checked on the issue with the tributes? Which tribe was the one that used an imitation at such a crucial period? I want the Chieftain’s head to be staked on a flagpole!”

Eron was furious. They almost passed by this hard to come by opportunity, even offending a Demon Lord at that. There would be trouble awaiting them in the future.

The Demon Lords were well-known for being difficult. It would already be a blessing for people if they did not cause any trouble of their own accord. If someone wanted their assistance, aside from waiting on them properly, the summoner had to pay the expensive “appearance fee” as well.

The most stable currency in use in the Lower Realm was the souls of the Upper Realm. In order to please the Inferno Marquess, the tributes used this time were top-quality slaves from each and every tribe.

It was impossible for the ritual to fail for no reason. The Demon Lords were known for being fickle-minded, but they were even more reputed to care to speak the truth (If they were displeased with someone, they would immediately make a move. If there was a treasure in sight that they wanted, they would immediately snatch it.). Since the Demon Lord roared at them because she was unsatisfied with the tributes, it was very likely for there to be a problem with the tributes.

“This…” The old Shaman of the Tortoise Tribe slightly hesitated. However, upon seeing the confused gazes the Chieftains were shooting him with, he knew that he had no choice but to say it. As such, he gritted his teeth and spoke.

“The tributes have been all expended, but the blessing was incomplete. Given that there was a loss in power in the ritual, the souls used in the ritual must not be enough. However, it was impossible to check on it since the tributes are no longer here. However, based on the timing when Lord Elisa became enraged… It matches with the timing when the Blood Axe Tribe’s tribute was being presented!”

Instantaneously, the furious Eron who was still interrogating others became speechless. To think that his tribe would be the cause of the trouble?

Hostility appeared in the eyes of the surrounding Chieftains. They also seemed to recall that the inferno statue's howl was directed toward the Blood Axe Tribe's camp. Even so, Eron was so determinedly pointing the blame to other tribes, wasn't this a case of a thief calling another a thief?

Unknowingly, the seed of discord had been planted. One still required prestige to head the other tribes, and the consecutive failures had struck a blow to Eron's prestige. In the eyes of some others, Eron losing his ability to rally all of the others tribes could mean that they might be able to replace him as the Great Chieftain.

Putting aside those seemingly peaceful but discordant Chieftains, when the short ritual was terminated abruptly, the will of a certain someone had already descended onto this world. The person had taken some of the tributes for her personal use.

Currently, the altar was a mess. In the midst of the tributes, a fiery red apparition was slowly becoming corporeal.

Breathing the cold air that was finally without the smell of sulfur, a smile appeared on the familiar, beautiful face. Similar to the avatar of the Goddess of Storm in the City of Rain, the silver-haired Demoness had secretly sent an avatar to the mortal realm.

"Master, do you miss me? Have you made preparations to welcome me? I did say that I would conduct sudden inspections."

When large-scale aerial battles had yet to become a possibility, terrain remained an important aspect of surface battles.

Kamo's Tear, rebuilt from the remains of the Mist Country's original Steel Fortress, was surrounded by sharp cliffs. The heavy city walls had been plated with the expensive enchanted alloy. What flowed in the moat of the fortress was a type of unfreezable oil made of alchemy. Once lit, the flames would burn furiously for two months straight before the fuel ran out.

A third of Sleuweir's military strength and forty percent of the country's spellcasters were gathered in the city. A total of nine large-scale Mage Tower and thirty midscale Mage Tower faced the ravine near the Beastmen's territory. Furthermore, the fire ballistae placed throughout the wall were so dense it made goosebumps rise by looking at it from afar. Two hundred years of painstaking effort and investment had turned it into one of the few impregnable fortresses on the continent.

As an infallible fortress, it had locked the Beastmen out from the human society for two hundred years. It was said that its establishment was heavily supported by the countries of the Northern Lands and the several powerful empires of the continent.

Ever since its establishment, those city walls which even Giants were unable to climb over became one of the greatest obstructions to the dreams of the Highland Beastmen. Lacking siege weapons, they found themselves helpless against it. Conquering a fortress of such size with the few aerial tribes and troops they had was a mere dream. Even the previous Great Chieftain of the Beastmen Tribes had died beneath the walls of the fortress.

But if I had to speak, it was all a mistake from the very start.

“Does an impregnable fortress really exist in the world? You may be able to defend yourself against a regular army, but are you able to guard yourself against assassinations and Forbidden Spells? Placing all of their eggs into a single basket was the wrong strategy. Even if the fortress was truly impregnable, the enemy could choose to circumvent the fortress. Even if there is no plausible route at the moment, it is possible for the enemies to simply pave one themselves.”

The Maginot Line of Earth had already proven that only establishing a fixed defensive line against an enemy was a foolish decision. However, the generals and military officials of this world viewed fortresses as an important and classic defense strategy. Sleuweir was also a country that believed in the importance of fortresses and had benefited for centuries due to the existence of the fortress. After this painful lesson, all of the military schools would probably research the causes of failure of this war and use it as a case study—a negative role model for why being overly obsessed with fortresses was a foolish decision.

The trade and communication agreement which Sleuweir had just signed with the Beastmen was instantaneously torn apart. Without any forewarning, the Beastmen had infiltrated into deep into their lands, ferociously tearing apart every single human they could see.

The Earth Elemental God Emordilorcan was definitely much more low profile than his colleague. With a single high-intensity earthquake, he changed the geographical structure of the Northern Lands, causing another narrow ravine leading from the highlands to the Northern Lands to appear, thus making that impregnable

fortress-like the eyes of a cave-dweller—ornamental.

The Beastmen army had charged directly to the core of the Sleuweir Kingdom before spreading all around to assault and take down the various cities. Of which, half of the entire Blood Axe Tribe headed straight for Sleuweir's capital, Antuen.

In order to create even more chaos and keep the military of the various fief lords under control, more than a hundred hunting squads consisting mainly of Wolf Knights conducted guerilla attacks on the various armies. Given how they themselves were in a precarious situation, the fief lords chose to utilize the army for their own needs. As such, in less than a single month since the outbreak of war, Antuen was already in an emergency situation. Sleuweir's downfall came even faster than anyone had expected.

At this moment, I am helpless.

It was not that I didn't want to do anything, but the first round of snow had struck before I could return to the East Mist Communal Country. Even though its arrival was within expectations, it was still unwelcomed. There were too many things that I needed to attend to and the snow truly fell at an inopportune time.

The winter of the Northern Lands was exceptionally brutal. The white snow had already covered all of Diffindor. Snow half a meter deep piled up on the streets. There were barely any pedestrians in sight on the streets.

Such weather was a disaster. The horses would sink into the

snow if they tried to traverse this weather. The weather would cause their body temperature to fall rapidly and precious war horses would simply die for naught.

Given the underlying rule that had gradually come into place in the Northern Lands in these few years, when a country had been invaded by the Beastmen or other foreign race, the other countries had to provide them a certain level of aid or send their troops to reinforce them. Back then, the one to enjoy such aid was often Karsomi Communal Country.

However, it was a pity that the snow that affected most of the countries in the Northern Land had changed it all.

The resources were unable to arrive on time and the reinforcement was stuck on the way. On the other hand, the Beastmen were still persisting in their attacks to capture the capital of Sleuweir. This was a hopeless situation.

The cruel natural world was equal for all. Traditionally, there would be a ceasefire when the snow was sufficiently heavy to lock down the mountains. After all, to the warriors, dying on the battlefield was a kind of dream. No matter what, it was somewhat a shame to freeze to death on the battlefield; the family members of the soldier would often be tempted to curse at the military officers if their family member had died so meaninglessly on the battlefield.

Fortunately, as the effect of the Fire God’s Blessing faded, the Beastmen gradually started to limit their sphere of operations and used the cities they had taken down as their base.

Truthfully, even without Elisa's Fire God's Blessing, the war would have still broken out early.

On another aspect, while Elisa's name had been cursed at by the higher echelons of the Beastmen, Eron and his Blood Axe Tribe—due to the accumulation of rage and resentment against them—started to be isolated within the Alliance army while their reputation plummeted.

Although the Beastmen Alliance army being split into four had strategic considerations, it also showed that Eron, who had meager prestige, was unable to hold onto his leadership position.

At this moment, the other three Chieftains also had tribes that supported them. The next Beastman Sovereign would be determined by the results of this battle.

Everyone knew they could not delay this war to spring of next year; the human kingdoms would not watch idly as Antuen fell and Sleuweir was destroyed. The moment the snow halted and the army was able to move, it would spell the outbreak of war.

Furthermore, given that the war would be conducted in the midst of winter, it would determine the survival of the various races within the lands. The war was bound to be exceptionally cruel. Even the non-combat forces would find their numbers dwindle significantly.

At present, I was busy dealing with military affairs as well.

“Has news from Hoyle arrived? What is the progress with the mines?”

Every single Gray Dwarf was a natural miner. They possessed the Race Talents: Rock Treading and Ore Perception. Of which, the sensitivity that the Blacksmith Master Gray Dwarf Hoyle held toward ores was not something his peers could compete with.

Regardless of whether it was for trade or military purposes, the East Mist required endless amounts of ore. At present, given how many newly created divisions were still using wooden training weapons, the military was in dire need of weapons to grow stronger. And the manufacturing of weapons had to begin from the mines.

This was the lifeline of the East Mist. Even when war had already broken out, I still regarded it as our priority.

While I returned to Diffindor in advance due to the outbreak of war, I left Hoyle and the other Gray Dwarves at the Barbarians’ territory to hunt for mines. If even they were unable to find any ore, it would be impossible for the human miners to find any.

“Good news. The mountainous range is indeed a mine deposit. We have already found two superior metal mines, one magic metal mine, and two jewel mines. However, it will take a period of time before we can develop it. Lord Hoyle’s applied for the assistance of machines and spellcasters and he had specifically listed the Beyar Brothers to assist him in his work.”

“Exploding the mines? Seems like it is the only viable solution to achieve results in the short run. Fine, send the Beyar Brothers to help him. However, remember to warn him to take note of their safety. Do not come into conflict with the Barbarians. They are inflexible people; offending them once means offending them for life.”

“Yes, Your Highness. We will convey your words to him. Then, the next matter is regarding the names of the newly created divisions and their flags…”

The various assistants came to and fro my desk, the military documents that had accumulated in my period of absence crushed the desk. Innumerable problems came rushing at me all at once.

While I did not intend to interfere with the governance of the country, just the military affairs themselves were enough to give me a splitting headache.

At such a moment, I couldn’t help but miss Elisa. After all, while others could only serve as assistant, Elisa, who I had brought up personally, had working abilities that were in no way inferior to mine, and I could dump all of my troubles on her so as to slack off.

Alright, Elisa was still in the Chaos Abyss and thinking about all these was meaningless. I should devote my attention to the problems before me first.

“The situation in Antuen isn’t going well. It is possible for the

city to fall at any moment now…”

No matter what, we were both offspring from the same origin. Even though we were filled with discontentment and resentment against that country, upon seeing it on the verge of destruction, these young assistants felt uneasy.

I nodded my head, indicating to the other party that I had received his words. After which, I fell into deep contemplation.

No doubt, we had to save them. Even though I was extremely unsatisfied with their royalty, I couldn’t watch as the Mist citizens in those countries were slaughtered. Furthermore, the moment Sleuweir fell completely, East Mist would be embroiled in the war and the current East Mist was not well-equipped for war yet.

While we had to save them, the important aspect to consider was how we should go about doing it. We had to build a reputation for ourselves to gain the initiative in our foreign diplomacy in the Northern Lands while not going too far to rattle the foundations of the already weak East Mist.

After a long time, I finally made my decision.

“Send a letter to Antuen and say that the neutral East Mist requires a sufficient reason to interfere in the war, so they have to request for help publicly. Right, have them send a request to the various Churches as well. Yes, a request for us to send our troops to help them ward off the invaders. Only this way will Lord Wumianzhe recognize the necessity and justice of the war, and we

will be able to send our troops to aid them.

“Didn’t you say that I was an imitation not too long ago, claiming that the East Mist was deceiving the world, even sending a report to the various kingdoms and Churches. Now, I will see how you will settle with the aftermath yourselves. Yeah, spread the former part of the message publicly, let the other countries understand the new system East Mist operates by. As for the latter, dump it on the ‘Emperor’ Feimer Carson.”

If you want me to save you, lower your heads and reflect on your actions! Swallow everything that you had spouted previously!

I was not worried that Feimer wouldn’t lower his head. After all, the situation in Antuen wasn’t going well and when there was a tangible threat to their lives, so many people would become much more obedient.

“Hmph, it is truly such an irony. Right after claiming that I am an imitation, they immediately turn around to request assistance from the imitation. Furthermore, the one who will come to their aid will most likely be the ‘demonic army’ they spoke of.”

After pondering the matter for a while, under the current circumstances, the most suitable reinforcements to send them was still my Undead army, who didn’t fear the cold. In the previous report, that fellow termed my army as the “demonic army,” not hiding his contempt and frustration at all.

“How can I miss out on such an ideal opportunity to conduct a

Winter Hunt? It is also an ideal opportunity to train our troops. Have every Knight bring along two squires with them! Have those little fellows prepare themselves. We will head out as soon as the snow stops!”

Chapter 148: Hunting And Being Hunted

Anwen Village was famous for its delicacy Smoked Silver Fish. There were countless numbers of said village in the entirety of Sleuweir. At this current moment, snow was gradually falling and the peaceful village was no longer as peaceful as it was.

The fences used to keep out the wild beasts could not hinder the true beasts. Under the concealment of night, the gray Wolf Knights entered their lands and a feast of bloodshed began in the little village.

The guards and watchmen of the village were slaughtered immediately. Under the sudden raid of the trained Wolf Knights, the guards of the village, who only had the experience of challenging Ogres at most, didn't even have the opportunity to sound the alarm.

At 2 AM, thirty Wolf Knights entered the village. At 2:15, the militia captain, village head, and other leaders were dragged out from their beds and their headless corpses were used to feed the wolves. At the same time, their heads were used to drain the survivor's will of retaliating against them.

By 2:40, all 500 people of the village were dragged to the little square near the entrance of the village. After the women and children had been dragged to one corner, the slaughter began. Perhaps not even a single young man of the village was spared.

There were people who tried to fight back, but against true

warriors, the retaliation of the civilians was completely meaningless. Furthermore, the Wolf Knights were already elites of the combative Beastmen.

At 3, the efficient executions had ended and the Wolf Knights had left. Before leaving, they casually set the entire village afire, the paws of the wolves leaving bloodied pawprints in the snow. The Wolf Knights splashed with blood were silent, but the burning remains of the village and the heart-rending cries would be in their nightmares for years to come.

They may have been hesitant at the very start, but it was already the fourth village they had destroyed in this week. They took less than an hour from their entry to their departure to purge the entire village. Their conscience was already numb to the slaughter.

This is war. It is neither sacred nor justified. The only thing that needed to be considered was how to win.

The mission entrusted to these packs of Wolf Knights was to roam about the Human Kingdoms and cause panic and chaos in order to divert the strength and attention of the other factions. Even though their means were vile, it was effective.

The Beastmen were not immoral beasts. Every single expert in their midst felt contempt for their actions of slaughtering civilians. People respected the fearless Knights who dared to charge towards the massive Dragons, but they would not respect a butcher who derived pleasure from slaughtering civilians.

“Father, how did you fare in the war with the humans? How many human generals did you kill?”

“None, I only slaughtered a few thousand civilians.”

Upon thinking about the question his children would ask him upon his return, even though the captain of the Wolf Knight section, Akerli, was famous for his bravery in his tribe, he didn’t know how he should reply to this question.

At this moment, he still smelled the stench of blood all over the place with his sensitive nose. His child’s questioning of his doings had become his greatest nightmare and his soul felt worn out.

For the Beastmen, challenging a powerful adversary and dying in battle in the midst of it was an unparalleled honor. On the other hand, slaughtering the weak meant that the person did not possess mental fortitude. Such a Warrior would be viewed with contempt by his tribe and be rejected at the doors of the War God upon death.

“This is an order from our superior. This is for our race’s dream of returning to our homeland, this is for our justice!”

Justice, a name used to conceal uncountable vile actions! Under the grand flags often lay the bloodied hands of an executioner.

He knew that he was just deceiving himself. However, it was only with this excuse could he deceive his conscience and continue to

slaughter.

"The team is getting more and more silent. Looks like I'll have to look for a way to boost their morale."

Only the most depraved villain would brag about their "results" in slaughtering civilians. From the stiff expression on these Knights, it was clear that they had not reached such a point yet.

Even so, they did it without complaint. After all, this was war, the evil war, the wonderful war, a war that could conceal all evil with a cloak of divinity.

"AWOO AWOO AWOO!"

The howling of the wolves echoed in the distance. That was a report from the Eagle Tribe Beastmen, who were serving as scouts. Three consecutive howls meant that there were enemies in their path, but they weren't strong and the team could simply charge on through.

Soon, they crossed a mountainous jungle and the "enemy" appeared before them. It was a golden-haired young man whose hair was covered with snow. He looked young, but the two-handed swords in both of his hands were extremely striking.

"Sigh, yet another young man who had pursued us by himself. Courageous, but naive. He is around the age of my Equar..."

Looking at the young Swordsman who was around the age of his own child, Akerli paused for a moment. Then, he drew his thumb across his throat. It was a command to slaughter all enemies on sight.

“There were more young men of Equar’s age in the previous village. For Equar’s beautiful future, you should go and accompany them…. That’s weird, the sword looks familiar. I seem to have seen it somewhere before.”

There was no need for superfluous thoughts. Since there was only a single adversary, the Wolf Knights used the Wave Charge Formation which they were the most adept in.

The several Wolf Knights whose mounts were the strongest were in charge of engaging the enemy head-on whereas the strongest, Akerli, would be leading a team behind to assault the enemy whenever an opportunity arose. Behind them, spears and nets were prepared to be thrown.

Even the powerful Griffin Knights could be killed in an instant facing the Wolf Knights. In the eyes of the Knights, the fearless young man was already a dead person.

Facing the deadly assault of the Wolf Knights, the young man simply chuckled and a hint of brutality could be sensed from his smile. That familiar smile reminded Akerli of where he saw the sword.

“Oh! Isn’t he the human sculpture from the village? Sword Ki?

He is a Sword Saint! …That sword? Could that be Roland Sacred Sword? Holy Knight Roland?”

These were the final thoughts that flashed through Akerli’s mind. The snow-white sword flashed across the snow and the flying Sword Ki started to reap the lives of others. A cold sensation on the necks and the Wolf Knight Captain felt his vision starting to slant as his head fell onto the snowy ground.

The final sight burned into his eyes was the silver chainmail Sword Saint moving the swords in both of his hands, a single Wolf Knight dying with every single movement of his sword.

At this moment, the Wolf Knights were devoid of the strength to resist the enemy. They were like frail chicks who had met a butcher, and what they did half an hour ago in front of that sculpture was occurring to them at this instant.

“The murderer is often murdered. Such an irony…”

At the first face-off, the Knights of the Kara Tribe lost their head. As a mindless murderer, he no longer had to worry about how he should explain his actions to his own child.

“Repay blood with blood. Die!”

Someone shouted these words and very soon, the snowy lands returned to its previous tranquility. It was just that there were additional headless corpses on the lands.

Yes, the blood debt must be paid with blood. However, who was the first debtor? Do we start counting from this war, the war twenty years ago, or the war three hundred years? This might be something no one could ever rationalize out.

After killing the final Wolf Knights, I felt fatigued. So I stabbed the swords into the snow and rested on the battlefield.

While waiting, Irene finished cleaning up the escapees. I recalled some things that I could do.

From the embrace of the Wolf Knight, I retrieved a goatskin pouch. As I expected, besides supplies, there was a map of the nearby villages. Those marked with a red cross meant that the Wolf Knights had already been there, and there was no need for me to head there anymore.

All that was in my field of vision were corpses and blood, but somehow, I felt thirsty. So I opened the water pouch the other force left behind and drank from it. It was an absurdly sweet, inferior horse milk wine. Somehow, I spat all of it out.

“Pui, bitter and rough, just like back then.”

While I complained, Harloys had already completed interpreted the Wolf Knights’ patrol routes. Thus, my next location had been confirmed.

“Blue Lake Village? Hope that we can make it in time. I do not

wish to see ruins again.”

Thinking of the horrendous state Anwen Village was in, I quickened my pace. After cleaning up the battlefield and double checking that there was no intelligence I had left behind, I hopped onto Erebella’s saddle and headed to my next target.

This was already the twelfth Wolf Knight section I had cleared. Compared to my other companions, I, who was operating as an individual, could be considered to have accomplished the least. Even so, the effects of our results on the entire battlefield was meager.

Everyone knew about the theory of huddling together to ward off the cold. Once Sleuweir was destroyed, the other Northern countries would be next. So the moment the snow started to lighten, the reinforcements of the other countries quickly headed over to aid it.

We were the fastest to arrive, but also the least in quantity. A hundred Undead Knights with three hundred rookie Knights. On the main battlefield where divisions counted by ten thousands, we were probably unable to contribute much.

Considering the East Mist’s current situation and the beast packs that would assault the country in winter, it was already very surprising that the East Mist was able to send reinforcements. Given how the one leading the army was me, all sorts of excessive gossip and criticisms on the East Mist was silenced. Yeah, at the very least, they were silenced when facing me.

Of course, while we had limited quantity, the same could not be said about quality. My Undead Knights were reliable fighters and those rookie Knights were the elites picked out from the newly established divisions; all they lacked was experience.

As for me, I wasn't really interested in the main battlefield at Antuen. The reinforcements of the other countries headed straight for the main fighting force of the Beastmen while on the other hand, I focused on those roaming troops.

The guerilla tactics of the Beastmen were effective. In order to clear the roaming troops on their lands, the fief lords of Sleuweir Kingdom ignored the orders to provide reinforcements to the capital. As for the other, stronger fief lords, they had been engaged by the other three Beastmen army.

Light cavalry (consisting of more than Wolf Knights) hunting in enemy territory wasn't a rare battle tactic, but it was extremely useful when complemented with the elite troops of the Beastmen. It was an extremely effective strategy, as well as a brutal one.

For an ordinary village, it didn't matter whether the one attacking them was a Sword Saint or a group of Bronze-ranked Wolf Knights. In any case, the village would be purged.

Killing these roaming cavalries was a difficult and ineffective task. Given their mobility, it was difficult to catch up with them. Furthermore, even if one successfully caught up to them, given their top-class individual abilities, it was hard to tell who would

win.

Before the main army of the Beastmen was destroyed, the other countries did not have the power to care about the small villages of another country. Yet I decided to interfere in the affair.

“Who cares about those nobility. Since we’re already here and we have the capability to help them, let’s just do it.”

I did not have many people under me, but the Undead Knights were capable fighters. They could easily face a section of Wolf Knights by themselves. At the same time, the rookie Knights could also accumulate some fighting experience.

Thus, I scattered the group and had an Undead Knight lead three rookie Knights in a team to hunt down the roaming light cavalries.

Logically but unexpectedly, this kind of operation won the hearts of the people. After all, the fief lords and the royalty who should have been protecting them neglected their jobs, and my Undead Knights were the best insignia of our identity.

“Our ancestor Roland had led his army to save the Mist citizens. That fake emperor Feimer had ignored Emperor Roland’s warnings, as well as the plight of the citizens, caring only for his own authority and safety and holed himself up in the capital.”

From a certain perspective, the official declaration the Sleuweir royalty made beforehand displayed clearly the meaning of

foolishness and suicide. I, who “magnanimously” forgave them, continued with my hunt. My prestige was growing to greater heights every single day. The Undead Knights began to be welcomed passionately by the villagers and they felt even more motivated in their jobs.

Then, something shocking happened.

Feimer, upon seeing such a situation, despite Antuen still being in a desperate situation, warned the civilians through the church that I was making use of this calamity to win the hearts of the people and reaffirmed that I wasn’t their ancestor Roland, just an imitation who was trying to deceive them.

Clearly, in the eyes of this “emperor,” the Beastmen army was an external threat which was going to be expelled sooner or later. On the other hand, my Knights and I were the true “threat.”

Hearing that, I almost turned around and left. However, thinking about the matter again, I decided to go all out.

“Fine, since you said that I’m here to win their hearts, I will win their hearts then. Knights, don our insignia and hoist our flags. We are here reinforce them. Why should we conceal our identities?”

The citizens are the citizens while the royalty are the royalty. Should I just watch these villagers die just because of that fool in Antuen?

When word spread, the prestige of the Sleuweir royalty fell even further. Every day, countless refugees chose to escape to East Mist, a location they would never have chosen to move to in the past.

According of my sources, after Feimer heard that news, he smashed a century-old family heirloom, a Rainbow Jade Wine Cup. After which, he felt intense regret over his moment of folly. After hearing this news, in order to console him, I sent him a message through the church.

“Rainbow Jade Wine Cup? Isn’t that the unintentional product I made from creating glass back then? Don’t worry, even though it looks beautiful, it is just normal stained glass so it isn’t worth much. Actually, it isn’t a wine cup either. It is actually a failed spittoon which I accidentally burnt too much. I even placed crickets in it before.... There should be a signature to indicate that it was made by Roland on the back of it. If it isn’t too fragmented, you can try looking for it.”

Alright, based on the rumors, he actually put the cup back together. However, this time, what was shattered wasn’t just a wine cup.

Chapter 149: Reunion

“I wish to become a Knight. Even if I am just a wild Knight without a family coat of arms, even if I serve as a squire for others for life, even if I am unable to become an official Knight for my entire life, it will be fine as long as I can become a Knight.”

For Cohen Asta, becoming a true Knight had always been his wish.

However, it was unfortunate that he wasn’t a child of nobility, so it was impossible for him to be sent to an elite Knight to learn under him as a squire. He also wasn’t a talented warrior who would send teachers into a frenzy fighting over him. He was just an ordinary farmer’s child. Needless to say studying at a Knight Academy, he wasn’t even able to read. Thus, he was never able to take the first step in accomplishing his dream.

Thus, he decided to lower his goal and set out to become an ordinary warrior as his goal. However, the result was even more disappointing.

“Regardless of what close-combat class it is, you won’t be able to meet the standards if you don’t even have basic strength. It would be best for you to return.”

Unable to even carry the sandbags used for training; unable to carry the wooden spear; exhausted after swinging the wooden sword a few times; it was no wonder that no one was willing to accept him.

His physique still remained his fatal flaw among his fellow peers. Even though his conspicuous golden hair and exquisite features made him a popular figure among the young, his weak limbs still made him unsure of himself.

Little Cohen felt despair at the fact that even ordinary militias were unwilling to accept him. Even so, he didn't plan to give up.

"Since I lack talent, I will make up for it with hard work."

Thus, Cohen's neighbors would always see him awake early in the morning, running by the river and carrying sandbags.

Every day, after he finished his daily duties, he headed to the various stores to help others move their goods. Part of the reason was to earn money, but more than that, he hoped to train himself through such a method to build up his strength.

Even though training was extremely tiring, it was effective. At the very least, his pale limbs became slightly more muscular and tanned. Going by the words of the neighbor Big Sister Lisa, he finally looked masculine.

However, his changes were more like evolving from a hamster into a squirrel, fighting prowess increasing from five to six and not panting the moment he started running. However, what he was unable to carry before, he was still unable to carry. For the time being, it was still impossible for him to swing metal swords.

Thus, even though he felt self-satisfaction at his improvement, he was still eliminated from the first round of the selection process for the divisions. After all, the East Mist wasn't wealthy and it couldn't afford to sustain a large army while the civilians were extremely passionate about joining the army. As such, the registration numbers far surpassed the required personnel in the divisions and this caused the standards to be heightened. Cohen had been too far from the starting line from the very start, and it was impossible for him to become a warrior at all.

Even so, he was unwilling to give up. As long as he worked hard to train himself up, the accumulation of his hard work would soon result in a qualitative change for him.

However, it was a pity that what awaited him was a series of failure.

"It is impossible for you to become a Knight, give up. No, I'm not talking about your birthright. The Mist Country has always operated by meritocracy and there are quite a few farmers who became Knights and fief lords. I am speaking about your abilities. if you're unable to even wield a two-handed sword, how can you get on the battlefield? Since you aren't even able to get on the battlefield, how can you be titled a Knight?"

A Lord Knight who was touched by his efforts intended to accept him as his page, but after conducting some tests, he gave up on the idea.

“Aiyo, isn’t this our future Lord Knight? Hehe, nice to meet you, Lord. Lord, have you just returned from your patrol? Did you achieve anything? Did you defeat a Demon or a Beastman? Or did you just triumph over an evil dragon? Ah, how incredible, Cohen. He is our future Dragon Slaying Hero. Hahaha!”

While his usual physical training had received the approval of a few, there were also a few youngsters who found him an eyesore and took this opportunity to mock him.

Even so, he persisted. At this point, he probably could no longer remember why he chose to embark on this thorny path from the very start.

Was it because he was saved by a group of Knights when he was attacked by wild beasts when he was younger? Or was he moved by the stories of his ancestors which he had heard since his childhood? Was it when he saw the victorious homecoming march of the Knights? Or was it when he swore to use his both hands to protect his family and friends?

There was no path of return, and he did not intend to back out either. Thus, he could only continue persisting....

“Trust yourself, you can do it. I was also extremely thin and weak when I was younger, but look at how far I came. Right, Prince Roland seems to be intending to create a division. Do you want to give it a try?”

There were a few who bore expectations from him. Every time

Big Brother Cloone returned and saw how hard Cohen worked, he would try to encourage him.

Right, to Cohen and the others, Cloone, who came from the same village as them, was an impressive figure. He was the pride and hope of Darr Village. Even though he was young, he was already serving as a part of the Royal Knights. Even though he wasn't an official Knight yet, in the eyes of the villagers, it was just a matter of time.

It was only that he had recently adopted a cute little girl called Ailee. Despite his tough life, he had somehow just become an unwedded father. This made many young girls cry.

Under Big Brother Cloone's encouragement, Cohen was even more motivated and worked even harder. However, what came his way was just failure after failure.

Until one day when he met a black cat. A black cat that, bizarrely, was capable of speaking the human language. There, he met the turning point of his life.

"Meow, I've found a treasure. To think that he would be an Elemental Son! Sign a contract with me and become a magical girl... magical boy!"

Cohen was first taken aback. Initially, he thought that it was just a joke from one of the spellcasters. In the end, under the verification of Big Brother Cloone, he realized that this black cat was actually an incredible figure. She was the beloved pet of Prince

Roland, a cat who was capable of casting magic.

She actually said that he had outstanding talents in magic and she wanted to groom him to become a Mage. Without a doubt, that was an occupation that held even greater potential than a Knight and logically speaking, he should have leapt at the opportunity.

But…

“Lord, I thank you for your appreciation. However, my goal is to become a Knight. Perhaps, the route of a spellcaster just isn’t one for me.”

Alright, a bizarre expression immediately appeared on the black cat’s face. That look of incomprehension and shock made Cohen worry if he had accidentally offended her.

After a brief moment of silence, that black cat continued speaking.

“Alright, if you want to be a Knight, so be it. Let me introduce you to someone. He will hoodwink… guide you. From the perspective of a Knight, he should be an incredible figure. Yeah, even though he is a complete idiot when it comes to magic. However, I think that he should be a suitable teacher for you.”

“Roland, I found your brother.”

When I heard those words, I was taken aback. Isn’t my brother, Karwenz, still in the Chaos Abyss? How could this darned cat meet

him?

“You possess incredible swordsmanship talent, and you are obviously a godsent Warrior. Yet, you chose to become a Mage. On the other hand, he, as the Elemental Son, a person born with incredible talents in magic, chose to become an iron can (Knight). Given how awkward you two are, what else can you two be other than brothers?”

Alright, that darned cat sure didn’t mince her words. Naturally, I took good care of her for that.

However, I had confidence in her choice of people. Thus, my interest toward this little friend known as Cohen was piqued and I arranged for a meeting with him.

“Pri... Prince Roland! Lord Harloys said that you can make me a Knight...”

That fellow was so agitated that he kept trembling before me. Stuttering, he accidentally bit his tongue. Through the System Interface, my interest in him deepened.

【Cohen Asta Class: NoneStrength: 5Agility: 7Stamina: 7Intelligence: 14Will: 11Charm: 10Race Talent: Elemental SonSystem Evaluation: For a person with such terrible strength and talent for magic to refuse to become a Mage and insisting on becoming a Knight instead, he is truly your brother.】

【Race Talent Elemental Son: Do you find the lengthy

incantations hard to remember? The complicated magic formulas hard to comprehend? This isn't a problem for the Elemental Son. They are born with the ability to manipulate elements and their commands can be used to replace the ineffective magic incantations. They are the favored ones of the world, the illegitimate son of Magic and Elements, destined to be a great Mage.】

Soon, after some interaction, I roughly understood what was going on.

It was no wonder that Harloys said that he was my brother. He wanted to become a melee fighter when he only possessed 5 Strength. His talent as a Mage had hindered his path as a Knight; it was truly rare to see a person with such an awkward personality.

After a short moment of interacting with him, I started to grow fond of this slightly shy boy. After all, these days, more and more youngsters were more obsessed with "making a fortune," and the number of "idiots" who persisted for their dreams was lessening. Those who persisted despite seeing no rewards on sight was even rarer.

In a certain sense, I am the same awkward "obstinate buffalo" as he is. Thus, I accepted him in as my third page.

"Cough, since that's the case, I'll teach some of the necessary lessons for a Knight. First, you have to learn how to connect with the world and control your magic power.... This isn't a necessary lesson for a Knight, but a lesson for a Mage? Young man, there's no need to be so anxious. You have to remain humble and learn

patiently. Have you never heard of Mage Knight? This is a necessary lesson for an outstanding Knight. Ordinary Knights wouldn't even get an opportunity to learn such advanced lessons. Right, I have a few close combat classes that are suitable for you. Do you want to give them a try?"

Putting aside how I managed to guide (hoodwink) this young man afterwards, I am quite contented with the decision I made. After all, given how unqualified the other two pages of mine were, this young man was truly of great help.

Even though the help he had provided me was on another aspect...

"Big Brother Roland, I have accidentally overcooked the meat. It is a little charred, but my intuition tells me that it will be delicious. Why don't you give it a try? Perhaps this might turn out to be a new taste that is to your liking."

No, it was impossible for it to be delicious. After all, one side was charred while the other side was raw. It was a problem of whether it was safe for me to eat it. Besides, your intuition had never been accurate.

"That's weird. I had strictly followed the proportions using the Alchemic recipe. Ten grams of salt, one gram of sugar, so how could it taste that bad.... Ah, I missed that decimal point and added ten times more salt (Ah, I mixed up sugar and salt as well)... Why don't you just make do with it?"

Should I say, as expected of an Alchemist? To think that you would actually bring the entire Alchemy set for outdoor camping. The lunch you made bore the scent of chemistry with it. But how was it that the product you made would be so fearsome? What is with that oily green substance? Are you sure that I can make do with it? How about you try it for yourself before passing it to me? I finally understand how you managed to remain a third-rate Alchemist even after so many years. Can't you just happen to get it right for once?

Typically speaking, a Knight's page was the personal assistant of the Knight. Going by the traditions, a page was responsible for the logistics their master required. If the master was unhappy with their work, regardless of how powerful that page was, he was unlikely to ever become an official Knight.

Before becoming a Knight, they were in a teacher-apprentice relationship, as well as a master-servant relationship. Some of them even regarded it as a father-son relationship. However, it was clear that the two pages I had chosen beforehand weren't really reliable. Most of the time, it was me, the master, who was taking care of them. Their passion toward their training was also unseemly.

As a princess, Reyne had totally no concept of outdoor survival. On the other hand, Kathleen was born from a prestigious family of Knights. Even though her family had fallen from grace, it was understandable why she was lacking practical skills.

If not for Cohen producing some edible meat stew, I, who was already tired from the long journey, would have to make some

food myself. It was truly a wonder who the servant was now.

Based on the predetermined grouping, I should have been a single group with my three pages. However, Reyne said that she had already reached Gold-rank, and with the Roland Sacred Sword in her hands, she could stand on her own and deal with the enemies by herself, no longer requiring my guidance.

Fine, I'll accept that. After all, it was impossible for one to grow without experiencing practical fights. I'll let you try it for yourself then. In fact, afraid that you might have insufficient manpower, I sent my other two pages to follow you, so show me some results.

However, one's power rank did not represent one's actual fighting power. In terms of actual power, a tenacious Bronze-rank was able to frighten this Gold-rank, who had yet to see blood. On the battlefield, a moment's hesitation could easily mean death.

In the end, it went exactly as I expected. If not for the Blood Tribe Assassin I sent interjecting at a timely moment, this East Mist princess might have to consider converting into an Undead.

"Lass, it's still too early for you to leave my apprenticeship."

Thus, we converged together and operated as a team afterwards. With the assistance of my pages, I felt even more fatigued. Not only did I have to hunt those roaming cavalries, I had to spend time to take care of these rookies. I felt like I was playing the role of a teacher and a parent simultaneously.

Fortunately, the farmer-born lad, Cohen, wielded a certain level of survival skills. He could build temporary shelters and settle some of the daily necessities. In a way, he was truly a great help.

Helpless, I even called out Reyne's secret bodyguard, Susanna, and had her find a way to teach these rookies some basic outdoor survival skills. At the very least, they should know how to make the basic barbecued meat, meat stew, and such.

After all, it was impossible for one to bring sufficient dry rations for a prolonged wilderness campaign. Meat stew and barbecued meat were two of the most basic dishes, but just depending on these two would cause one to suffer from imbalanced nutrition and this would eventually lower fighting prowess.

As such, mature adventuring teams were often skilled in outdoor survival techniques. The renowned Master of Survival Bear Grylls had once said, "The wilderness is my life. The wilderness is the most natural outdoor food trove. Anything can be eaten once beheaded!"

After completing my hunt, I returned to my camp and caught the whiff of a familiar meat stew. Instantly, my appetite was whetted.

"Hm? How fragrant. There seems to be wild herbs and vegetables as well? Susanna sure did well. You all learned fast, to think that your cooking skills would reach such a level so quickly..."

I was unable to speak further. What entered my vision upon reaching the campsite was a young lady dressed in a maid costume

busying about. That was a familiar figure that should have never appeared here.

【Ding! A wandering wild maid has appeared. Thank the maid from saving you from the mysterious mixture hell. Otherwise, what would have been waiting for you would be a mixture created from Reyne and Kathleen's hard work—Green Slime Cooking! Er, as someone who was aware of the matter beforehand, I...】

Ignoring the nonsense the System came up with, that familiar figure made me feel like I was in a dream.

That familiar bow, that familiar gleam of her spectacles... and that unfamiliar passion and temperature. While I was still in a daze, that wild maid had already given me a hug.

"Welcome back, master. Do you want to bathe first, eat your breakfast first... or eat me?"

Alright, I don't know whether I can really eat you, but that dagger-like cold glare of yours felt like it was ready to eat me.

"Elisa!?"

Chapter 150: Secret

“Big Brother Roland really treats me well. He often tells me bedtime stories and we would spend the night with just each other.”

“As expected of an undeveloped little girl. To think that you’re still interested in listening to bedtime stories. Let Big Sister teach you a life lesson. All of those bedtime stories are lies. Princesses are all flower vases who are unable to withstand pressure and princes were all perverts with fetishes. In fact, there are many such examples around us.”

“Y-you, you are slandering me!”

“However, it is no wonder you are so naïve. After all, children have the right to remain ignorant. When I was younger, I often listened to master’s stories as well. I have heard them for around a century now. Oh, should I call him honey now? It does feel a little embarrassing to call him that.”

There wasn’t the slightest bit of embarrassment on Elisa, who was chuckling behind her hands. With just a few words, she managed to infuriate Reyne. However, it seemed like I was somehow attacked by her venomous mouth as well.

“Looks like Elisa must have met Karwenz. It is true that he is a pervert. It isn’t bizarre for her to come to such a conclusion. Yeah, she definitely isn’t referring to me.”

Shaking my head, I ignored the discussion over there and turned my attention to the feast before me. For numerous reasons, this seemed to be the first time I was eating food made by Elisa personally.

After several experiments the last few days, I had no choice but to take my ladle myself. However, I had long since gotten sick of the food I cooked myself. Cohen's cooking skills were also very average. I had been craving for good food recently, and as long as Elisa's food was not bad, I would be extremely satisfied.

She had made common meat stew. The meat was cut thinly and there were bits of wild grasses floating on top. An indescribable herb had added to the allure of the stew, and the green onion-like aroma whetted my appetite.

"Delicious!"

Even though I had guessed that the cooking skills of the veteran maid Elisa wouldn't be bad, I was still pleasantly surprised by the taste of the meat stew.

The stew was thick but smooth, and its aroma tackled my nose as I gulped down the soup. In fact, even after swallowing it, the aftertaste lingered in my mouth, enticing me to take another mouthful. There was also barbecued meat by the side glazed with wild honey and herbs. My stomach immediately grumbled in protest.

"What kind of herb is this? It must be extremely expensive! Yeah,

delicious!”

I immediately started to dig in. On the other end, Kathleen and Cohen exchanged gazes before digging in as well.

From how ravenously they were devouring the food, it seemed like I wasn’t the only one tortured by the lack of good food.

The most delicious feast I remembered was the one I had before my Ascension. However, due to time restraints, Elisa didn’t get to make it herself. It was truly to pleasant surprise to taste her handicraft now.

“Hey, if you don’t dig in, we’ll be finishing all of it.”

“I have no appetite,” Reyne said obstinately. However, the moment she said such words, her stomach immediately rumbled. Her face immediately flushed.

“Hehe, the most important thing in life is to be happy, and to do so, a satisfied stomach is a priority. Roland, take your time and don’t choke. Are you still hungry? If there isn’t enough food, I can make a bowl of noodles for you.”

Thus, I nodded my head in sheer delight. After regaining a physical body, my greatest hobby was eating. As a result, I never turned down anyone with superior cooking skills. How could I possibly turn my head away from such an event?

But that very afternoon, I realized there were some things which one should never put into their mouths, especially when it came from a Demon who had accumulated a bucketful of resentment behind her cheerful smile.

"AHHH! My stomach hurts. My head is also spinning. This is the fourth time my stomach has been acting up today! Elisa, what exactly did you put into the food!"

"The Cursed Herb, Black Mandala Grass. Just as you said, it is an extremely expensive herb, almost equivalent to consuming gold. Right, there's also the Little Fanged Dragon meat that I had just procured. This is an extremely nutritious tonic. Aiyo, Lord, could it be that your body isn't well-nourished? It isn't good to leave your body in such a state. I shall cook another bowl of noodles to stock up on your nutrients."

To think that she would use the Black Mandala Grass which was used to create poison as green onion... The Little Fanged Dragon, otherwise known as Little Green Dragon, was also poisonous. Should I be thankful that I only suffered a stomach ache from the mixture of the two poisonous substance?

"Something's not right! Why are they alright!"

"Actually, I cleared away the poison in the meat and herbs before using them as ingredients. It must be that there is some kind of stimulant in the noodles which happened to trigger the poison in them. I'm truly sorry, master."

That impassive explanation and emotionless apology sounded like monotonous reciting. Only now did I realize that perhaps, all along, Elisa had been infuriated....

"I'm sorry, it's my fault.

Alright, a true hero knows when to back down. I understood the vindictive nature of this little lass. This likely wouldn't be the end of her vengeance. For the sake of delicious lunch in the future, I apologized immediately even though I didn't know my mistake. Was it because I had been too busy to communicate with her recently?

"It's all your fault. But since you have apologized, I will accept it then."

Elisa finally flashed a sincere smile. Afterward, she threw me a bottle, which after consuming, I felt the chaos in my stomach calming down slightly.

There was also another reason why I liked Elisa's personality. Even though she often threw tantrums, as long as I apologized, she would immediately forgive me. If she seemed to be angry in any way, it would definitely be no mistake to take the initiative to apologize in advance.

"...I am finally feeling slightly better. I am a living man; I will really die from that! Please don't come up with those kinds of jokes in the future. Right, why are you here? What's with this physical body of yours?"

It was truly an unexpected surprise for Elisa to be here. Soon, I managed to grasp what was going on.

It turned out that Elisa's physical body was an avatar created using the tributes of the Beastmen. She was barely able to come over through eating a portion of the tributes, so this avatar did not wield much strength.

While she had no problems whatsoever with operating day-to-day chores, it was impossible for her to join the battles.

"Enough. It's already great that you can come."

It's not that my M nature is working up. Rather, I had felt the agony of not having a handy assistant by my side these few days. Now that Elisa was here, I could finally dump all of my work on her.

The moment I said those words, the cold-faced Elisa smiled in satisfaction. Then, she came closer and stared at me face-to-face.

"...I know what you're thinking of. Nevertheless, your words still make me happy. This is your reward."

In a certain sense, the Demonified Elisa had become braver in expressing her emotions and pursuing her desires.

That beautiful face slowly approached mine and the frosty expression that she usually wore disappeared. Below that ice mountain was passion as fiery as the flames of hell. A bright red blush appeared on Elisa's cheeks and her seductive red cheeks were exuding incredible allure and warmth. I had nowhere to back away to.

"You... What are you all doing!!"

It was a pity that I wasn't the only one here. Putting aside the other two who were trying their best to pretend to be statues, Reyne did not intend to sit on the sidelines and watch this scene unfold before her. She immediately charged between us to tear us apart.

"Pity? I actually found it a pity?"

While I was conflicted over my own emotions, a verbal argument had broken out between Elisa and Reyne once more.

"I finally understand why master hates rascals now. Shouldn't you pretend to be oblivious when you see your parents getting intimate with one another?"

"Parents... Who are you saying are my parents? Furthermore, I am not a rascal! I am fourteen years old! I am already of marriageable age!"

"Fourteen years old? How incredible! I thought you were only

ten. Annie seemed to have surpassed you when she was only ten."

Alright, even though her words were without context, based on her downward glance, it was clear what she was referring to.

"That... Elisa, won't you take damage from your words as well?"

Alright, seeing her twisted lips and twitching eyebrows, that venomous flat-chested young lady was currently sacrificing herself to deal damage to the other party. Her heart was probably bleeding at the moment.

Just like before, in just a few words, Elisa had managed to destroy Reyne. That ineloquent Reyne could only march off to a corner and sulk.

Even though Elisa was in the midst of angering Reyne, her words suddenly echoed through the ring.

"Master, I have already investigated the source of the bloodline of the new Mist Royal Family. I'm afraid that this matter is more complicated than we expected. Using your words, it is an incredibly huge scheme, to the extent that I would only be reassured if I came over to say it myself. I have already set up the barrier. Just listen to my words and do not overreact."

A formless barrier blocked all curious gazes. I was still squatting by the side and enjoying the glow of the sun whereas Elisa was busy packing the bowls and chopsticks. Unbeknownst to the others, we were currently conversing.

“First, she is indeed of the Mist Bloodline. However, she is not your descendant. Just like you have expected, you are still an old virgin, a powerful elder of the FFF cult, a Forbidden Spell-level Archmage, and the spiritual leader of the Torch Festival. The moment I think about the fact that I am the first love of a thousand-year-old virgin, I can’t help but feel agitated. After which, I can’t help but instinctively feel slightly disgusted and threatened. It is said that those who restrain themselves for too long become slightly perverted. After thirty years of holding themselves back, they can do anything. As for three hundred years…”

While having salt rubbed in my wound by that venomous tongue, a shocking secret was gradually revealed right before me. I couldn’t help but put aside the resentment of the demon.

This time, I was truly shocked. It was no wonder that Elisa sent her avatar down despite the costs. It wasn’t sufficiently safe for her to use any other means to inform me about the matter unless it was face to face.

After a long time, Elisa was done revealing everything. Even though the wind outside was piercingly cold, cold sweat was still flowing down my back.

“If I remained ignorant of the matter all along, I would have been done for. Looks like I really mustn’t underestimate my opponents.”

While I couldn’t help but shudder upon thinking of the possible consequences that could have occurred if Elisa had failed to find out the matter and inform me of it, I still chuckled. Schemes and traps were only fearsome when they were unnoticed. Since I had learnt of them, I could come up with plans of my own to counteract them.

“Thank you, Elisa. Your presence is truly assuring. Looks like I owe you another one. I really can’t imagine what I would do without you.”

“Hmph, seems like you are getting mushier and mushier. If you are truly sincere about your words, you should stop getting involved with other girls.”

Even though she said so, judging from that sweet smile on the corners of her lips, it seemed like my words weren’t completely useless.

While we smiling to one another, the pages behind me who were oblivious to our telepathic communication started to quietly discuss me.

“To suddenly smile lecherously when nothing has happened.... Cohen, could it be that there is still some poison lingering in the body of our teacher? He looks a little foolish and bewitched.”

“... I heard from the neighboring Big Brother Cloone that men who hold it in for too long will tend to act slightly strange. Seems like Lord Elisa’s appearance has delighted His Highness so greatly

that he was unable to uphold his etiquette.”

“Seems like you would really become a pervert after holding it in for too long. But from the looks of it, it seems like there is completely no hope for Princess Reyne.”

“That… Senior Kathleen, Princess Reyne is behind you and it seems like she is infuriated.”

“AHH, Your Highness, I’m sorry. Umm… Surely you won’t reduce the amount we have agreed upon. I still need that money to buy a new set of Alchemy tools. Um… Even though the opponent is powerful, there is still hope for you. At the very least, there are some aspects where you two are on the same level…. Pu, I really wasn’t thinking of that. Anyway, I will try my best to speak well of you before the prince!”

The apprentices seemed to have gotten into a dispute. On the other hand, I needed to reconsider my future moves.

“The Revival of the Mist? This is truly a massive and troublesome trap. Looks like I have to quickly end this war. Then, I think I should head to Antuen next.”

Chapter 151: Entering The City

"My Lord, I have some ideas. The Elemental sword seal was a spectacular discovery, but we have been too crude in utilizing it. Its current development is highly inefficient. We can start from the construction of its spell, making it more unrestrained, more seamless. After the construction of the basic sword seal, we can use the basic sword seal to reconstruct the elemental sword seal."

Every time Cohen suggested something to me, a bunch of jargon that I can't comprehend will start to crawl into my ears. Then I will start sighing, wondering who was the mentor and who was the apprentice.

"Prodigious wizard who works hard to become a knight, while learning alchemy and magic at the same time. She is Kathleen Solia from the Gentlemen's Alliance. My knight squires are a bunch of weirdos." In a sense, those three people were not considered brilliant. It also seemed like they were steering further from the path of becoming knights, especially the little Cohen who is standing in front of him. However, he has fully showcased his talents without me taking notice.

Incantations? The formula to construct a spell? I can do all these instinctively, without putting much thought in it. To a son of elements, magic was just a manifestation of will. Usage of general spells was only a process to that prove the formulation that has already been generalized, just like a mathematician who casually comes up with new formulae, the son of elements can casually create unlimited numbers of new magic.

Now, I could finally understand why Harloys wanted me to deceive this little Cohen. The humans' son of elements, the dwarves' son of lightning, and the elves' son of moon were considered God given children. The son of lightning is good at fighting and smithing. The son of moon is a prodigy in theurgy. Both them are astonishing prodigies in their own fields. In a way, they are actually very similar. It would be a shame if all these talents went to waste. My ideas on four elemental swordcasting were general and simple. An ordinary soldier could handle a certain level of the strain of using the power of elements by skipping the knowledge of basic theory. Naturally, they will be able understand all those magical theories when they become skilled elemental casters.

"The first step is always the hardest. There are a lot of people with the potential to become powerful, but most of the time, they lack talent. They cannot even make the very first step." To Cohen, this was a brand-new world.

It was true that my arms were weak, but I had the sword that did the heavy lifting in place of my arms.

It was true that I cannot run fast and jump far, but I have my mark of wind that becomes my wings.

It was true that my sword cannot penetrate the scale of dragons, thus I will have my mark of lightning summoning to serve as my sword edge. The dream of becoming a knight motivated and kept Cohen moving forward. On the other hand, Harloys became the contributor of an uncountable number of theories. There were new results and advancements every single day. Based on what I

observed, this kid, Cohen's level was increasing at a lightning speed. Yesterday, he was a level fifteen, four elemental Mage Knight. Today, he is a level seventeen Mage Knight. It is safe to say that in two more days, he will become a level twenty Mage Knight. His dedication had brought out the best in this brand-new class, the four elemental Mage Knight.

"Sword seal of black tortoise—The coiling of the glacial serpent" The magical power of ice will spread through the ground without being seen and it would surprise its opponent by appearing under their feet, freezing them to the ground. "The most important thing about the properties was that ice can freeze, lightning can paralyze, and flames can burn. If we only treat it as temporary enchantments to increase the effectiveness of our attacks, it will be a total waste. We can fully utilize their natural properties to come up with completely different magical sword skills."

"As you know, the magical power of ice spreads rather slowly. Even if we tried to enhance our swords to freeze our opponents, it would still take a longer time to achieve its goal. Due to its ability to stay hidden, we can totally take our time, battling against our opponents."

Still, there was a limit to Cohen's ability. Also, he had not come up with any new sword skills. But, by changing his method of battling, by utilizing the right elements, the total combat effectiveness of this brand-new class has been increased by three times. It was imperative that Cohen gains the ability to hear the whispers of the elements. It would actually allow him to discover a new way for this class to improve and develop other elemental sword skills.

[Congratulations Master, for acquiring new magical sword skill, The Sword Seal of Black Tortoise – The Coil of Glacial Serpent. This skill will be automatically included in the class system of the four elemental Mage Knight. System notification: Looking for the reward of inventing new skill? How dare you ask for a reward? What did you feel when your own apprentice taught you this new skill? Don't you feel ashamed? How long do you think you can deceive him from the rate of his improvement?]

Unsurprisingly, the system mocked me. In order to protect my master's dignity, I will put more effort into the research. There is a saying, humans perform better under pressure. Harloys was very impressed by me when I combined the power of frost and death to form a Deathly Frost sword seal. The sword seal possessed the magical powers of corrosion and freezing, and it was highly lethal against mortal. The only drawback of this sword seal was that it took a lot out of its user. In some inexplicable way, using this sword seal became my privilege.

Of course, the straightforward way of naming this sword seal without any sense of technicality was definitely not my work. I sulked for quite some time when the name, Sleeping Tortoise sword seal was rejected by them. "The magic power of death is from Sluggish Sword Seal and the magic power of ice is from Black Tortoise Sword Seal, when the two are combined together it became Sluggish Black Tortoise. Did it actually mean sleeping Black Tortoise? The way you name your sword seal is way too cool. In consideration of other apprentices' future, please leave this place and entertain yourself at your own home.

What was with all the bullshit? But, when I saw everyone around me nodding their heads and agreeing with comment on my sword

seal's name, I had to accept this bitter fact. "Actually, I thought of a name for your sword seal..."Elisa said. Soon enough, Elisa, who held the dominant power in this small group had also invented her own personal sword seal. Her sword seal was the combination of demonic force and the force of flaming sea. It was extremely powerful and evil. It was pretty obvious that no one else could use it.

"Let me guess. According to your unique naming sense and poor choice of words, you will think that demon represents anger; and the flame represents phoenix. So, the result will be Angry Phoenix?"

"No, it should be Angry Bird. And the sword seal of yours with the combination of fire and ice should be named as, The Song of Fire and Ice! Too bad, I still have a few other names that I have not used. The combination of wind and earth, Azure Dragon and White Tiger can be named as The Fighting of Dragon and Tiger! The combination of ice and wind, Black Tortoise and Azure Dragon should be called The Romance of Dragon and Serpent!" I said it with pride and joy. The apprentices around me did not say anything. They just nodded and left the place one by one. Nobody else asked my opinion in naming sword seals anymore.

Maple City, it was a small and less-known city in Sleuweir Kingdom. Yet, it had a special place in my heart. Back in those days, I had a war against the armies of beastmen. If I recall correctly, this city used to be a temporary command center. The war left behind quite a number of historical marks. There was a war museum somewhere in this town. Now, this city had become the focus of every northern countries. This was due to the fact that this city was near the capital city of Sleuweir Kingdom, Antoin.

The area in front of Maple City had become the territory of the beastmen. Naturally, this city became the gathering ground of reinforcements coming in from different countries.

I got in the city before dawn, and the gate of the cities were still shut. The guards were trying to stop me from going in. In some way, on this ground, my face was the best gate pass. The soldiers were stunned for a moment when they saw me. They saluted excitedly and then the door was opened wide for me to go in.

"Open the door! Here comes the Lord." I nodded my head politely and stepped on the ground that had not yet been completely frozen. There were squeaky sounds as I walked on the ground. I became silent when I saw a beastman's head hanging on the wall. I am not a good person, and neither do I have a compassionate or sentimental heart as well. On the contrary, when I saw this phenomenon, I was actually happy and relieved. Well, there were similar sceneries at the villages that were being attacked by the beastman. Some human heads were left hanging as well. According to their culture, they intended to build a tower of human heads. There were mutilated young ladies' corpses and mangled toddlers who had been thrown to their deaths. That made me even more silent.

This is war, and I hated war, because war was the ugliest thing on this earth. War legalized every single criminal activity and also turned humans into cold-blooded animals.

This was war, my favorite war, I used to think that the only way of protecting my race was through war. The only way to destroy war was through war. Along the way, I was called hero, devil,

butcher. There were mountains of bodies behind my back and I'm afraid that the so called "butcher" among the beastmen will never catch up to number of living souls that I had reaped.

When I was known as a hero, I had slaughtered an uncountable number of living souls. I was the hero among human being, but among beastmen, I was known as the butcher and the devil. I was used to scare the beastmen's kids if they didn't stop crying. The reason? Well, I guess I was the first one to actually carry out their culture of building a tower of heads with the help of ground and aerial units.

This was war between countries. The racial war between humankind and beastman. I had no idea how much grudge both sides have retained. When the war began, even the worst crimes will be seen as sacred and heroic. Was I a hero? A butcher? A devil? I'm afraid, I'm all of the above. I had never considered myself as a saint, but before all those who constantly stir up war are put to rest for good, it was necessary for people like me to continue existing in this world.

Small time war criminals like me will not be willing to sleep alone when the real villains sit atop the temple, being worshipped by the people. Sinners have to be judged. The least I can do was drag them to hell with me. "Walk faster! Bastard beastman!" The soldiers yelled. A group of beastman were being chased out by the soldiers. Judging by their human-made attire, they should be the permanent residents and businessmen of this place.

In some way, Sleuweir Kingdom's open and peaceful strategy was working. There was a few decades of trading history between

humankind and the beastman. With the constant trading between two races, there were a number of permanent residents staying in the city, along with traders who dropped by regularly. Well, obviously the war happened without any prior notice, so the humans who were staying in the beastman's kingdom and vice-versa had no chance of returning to their own kingdoms. They became the first victims of the war and also the punching bags of their opposing races. I'm afraid that the heads of those beastmen that were being hung on walls, belonged to spies who tried to scout this place and spy on the permanent resident here.

"Are they spies or scouts?" After a moment of doubt, I decided to stick my nose into this matter. I could care less if they were soldiers, but even then, I will never slaughter civilian, even during my craziest moments. "You....You are Lord Roland." The young soldier spoke out my name excitedly. However, the beastman were paralyzed when they heard my name and the children were already starting to cry. It seemed like my name still held some power after so long. If that was the case, the rest should be quite easy to handle. After some clarification, I got to know that they were actually permanent residents who had resided in this country for a few decades. Now, they were being sold to the slave market. Perhaps, I will just spend some money to buy their freedom.

Of course, the children were crying louder than before. I was probably the worst possible idea that can exist in their minds. They were probably thinking that I had bought them to make some soup and barbecue their meat. "Elisa." Roland said.

"You are still a hypocrite at some random places but this is what I like about you. Your wish is my command. I will check out the chamber of commerce here. I can't guarantee the chances of

surviving, but it’s still better than becoming a slave. If they are sold as slaves, even the kids will become the retainers of those rich kids."Elisa said.

I did not speak much after nodding my head, Elisa was better than me when it came to this kind of matter. If she was ever incapable of doing something, I would have even lesser success. Hypocrite? I cannot refute this fact. I know that I’m a hypocrite for saving a few beastmen, and yet here I am now, thinking about killing more beastmen. "Where is the joint command center? Where are the nobles? Why has the war not started? Are they planning to witness Antoin’s destruction?"

Chapter 152: Notebook

"Word has already spread far and wide that every beastman has set off for war. There are over two hundred and seventy known tribes. Although they declared that they have an army the size of eight hundred thousand, in reality, we know very well that they can barely muster up two hundred thousand. If we take their thirty thousand non-military personnel out of consideration, they would still be left with around an army of a hundred and seventy thousand. And they have all split up into four different directions. Clearly, they have already committed military suicide."

The long-neglected opera that had stood for over six hundred years in Maple city had now found itself occupied once again. It was now a temporary meeting hall. The middle-aged, but still handsome man dress in a military uniform was running his mouth off, on the stage. Clearly, the audiences were not giving a shit about him talking on the stage, some were sleeping, reading, or talking.

"Although beastmen are typically stronger than us when it comes to brute strength, our allied forces total up to more than three hundred thousand. In terms of military strength, we still hold the upper hand. We can take advantage of their scattered state and annihilate them one at a time."

"Bearman Longde, the potential candidate for the next king of beastman. He has twenty tribes under his command, and around fifty-five thousand military personnel. There are several types of units within his camp, with members ranging from the weakling wererats to the strongest bearmen and elephantmen. Take note that, the bearmen who currently form the backbone the military

force tend to slip into hibernation; and thus, their marching speed is the slowest. Recently, they have started to gather provisions and other necessities to go through the winter. It seems like they intend to stay within their territory until the winter is over."

"Kas the Centaur has thirty thousand of military personnel under his control. The bulk of the troops are the agile riders and similarly quick beastmen. They are the smallest echelon among them all. They do not have a base camp, but tend to partake in guerrilla warfare. Small as they are, they are giving us the most trouble at the moment. Currently, they are trying to break through the eastern defense line. It seems like they are trying cross the borders to the other countries. It will be a mess if they manage to break through the southern defense line."

"Saustero the Wolf King has forty thousand under his control - a mix of lionmen, tigermen, wolfmen, and other variations of their race mostly known for their brute strength. I have no idea what the hell is going on through his head, but he has actually turned around to attack the western defense line. Maybe they are trying to attack and invade the Kingdom of the Elves. Rumor has it that a fox man is serving as their strategist, so it’s likely that there’s more to that seemingly reckless maneuver."

"Eymond the Eagleman has sixty thousand military personnel under his command, with a wide variety of beastman soldiers. There are a lot of airborne forces and, flying type of beastmen fighting alongside him. According to the intel, Eymond is also the advocator of the United Army of Beastmen. Rumor has it that he owns most of the elite troops. Currently, they are invading Antoin. I don’t think Antoin can last much longer.

Crosses and circles were all over the diagram, they highlighted the enemies' position and places that they were likely to attack. The military guy tried his best to continue his speech over the growing buzz of the uninterested, skeptical audience. "I don't think our military forces is really having the upper hand. More than three hundred thousand? That must be a joke. Take out all the non-military personnel, and we'll be left with two hundred thousand men at most. Moreover, those beastmen are like what, thrice as strong as we are? Technically speaking, our military force would probably match up to one third of beastman's military force. How are we going to win this war?"

"There are almost one hundred thousand troops stationed in Antoin, but with the constant attacks coming from Eymond's troops, our armies have been calling for reinforcements for quite a while, now. It seems like we'll lose Antoin. That ratio of one to three needs to be reviewed again."

"Have you heard there is a gigantic beast named The Biz? He was the one who led the bearmen in tearing down the defensive walls of Wender City. It was destroyed with little effort. That's the tenth city seized by them. Now, my only wish for them is that they get into their hibernation as soon as possible! I don't want to face those giants in battle."

"All is well if that's the case, but I heard the situation is getting even more bizarre. Somehow the beastmen are not bothered by the cold and are able to fight in the winter unhindered. This is why they've been ambushing us out of expectations. So much for hibernation. Our own troops are shivering all the time, it is obvious that there's a big gap between us and the beastman in terms of physical strength. And now we are going to fight the final

war? It seems like we can’t wait to meet our maker.

"The beastmen are really going to overrun us, they have already taken control so many cities, they wouldn’t even have to worry about supplies. Moreover, we didn’t even bring our siege engines and catapults with us. Our supply line is constantly fractured. How are we going to fight this war? Are you asking us to fight with the beastmen with empty stomachs in the freezing winter?"

"Isn’t this the matter of those super empires? Why are small countries like us at the northern side, fighting this war? How about the Kingdom of Kasmi? Has the Empire of San Antonio mentioned anything yet?" If the leaders of beastmen are fighting against their own King, then we humans are like platters of sand, hiding behind each other’s backs, hoping that we don’t become cannon fodder.

Due to the sudden attack from the beastmen, our first fallen city provided them with enough supplies and shelter. The reinforcements that came after, looked more like guests and soldiers. A huge amount of beastmen came down from the Orison mountains. Their numbers aren’t much in the face of any of the super empires, but most of them are elites, and it the six northern countries couldn’t possibly send out all their troops to assist us. The total number of troops from all five countries is two hundred thousand. On average, each country sent out fifty thousand troops. The final war has yet to begin. People were looking for more reinforcements but the beastmen merely fortified their positions, obviously with different purposes and goals in mind. Thus, they couldn’t have been acting as one. The main focus of Eymond’s troops was to take down Antoin city, so that their leader could take credit for it.

There was no conflict of war strategies between humans and beastmen. Naturally, the war had been dragged longer. Also, most of the generals from the northern countries were hoping that the war would be dragged on until next spring. It was to buy them time to carry out large scale stratagems and take the upper hand of this war; and then, they could proceed to the final war. What about the Antoin city that was currently waiting for reinforcements? Sleuweir Kingdom was going to be destroyed soon, who cares about his opinion. Of course, it is impossible to simply stand aside and witness Antoin city's destruction.

The general continued spouting empty fallacies and propaganda that fell on deaf ears. It was a total waste of time. Someone can't hold it any longer. "Enough! We are soldiers! We are not drunkards or cunning politicians." The angry middle-aged man was plain-looking, of medium height and had a long cape that was made of white fox skin draped on his shoulder. When he shouted angrily, the whole hall fell silent. "Leave the liberation of Antoin city to the Kingdom of Kasmi alone."

His voice was calm but it shook the entire hall. Every country had rejected that role because it was too risky fighting with Eymond's troops. When the middle-aged angry general spoke up, he actually decided to pick up this mission impossible. "Time is of essence and you people are wasting it. We have reinforcements and the beastmen have reinforcements as well. There are at least thousands of beastman tribe inside the Orison mountain, but not all tribes will respond to Eymond's command. Some tribes who may or may not have had good relations with us in the past will definitely see our weakened state and the lands there are just waiting to be claimed. Do you think they will just sit there and not attack us?"

"The Kingdom of Sleuweir has to be saved. If nobody initiates this rescue mission, please don’t expect someone to come and save you when your country is in trouble. Let’s think from a different perspective, if Sleuweir Kingdom is destroyed, the beastman will border up your countries. Do you have the fortress of Camo’s tear? When that time comes, the beastman’s wolfriders will start to hunt on your ground, killing your people, burning villages, and grabbing your women and children. Is that what you want? The general of Kasmi had gradually raised his voice into a shout.

"Fine! You can continue to hide if you want! When all of you get yourselves up on the board of sin, please don’t drag me down together with you guys. I, Ainro am not a retard, I will take the mission to rescue Antoin city. If you are a soldier…no….if you are a man, buy me some time by holding back the other beastmen. Don’t let them stop me from marching to the final war."

Finally, some solid talk after listening to three days worth of bullshit. I started to stir from my slumber when I heard the speech from general Ainro. "Who is he? All the missions have been debated angrily. These bunch of imbeciles has finally done something good. I wonder why all these arrogant bastards are listening to this deafening general. Is he famous?"

Of course, he was different from those imbeciles who were being manipulated for three full days. He was the big shot from the meritorious board. Also, he was not considered as the general of Kasmi for nothing. Ainro The Black Bear was quite famous in my country, San Antonio. Amelia was here earlier than me. She lived in Maple city because she did not want to travel everywhere to hunt down rangers. Naturally, she became the temporary leader of

East Mist Communal Country. She did not look like she was in her best mood, with all the sarcasm dripping from her speech.

"Meritorious board? What's that? And also, what was that sinner's board he mentioned? Looks like I became a piece of antique, left out of this era."

"We have all these stuff in my era as well, maybe you didn't notice, the name is; The Notebook of Pixies.

"The work of those pixies, seems like they are free as usual." Pixies were inherently magical creatures. They were quite similar to those pure looking fairies. Their maximum height was around ten centimeters. Their height allowed them to dance on human's palm. There were different types of pixies; pixies with feathered wings, shadow pixies that lived in the shadows. They had different personalities, living habits, and living environments as well. There was one common trait that all these pixies shared; they loved to talk and gossip. Their race is all over the earth, and they are natural born neutral group, thus, they have good relationship with most of the races. Also, they had their own trading and cooking centers all over the world. In the human world, something that was made by pixies was considered to be a treasure of impeccable quality.

Usually, their trading centers also served as the best place to obtain different kinds of intel. If you can afford their intel, there were no secrets you couldn't get from them. The pixie's notebook that Harloys mentioned earlier was written by pixies. The notebook recorded all the significant points history, caused by famous people and incidents.

"The Meritorious board was created by the pixies, it recorded all the famous warriors who ever walked on earth. The ranking system was based on war records and even included your rank among your own troops. Obviously, this was an disadvantage for small countries. Actually, a Master Meritorious Board supersedes this board, also known as the Board of the War God. All the famous warriors throughout history will be included in this board. This board is pretty convincing. Basically, if your name is listed in this board, you can be considered as a valuable asset of your own country.

Historical people? Ancient warriors? Seems like I'm overthinking things now.

"But me..."

"You died too young when you were still a human. You didn't even get the chance to be listed in the meritorious board. However, you are actually listed in another leaderboard that is actually more famous. In addition to that, your ranking in it is actually quite high."

I was getting really hyped up. I couldn't believe that I was listed in a board that was even more popular than the meritorious board. Did I become such an important figure? Wasn't the point of living in this world, to leave some marks behind? Could it be that I actually left some historical marks behind without me realizing it? This was a huge surprise for me.

"What kind of leaderboard?"

"The Ultimate Apocalyptic Leaderboard. You are the Undying Roland, ranked 33."

My face turned black after hearing what he said. I knew this leaderboard. The people that were listed in this leaderboard were known as trouble makers, walking catastrophes, and plagues. If they were dangerous enough to the point that no one would even dare to lay a finger on them, they will eventually be listed in this leaderboard.

"This is bad news. No mortal being can fight against it. If you see them, just run for your life. If you run into them, well, you're just out of luck" I thought this was the essence of The Ultimate Apocalyptic Leaderboard.

"My other identity?"

If Roland could get on the board, then, the King of Eternal Night should be listed on the board as well.

"No. He was not listed in the board from the beginning. It looks like the pixies deliberately left out the person. They never explained any further. I will need to pay more if I need more intel."

"Shit! My true identity has been uncovered out."

"Isn't it normal to be found out? Did you even try to hide

yourself? All you used was a piece of the Wind of War flag as the flag of the Royal Guard. Do you think you're surrounded by idiots?"

I nodded my head. The truth was, I did not even try to hide myself. When I decided to avenge others in the past, I had let the opponent know the reason why I killed them. It was totally normal for all these well-informed pixies to know my true identity. Also, they had probably sold some intel on me for a lot of money.

"Actually, I know quite a few people from the leaderboards. The one who is ranked 99 is Molly The Red Dragon. She leaves a trail of destruction behind everywhere she goes. I think you should know her. Also, the Evil Professor, Harloys The Black Magician is ranked 46. Looking at the name, it does not look like she has a lot power to bring destruction. She did produce a lot of "good" students. For example...."

"For example, you! What is your ranking?"

I sighed, remember how tough The Dragon Mother, Molly was. When she failed to bring more destruction underground, she went above ground again to create more trouble. I was so full of confidence and I asked, "If Harloys and myself are on the leaderboard, I'm pretty sure the Amelia standing in front of me is in the list as well."

"Last I checked, I was ranked 57, under the moniker; The Naughty Storm Lady. Initially, I was ranked 69. Three of my friends who ranked in front of me had kicked the baskets. I happened to have killed one of them. As a result, my ranking

jumped again. All in all, my ranking has gone up by twelve."

She stated it with some pride, but I don't think she has anything to be proud of in the first place.

"Nice! That title is way cooler than mine. What the hell is Undying? It's so not cool. Can I request to change my title?"

"I'm glad that you think my title is cool. Hehe..You have good taste. Others say that my name is totally uncool. That actually makes me very angry. But, no matter how you try to compliment me, I will not give this title away to anyone."

"Shit! I can't believe you saw through me. Then, can you please contact the pixie? This title is really bad. I have to change something cooler. For example, titles like; The Invincible, The Genius, or even, The Forever Loveable Rolan."

"So, the title that you decided is, The Stupid, Selfish, Hideous Rolan. Leave it to me. I will contact the pixie for you. I can't believe the elves were actually so bound to reality. Titles like this should be easy to acquire.

They couldn't do anything about our daily arguments. Reyne and the others were compelled to listen to the arguments. The general on the stage was talking non-stop again about the so-called strategy. These two persons had totally no idea about what was going on here.

For these three days, I knew that if I continued to be a bystander, I would become one of those soldiers who will drop dead in a second thanks to stupid orders that I was stupid enough to obey. So, I stood up.

"Ainro , your setup is suicidal. I have a few suggestions and some intel. Maybe it is time for you to listen to me."

Chapter 153: A Third Party

The Black General was known as Anynror. He had a head like a black tiger, a chiseled, stern face, body like an iron tower, with large eyes that reflected light like bronze bells, a flat nose, wide ears, and bull-like strength.

His gaze was a permanent glare that reeked of murder, and his body constantly radiated a threatening aura. This man had devoted his life to the military and was last place on the general board’s rankings. He was known to all as a brave general who was always on the front lines. In battles, he broke through the enemy lines, and once, he took eighteen arrows and remained standing, as he fought on to take down the city gates. This man was never stopped, ever.

Standing opposite him was, in stark contrast, a green-eared, white-nosed youth of a General. He looked to be in his seventeens to eighteens. In an older gentleman's world of the military, he was but a baby.

He had a sacred Mithril sword in his hand, a Winged-tiger helmet on his head, an armor of steel on his body, and dragonskin army boots on his feet. His face was beautiful, and he was dressed impeccably, but if one were to look closely, he did lack an air of authority. He looked a little too effeminate, with fair skin, rosy cheeks, ruby lips and a smile was constantly plastered on his face, one would say he seemed more like a model than a general.

But if you were to underestimate him because of his appearance, then you could not be any more wrong!

The sword in his hand was none other than the famous Pale Justice, it had slaughtered many a vicious dragon, and evil monsters. Just think, if it is true that sacred swords always choose their owners, can a mere mortal wield such a sword? Can this be a normal man?

The silver-armored Great General Roland, though only the age of twenty-eight, had already spent half his life on the battlefield, was a renowned Junior General. People knew him as a chatterbox, silver-faced white dragon.

Despite his youth and delicate appearance, he was as comfortable in court as he was in the household, and that silver sword was stained with the blood of evil, tales of his battles shook the entirety of Eich. Those dragonskin boots, that looked just like any other pair of boots, was made out of the skin of a nine-headed dragon that he had tracked through ravines to slay. A man such as this, could he be thought as a commoner?

The problem was that, both of them had massive tempers. The more famous they were, the more stubborn they got, and the less they would pay heed to any advice. It seemed that, at that moment, the two of them were having disagreements regarding the war, and naturally, being warriors, once they were met with a disagreement, they would draw out their swords in hopes for a closure on the matter. And what a match it was!

With a black and a white General, friction was bound to happen, on top of an already hostile history of unresolved bitterness. The Black Tiger against the White Dragon, this conflict will prove to be

a match of the ages.

Right in the middle of the court, standing on the platform, the two of them glared at each other. The dark-faced one thought the white-faced was unreliable due to his delicateness, the white-faced one thought that the black-faced was too ugly and terrifying to the innocent. Anger and fury ignited the air, spewing a murderous aura that visibly warped the air around them.

Finally, the two of them drew closer, and met at last, nose to nose, eye to eye. Then...their lips touched! Yes! They actually touched!

"This is the spirit of victory! This is the ultimate victory of the hag's will. At this moment, Roland followed the glorious tradition of the philosophers. It was as if the spirit of Abegel (some famous homosexual man) or King Billy (an even more famous homosexual man) lived in his body! Roland alone represented the longstanding history and tradition of homosexuality in all of all Eich! At this moment, he is not alone in this fight. He is not alone!"

"Elisa. It's enough that you have been telling a story beside me, and now you are making up all these nonsense. I will send you back to the abyss where you came from! Don't think for a second that I won't do it!"

As I was fuming inside, Elisa, who was making up ridiculous passages as if she was possessed by some narrator, finally stopped talking.

Yes, the passages above were all made up by Elisa, it was all fiction! I never was a homosexual, never!

There was a silence, as I gathered up my wits to size up my opponent.

""Black Bear" Ainro Soan, a citizen of San Antonio, forty-four years old, honorable Earl in the military. He joined the army 27 years ago, slowly climbing the ranks from a common knight to a General. He always led the army, galloping towards the enemy lines. His most victorious battle was when he led his men and rode thousands of miles through the night, breaking through the encirclement of the neighboring country, and then took over the four cities that were under the rule of his opponent."

"The reviews on the honours board of famous generals: an old general rich in experience, his methods of utilizing soldiers were practiced and traditional, hated raiders, does not have any special strategies, but neither does he have any obvious flaws, has never faced any great defeat. During critical times in battles, he would fight bravely, and under extreme conditions, he would still fight his way through a path of survival, he was a brave general but not a particularly intelligent one."

I suppose Elisa’s one virtue was that, although she normally had a malignant tongue and was always giving me these sort of "surprises"; when it came to important matters, there would never be any mistakes.

When I asked her to provide me information about someone, although she will add a bunch of nonsensical stuff with it, she

would still be able to give me what I want.

"A practical General who was not an academic? Isn’t that what people call old-fashioned? But this seems like trouble. Huh, no flaws, no virtues either? In other words that mean he is full of flaws, isn’t it?"

"Well, may I ask, in your opinion, what counts as an academical military man?"

"A bookworm who only follows every military book written to the word. Just draw a hole and he will burrow into it himself, this is just too easy."

"....do you want to know your own assessment? There is a passage about your own strategizing tendencies."

"Oh, you have that? Of course, I do. I had been planning to buy it from some pixies when I get back. Good that you have it already."

"‘The Undying Roland’, Roland Mist, the last prince of the Mist Kingdom, also in recent times famously known as the most powerful Necromancer and Emperor Yongye . He was also the founder of the Xiluo Empire and their supreme leader, and he has had the honour of being 33rd in The Ultimate Apocalyptic Leaderboard. He is known as the Undying because he possessed the extraordinary ability to resurrect himself, and he is also the precious few who can skip over incarnation cycles to maintain his current existence. This is the one and only case of multiple resurrections."

"According to those close to him, he is extremely cunning and vindictive. If one were to have the misfortune of stepping on his tail... It has been known that he won't hesitate to use a hundred years to prepare for his revenge. And if you had really made him angry, this avenger is absolutely indestructible, bless you. Of course, one can consider the insurance package provided by us pixies (not to help you solve this problem of course, but at least we will give the insurance payments to your descendants.)"

"According to an unknown source (this year's latest report). He once transformed into "the Black Hand Baron" Roland Charname, and later "Aurora Sword Saint" Rolo Danbouer to travel the world. Due to his undying nature, even if the world is destroyed, he will remain standing. So I'll capitulate on this; do not offend him. Otherwise, in your old age, you will never know if this shameless cheater will come back and romance your granddaughter (This were the exact words of those who were once cheated by him, a source has disclosed that it is his senior from the same school, and this report is highly credible). As you can see, this person is rather psychopathic.."

Very well, should I be glad that I have found someone who understands me? Although the description of one that can't seem to die is a little disgusting, and though it had been written with great prejudice, at least some parts were true. I glared at Amelia who was acting coy.

"A senior girl who was cheated? Amelia! It must be you! How dare you slander me. At least, at least..."

My angry glare earned the sneering of a senior girl.

"... at least give me half of the fee for tipping them off, this is free money! What makes you think you can have them all for yourself!"

"Is that really the main issue? Hey, Roland! You're getting worse than before!"

Very well. I ignored the mischievous Amelia, and turned my attention back to the main topic. Elisa was still dictating the reports about me.

"...whether as the prince of Mist Country or Emperor Yongye, or the "Black hand Baron", he always had records of leading an army to war, and his strategies were all basically the same. One of the reasons the Yongye Plunder could capture so many kingdoms was his outstanding method of utilizing his forces. He preferred to use raiders, and was unafraid of head-on battles. If he did not have absolute confidence he would never face a battle head on. That is his most significant characteristic. His most memorable battle was the battle against Soubel Elves Kingdom, where his opponent's army was three times the size of his and all of them had been equipped with the blade of light, known to be able to defeat spectres, yet they were no match against the elite cavalries he sent. The leading army was reduced to nothing, and the war dragged on for a year and a half, the undead armies obtained victory as they outlasted the enemy.

It seems like the reviews were quite spot-on, at least the war that I was most pleased had not been missed. The strategies were not new, no doubt one of the variants of guerilla tactics, but perhaps

only the spectres who do not fear death can execute such suicidal attack to the end.

"When he was a human prince, he left a few pieces of writings such as ‘Treaties on Guerilla tactics’, ‘Collecting intelligence is the most important task in a war’, ‘Our goal is The Sea of Stars - be a full-fledged coward before being able to win a war’. His diverse and interchangeable war strategies deeply influenced future generations.The long term decree that rewards anyone who brought the head of a Beastman, the "Beastmen Slaughtering" decree, that was mentioned in his book had received many constant criticism, but caused a great impact on the future generations. Besides that, his utilization of the elite cavalry methods to counter attack against the Beastmen tribes while cutting off their escape routes, along the evil yet ingenious idea of poisoning their water source, all these gave him a frightful reputation, especially among the Beastmen. However, in a way, the Beastmen tribes who suffered the greatest damage in history, have in recent times had the longest lasting safe haven in history. The Northlands had peace for more than fifty years, but this caused the rejuvenation of the spirits of the Beastmen tribes, leading to the largest scale of Beastmen attack on the south in a thousand years."

"As his method of strategizing his soldiers were superior, the effects on his military philosophy and thoughts on war were groundbreaking. His military successes were brilliant, and he was once listed as the number 68th on the board of the famous generals in history. However, due to the pressures from kingdoms with past connections with him and churches of the gods, he was taken down from the board. Nevertheless, his military success and strategizing ability were indeed recorded in the Board of War Gods, and due to his indestructibility, I’m afraid he will be in the top 40 on the board of recent famous generals for quite a long time.

After hearing those words, I was at a loss for words. To that end, I can only say that I was too young, and was perhaps a little too overboard in my actions.

In a way I felt a little encouraged, I definitely did not believe that the Black Faced blockhead will buy my information, but since he knew my information, no doubt would he feel a little guilty.

After all, he had just entered the recent board, and on the last place no less. While I was named a famous general in history. Since I am of a higher rank, and among peers, those who are stronger and more famous have a more powerful say in the subject, especially since I am of a higher rank than him.

At this time, as if rendered uneasy by the silence after my speech, Ainro spoke up, the content was very respectful, but his tone sounded a bit strong.

"Your majesty, Roland, I do not know if you felt that there were any mistakes in my strategy, but I would be grateful if you could point them out."

I smiled at the seriousness of Ainro's face, then it seemed that it was judgement time. The same procedure: First throw out some heavyweight bombs to scare them off.

"If it is just fighting on paper then you are not wrong, it is quite the contrary, this setup is very spot-on. If the execution is powerful, then the chances of winning are more than 80 percent..."

At this, as if he thought he had obtained my praise, Ainro touched his chin as he smiled, but I was not yet finished. These three days I spent riding on my horse and wandering around without stopping, gathering and organizing intelligence, and when there were enough intelligence and information collected, only then did I make a judgment.

"But I must say, your setup will just send all the generals and soldiers to their death. All you see are the threats on the chessboard, but you completely forgot to take into account the other chess pieces that were not in the scene!"

"The Earth Elemental God, Emordilorcan have always supported the Blood tribes, and you think that they will not interfere with such an important event as you attack Atoin. I have seen in Auland, the formation of the city of rain, the Water Elemental God and her people directly participating in the invasion of Auland Kingdom, they do not have as many restrictions. To underestimate any of these Ancient Elemental Gods is foolish. I guess when your great generals are at the brink of a decisive battle, earthquakes and the sudden appearance of the Earth Elemental God would be the best ambush."

At this point, those in attendance have already turned a deathly green. Obviously, they had long neglected the existence of those ancient Elemental Evil Gods, and even believed they would not interfere in the conflicts of the human realm.

The look on Ainro’s face made me smile, since the right to speak is now in my hands, then, the next piece of explosive information

would be even more shocking.

"To march without enough intelligence, I think you are just looking for death. And that wasn’t all that you missed."

Ainro started as if he wanted to object, but after hesitating for a moment, he shook his head and kept quiet.

"Forgetting to include Emordilorcan is one of the reasons for your downfall, but it is not the most fatal one. I know that you have other preparations, don’t argue with me, but you forgot another dangerous opponent. No, from the beginning you have not thought of seeing them as an enemy. On the contrary, in your eyes they were considered trusted comrades, after all, it has been so many years since we last went to war."

"You are saying?"

"Impossible, perhaps in the West? Perhaps the Wolf King was headed there?"

"No, no, it is completely possible. Their recent behavior has been very strange. If so, then this would explain the Wolf King’s journey."

Just after the sentence was completed, the leaders and generals in attendance stood up, and the black-faced Ainlo was pale-faced with shock by this revelation. If this report is true, the whole world will be shocked.

"Yes, Eymond’s power far is stronger than all of you have estimated. The Wolf King Saustero, and philosophers of the Fox race, are all his staunch supporters. They dispersed their army and went West because they are planning to open up Akysyos to let the Elf armies in. Yes, your predictions are not wrong, my most trusted long-eared comrades. This time, right from the beginning, they have decided to stand against us. They have too much accumulated grievances to settle with us."

"Elves will soon be declaring war against the humans. And the gods of the elves will soon declare godly war on the gods of humans! And our Northland, will soon become the battlefield of the gods!"

Chapter 154: The Elves

The Elves, well-known for their beauty and longevity, lived inside the peaceful forest. They were pure, kind, and lived a simple and self-sufficient life. They typically lived in harmony with nature, but whenever this world is threatened by Evil, they would unhesitatingly rouse themselves for battle, and would fight to their last breath.

Only the children would believe such a fairy tale! If there was a race of such innocence and purity, they would have been exterminated long time ago, by any big war evolved from the stray projectiles from the crossfire.

In Eich, these long-eared folks were doing quite well. They might be beautiful, but they were definitely not kind and naively gullible as the legends suggested. As a powerful and prosperous race, some trickeries in the best interests of their race were inevitable.

"Pure and kind? Where do we find such Elves? In my perspective, the Elves are just a bunch of pretty long ears. Their beauty and longevity are undeniable, but obviously, they have nothing to do with purity and kindness. In fact, ego, brutality and belligerence are their three signature traits!"

Their ego could be justified by their historical background. As the race which had once occupied over seventy percent of the continent, and with their fellow Gods serving as the strongest divine system in the world, the Elves used to have it all. They had been treating the short-lived Humans as uncivilized vulgarians. Granted with an eternal life, well-established traditions, magic and

martial arts, they treated all the other races with contempt.

Just like the Pixies, the Elves were divided into factions. The difference was, that all the Pixie members were on equal footing. In the contrary, the Elves practiced an extremely prejudicial hierarchic-cum-caste system, which was determined by their bloodline and could never be transcended.

Akin to the first generation of Humans, the High Elves once graced the earth with their golden footsteps, but they no longer exist. Nevertheless, their lineal descendants (creations), namely the Wood Elves, the Moon Elves, the Night Elves and Silver Elves became the Four Elven Aristocracies, which were superior to the common Elves. In this century, they had built their own kingdom, retaining their aristocratic status.

It was worth mentioning that Harloys, the Princess of the Ancient Elven Kingdom was actually the one who exterminated High Elves, the legendary golden Elves. Their remaining cultural heritage naturally became the treasure that all the Elven Kingdoms strived for. Besides, a lot of Elven royals were claiming themselves to be the true descendants of the Ancient Elven Kingdom.

Of course, even the Elves themselves were not convinced by their own tale. Like everyone, they would glorify their ancestors at times, but to believe such a tale would be a real stretch. It is indeed gratifying that the Simita race did not exist in this world.

Discrepancies always lie between legends and history. History tells us that the golden Elves were a paragon of virtue and perfection, but to think that Harloys was such a deplorable

character, what a sickening truth! The prince was usually deviant, while the princess was either a fool or a flower vase...just like the damned cat. (Speaking to the cat) You dare to bite me? I will load you up into the Goblin's cannon and send you a thousand miles away. I mean it!

(TL Note: In Chinese, the term "flower vase - 花瓶" is used informally describe a woman who is gorgeous but a good for nothing)

Sigh, where did I stop? Alright, since we have been darkening the name of Elves, next I will talk about the Dark Elves.

Now it's really about Dark Elves ! The Dark Elves actually emerged from the bizarre hierarchical system and regulations of the Elven race.

(TL Note: In Chinese, the word "Dark - 黑" in the term "Dark Elves - 黑 精灵" means "dark" literally, and means "darkening" non-literally. The author is playing with words here, as the narrator actually spoke about the 黑 精灵 (Dark Elves) after he 黑 精灵 (darkened the name of Elves)

The Dark Elves were never in this world until the Night Elves were banished to the Underworld.

Lorci was banished by the fellow Elven Gods, while the Night Elves were banished by the other three Elven aristocracies. Why? It was said that they violated a taboo and hooked up with Chaos. I don't know what the taboo it is, but considering the unusual antecedents of the Night Elves, they had probably altered their bloodline. Aside from God himself, the truth could be told by no one.

The Four Elven Aristocracies were the Superior Elves who

carried the Silver bloodline (slightly inferior bloodline). Intermarriage between them had always been forbidden. In the era of Ancient Elven Kingdom, they had even banned inter-communication and accepting jobs, aside those stipulated by the race.

The Gold Elves were born to be royalty, while the Silver Elves were born to the warriors. On the other hand, the Wood Elves served as priests who had the ability to communicate with nature, while the Moon Elves served as the pivotal force of the government. Lastly were the Night Elves, they were in charge of all sort of underground activities.

As for the rest, like the Medium Elves, the Lower Elves, and the hybrid Wild Elves who were disdained, rejected by their own race, they were no more than vassals of the Four Elven Aristocracies. A majority of the Medium Elves and the Lower Elves belonged to the Bronze faction. The hybrid Wild Elves were usually the Blackmetal faction, but a precious few of them could be mutants whose power surpassed even the Superior Elves.

Even today, there are still some old fogeys practicing the law and order enforced by the Ancient Elven Kingdom, that the Four Elven Aristocracies must serve the Golden Elves, and all the other classes of Elves must serve the Four Elven Aristocracies. Such a hierarchy system was perceived as the root of the Elven society.

If a man’s fate is predetermined at the moment of his birth, the social progression is in deeper trouble. The gap between different classes would only get bigger, and the contradictions would only lurk beneath the surface, forever unresolved.

In short, the Superior Elves were always of Silver faction, whilst the common Elves belonged to either Bronze or Blackmetal. In the past, the Elves were much more powerful in contrast to Humans who had no distinction of classes. These advantages led to their contempt for the other races. The only shackle restraining them was their low fertility rate and slow growth period.

This is why a Wild Elf like Krose would feel out of place while facing a Wood Elf like Kelly. The Wood Elves were not as mighty as they were, but the formality that flows with her blood, would naturally bring out her discomfort before the Superior Elves.

A social hierarchy like this would definitely come along with a latent fatal risk. Ever since the Ancient Elven Kingdom vanished, and the Golden Elves were extinct, the Four Elven Aristocracies naturally became the top of the pyramid. For one kingdom with four rulers, the dissolution was only a matter of time!

With four Elven Gods in command, conflicts and division were inevitable. As spoken by Harloys herself who was full of resentment, the fall of Ancient Elven Kingdom and division of the Elves were closely related to the fellow Gods of Order, especially the fellow Elven gods.

I have to emphasize that they were asking for it. As one ancient species, Golden Elves could not care less for their descendant Gods, "You were once my vassal, how dare you disregard me right after turning into Gods?" With such ideology going widespread, the true Gods would disregard anyone.

Ironically, this was the how the Elves declined from their golden age, but the rise of Humans would never come without their internal strife.

Let us skip the long chapters and look into the outcome of a series of misfortunes. As the Golden Elves no longer existed, the Elven race was divided into hundreds of kingdoms, scattered all over the world.

The four Superior Elves were having a rough time as well. The Night Elves were banished from the rest altogether, turning into the Dark Elves of the Underworld. The Moon Elves and The Silver Elves might be the primary royal forces in every Elven Kingdom, but there was always bad blood between the two families.

As far as I knew, there were several Elven Kingdoms in the northwest border region, which were ruled by the Moon Elves. They belonged to one of the four Elven families, who had been declaring themselves as the true lineal descendants of the Ancient Elven Kingdom.

In the Northern land, I'm afraid there is no one who knows the Elves better than me, and that knowledge stemmed from rather nefarious intent. Your nemesis always knows you the best, and there were years of deep enmity between the Elves and myself.

One thousand seven hundred years ago, the Human's victory in the last sacred war awarded them with the richest land on the continent. However, the defeated races were in suffering. The Aqua tribe descended to the deep sea and were reduced to the Sea tribe, whilst the Beastmen were driven away to the northern

iceland. As for the Protectors of Order like the Humans however, the Elves had no choice but to move their kingdoms to the remote region under the compulsion of the Humans.

"Allies? Would allies send you to the remote region and into the woods? Would they form a hunting party to catch your people and make them best-sellers in the market of slaves? Would allies disregard you after absorbing your magic and knowledge? Would they seize your resource supplies and trade petty salt for your magical craft?

Without mention any more subtexts, I will conclude that the entire race of Humans was indeed nasty. A single reason like trading their people into slavery was more than enough to tread heavily on the Elves' toes.

The crowds of royal peers loved to enslave the Elves for the sake of pride and pleasure, their filthy hands even clambering up to the Superior Elves' bodies. The charming Wood Elves, the innocent Moon Elves, and the lively Silver Elves also had the experience of being sold at auctions for an extortionate price, a price which was never seen before. Such an event had led to several wars.

The Elves were unlike the Humans who lived up to only a hundred. Unfortunately, they were also renowned for having eidetic memories,which caused them to bear a myriad of hatred and grudges over centuries. For the Elves, the grudges built up three generation ago were just like yesterday. If their enemies were dead, they would take revenge on their descendents or countrymen. If none of these existed too, their vengeance would fall on the Human race in general.

The resentment which had been simmering for too long would eventually burst out, but in a time of peace, it would not be heavily surveyed by the fellow Gods of Order. Besides, the Human Gods who were the majority of Gods of Orders would treat the matter with injustice like how they usually did.

Hence, this explosion of resentment would die out quickly. Only when the last obstacle, the fellow Elven Gods, agree to switch their side, only then would there be nothing to stop the hostility between the two races.

Betraying their own people would not be a big deal for the Elven Gods as they had even turned against their former masters. Loyalty was meaningless for someone who had a history riddled with treacheries. It merely depends on what their opponents could offer.

The discerning spectators could have speculated the facts I were telling. But, I have one more here, which emerged from my own investigation.

"Key of the Moon Plan."

Such a beautiful name with such a simple meaning, which was literally "a plan to open the door". The main target of the plan was to prepare for the sacred war, and open the gate to the Central Plains.

Three hundred years ago, the Northern gate was surrounded by a

mighty kingdom. As for the Elves, it was just like yesterday...

The fall of the Mist Kingdom went according to the Elves' conspiracy, as the Cardinals who had desired to kill me got a visit from two slaves of Silver Elves. It was never the strong enemies who destroyed the Mist Kingdom, but the backstabbing of a few Humans Kingdoms, together with none other than the "pure and kind" Elven allies.

It was never a cinch to knock down that Kingdom, a lot of colluding between the insidious parties was just enough to deal minor damage, which caused a chain reaction that eventually led to the fall of Mist KIngdom.

My second incarnation was Roland Charname, the Black Handed Baron. As the surname Charname had spoken, my mission was to investigate the insider news. Unfortunately, I was murdered during the mission by the Elven Kingdom armies.

In Chinese, the word "Charname - 查内姆" is homophonic to the word "查内幕", which means "investigate the insider news")

It was not until my third incarnation, Rolo, that I finally traveled across numerous Elven Kingdoms, and gathered sufficient information from their database and libraries. Several times, I had even stepped into their palaces.

Only with all these efforts, it came the time for the mad revenge of Yongye's Army. My first target was absolutely the Elven Kingdom! At the height of madness, even the forbidden curse of destruction, which had been used on the Humans in hesitance, was cast directly on the Elves without mercy. The entire Elven Kingdom was then crushed within the curse.

Looking at their vindictive nature, I was afraid I would top their Wanted list for a perpetual period of time. Revenge against me was inevitable.

Never judge a book by its cover, I had always been wary of the Elves. On hearing the news that the Wolf King was marching to the west, I had dispatched my troopers and spies towards there. Meanwhile, my informants in the Elves had brought me sufficient information.

"I have been here for three days, waiting for my informants. The Moon Glaive Army of the Tassel Elven Kingdom have moved away from their camp, eastwards, similar to the other Elven kingdoms. Do you think the long ears are coming to our assistance?"

There must some clues to the secret activities within the Elven Kingdom. The Gods of Law had been watching over the conspiracies between the fellow Elven gods and the Gods of Chaos. Owing to the frequent notice and warning by the cathedrals, everyone was astonished by my judgment, and without even suspecting it, they started to think about the next step.

"How is this possible? The Elves and the Beastmen are bitter enemies!"

"You fool! Two enemies are allies in front of a common enemy. And what are allies? Ask those Elven slaves in your house."

"Not all the Elves wanted to fall out with the Humans. Was it a

clan, or just a tribe?"

"Please validate the truth before jumping to the verdict. Your majesty, it was not a query, but could you provide more relevant information?"

I turned abruptly and walked away from the clamour.

The information I had thrown meant a lot, which will definitely keep the leaders of all countries occupied for validation, organization, and reporting. By then, their reckless march would be stopped, and my target was achieved.

In such chaos, I was not interested to carry out any discussions, as I had a lot of things in hand, I did not have the mood and time for them.

I would not count on these guys, and the Borealis was arriving soon. With these reinforcements, this time, we shall hold nothing back! The new weapons, the new tactics, and the new soldiers, will bring about a new world. Let this inevitable war be my experimental plot!

Chapter 155: A War Without Mercy

Akysyos Fortress, was dubbed by the Elves as "Shinkerin Shinker", which means "The Sinland" in their language.

Being the Humans' Fortress closest to the Northern Elven Kingdom, it served as the major pathway to all the Elven countries. It was also the main source of supplies for the Slave Hunters. Naturally, it turned out to be the best trading market for Elven slaves in the northern region.

Amongst the Elves of all regions, the northern Elves were considered the weakest. Unfortunately, their neighbouring kingdom, the Sleuweir could do nothing to hinder the slave trade for big merchants from all countries. Hence, this "trade route" became a "disastrous" location to perform Elven slave trading.

The wired second-hand dealers were helping the peerages and the agencies of special goods to get the latest stocks. Meanwhile, the ruthless mercenaries who were awaiting orders, as well as the city guard officers and troops stood aside like nothing had happened. It was not surprising that the Elves would call that place "The Sinland".

The merchants would risk for a hundred percent profit. For a profit over three thousand percent, they would trample all the world's law without a hesitation. Regardless of whether they were ordinary, superior or even the half-Elves, the Elven children, men, and young women had all brought them an extraordinary income. Hence, the Akysyos had become their first choice for a tourism spot.

Of course, he would never answer you, as he, together with his kingdom had been sealed within the ice receptacle. Their bodies would remain fresh in the Ice Age for hundreds of years, probably until even the day they melts.

And that day, was the doomsday for the bloody Akysyos, along with all its slave dealers.

Just as the Beastmen armies invaded the castle from the rear, the Moonglaive army of the Tassel Elven Kingdom ambushed an interim camp of the merchants. They were coming to the rescue of their princess.

The imprisoned Princess of the Moon Elves, was found in the merchants' basement, with her body pathetically mangled. This had infuriated the surrounding Elves, the little ambush thus grew into a mad rampage.

Influenced by some malicious people, the Elven slaves eventually engaged in the rampage too. After wiping out the prison guards and mercenaries, they had snatched their weapons and opened the gate.

The time had finally come for an ethnic cleansing. At this moment, the arrogant Elves would gladly accept any help from the Beastmen. Resorting to violence like the Beastmen, they had developed an inclination for a sadistic pleasures besides assuaging their resentment. They even praised the Beastmen for their inhumane massacres.

A strongly worded declaration of war was very soon delivered to Antoin which was under the Beastmen's attack. Tassel Elven Kingdom and the other Elven Allies were declaring war against the Sleuweir.

The third party's interference in the war had brought astonishment to the whole world. Myriads of letters were drifting to the north like the snowflakes, and the cathedral envoys were running back and forth. Unfortunately, the communication canal had been sealed.

Meanwhile, at the protection area of Moon Glaive Army, the face of Commander Alven Newleaf was filled with grief and sympathy, as he stared at the severely injured Moon Elven girl who was deeply asleep.

"Your Majesty, are you cold-blooded? Princess Suana was still a young girl, and she was your one and only daughter."

Being an aristocrat of the Moon Elves, Alven shared a blood kinship with Atrion, the emperor of Tassel Kingdom, therefore the injured Elven princess was considered his niece.

As the executor of "Key of the Moon Plan", Alven was the one who actually knew the whole story, when the other Elves were seized by anger, lynching the slave merchants.

"Those damned old creatures were trying to kill her!"

Suana Newleaf, the Princess of Tassel Kingdom, was the only descendant of the Emperor of Elves. Nevertheless, to get the approval of war declaration and to gain support from the elders, she was sacrificed for the political exchange. The next Emperor of Elves would have to be the nephew of the chief of the council.

Aside from political interest, Suana was chosen as the sacrifice due to her role as the leader of the Peace-pursuing faction of the Elves, despite her young age. The solidarity amongst her followers were as firm as rock. Beloved and respected by all her people, in any way if she was hurt, the Elves would certainly be filled with hatred and animosity. Wrath of the people would be incessant, and the war would be unstoppable.

To fully utilize Suana, the ruthless schemer had made use of the most malevolent slave merchants, the most deplorable buyers, a well-planned engagement, and a brutal slave hunter, which finally led the honourable princess down this path.

"...Water...water."

A feeble voice pulled the surrounding female officers closer. Alven could not withstand watching the misery of princess anymore.

"Your highness, please just say the words, Alven would do anything for you"

It was obvious to all that Suana, who had suffered such

tremendous physical and mental damage, would not survive. This terrible scene was more than what Alven could bear. Finally, he made a promise to himself, that this was the end of his tolerance, and he would then accomplish any wishes of the princess at any costs.

"...Re...venge..."

Hearing this, Alven was puzzled. To fall into such inexplicable misfortune, it was only natural that the little anti-war princess would harbour such resentment. It was pathetic that she had not realised the real culprit behind all of these.

With her withered lips moving slightly, it looked like Suana was trying to speak something but she was powerless to do so.

Only by moving closer, Alven was able to hear her small groan.

"Do...n't...Don't....avenge me, I....want peace, I don't want..don't want war."

Her alabaster face was filled with scars. After much struggling to deliver her last wish and making sure it was heard clearly, the most beautiful rose in Tassel lost her final colour, she had given up her life, withered and perished.

Upon learning the death of their dearest Suana, the fellow Elves had gone insane.

"Her highness is dead! Her highness is dead!"

"It was all because of the damned Humans!"

"Revenge! A blood for a blood, a tooth for a tooth, that is not even enough or these scoundrels! We need the fresh blood of their wives and daughters to pay respect to her spirit of Princess Suana in heaven!"

"Not yet, the Elves do their vengeance in ten fold! We need ten times the amount of blood as offerings!"

An uproar reverberated through the skies, as even the female officers in the palace had vowed to avenge their princess at any cost. Being the only one amongst the crowd who actually heard her last wish, Alven was sinking into silence.

He opened his mouth as his head was spinning. Trying to speak something but his thoughts were all in a muddle, he ended up saying nothing at all.

"...Forgive me, your highness. I am afraid I have to go back on my words, everyone has gone out of control. As I'm about to fight with the destroyer of our kingdom, I will probably apologize to you face to face very soon.

Upon hearing the news of Suana's death and declaration of war

by the Elves, I was not even surprised. I had to say if my speculation was right, for the Elves to deviate from the Order, Suana must not only die, but die horribly.

Reason? There was no actual reason. Every war needed one reason to start. Not to mention the Elves who had always flattered themselves as a race of upright justice and peace, they would certainly call for a strong reason.

Suana herself was a perfect sacrifice. Aside from her high reputation, she had always opposed the war, proposing harmonious coexistence with the Humans, and seeked to resolve all conflicts by communications. This had rendered her a thorn in the flesh of the War-pursuing faction and the fellows Elven gods.

How did I know about her? Were we close? I was imprisoned in the Sulphur Mountain City when she was born. We never spoke and recognised each other, but I did know about her.

"Sure enough, the real world is not dramatic, in the end, the lucky Suana failed to ascend to the Queen of Elves..."

In the dramatic "history", as the leader of the Peace-pursuing faction she had issued a mythical mission of incredible rank. With the help of both Elf players and Human players, she had finally annihilated the War-pursuing faction which included her dad and the council. She ascended the throne and even fought to be the Queen of Elves later. In the end, she successfully persuaded all the Elves to remain in the Order faction.

Ever since the Four Elemental Gods turned out not to be sealed by the "players" according to the "history plot", I had discerned a number of idiotic flaws in the strategy guide. In that "history" at least, the few significant events would be completely different from what the gamers abroad had in mind.

Reality is not a game, this mistake had given me a real lesson.

In consequence, I had cleaned up the "history"and reevaluated it by taking the real world as the benchmark. Quite a number of flaws were actually discovered.

The mysterious fall of the Four Elemental Gods, was to furnish the "players" with a greater sense of participation and achievement, and also to free the early stage in the game from unbeatable opponents. Judging from the baffling plot, however, one could easily tell that it was deduced by the game story writer using the Hand of God, as it was not based on facts.

(TL Note: Hand of God refers to a goal scored by Diego Maradona in 1986 World Cup using his hand but wasn't seen by the referee. Later in Chinese, "Hand of God - 上帝之手" is used to describe a mean to achieve something without conforming to human's law of nature)

Besides, Queen Suana who was graced as "Light of the New Moon" and "The Moon of Luck" had lived a legendary yet incredible life. For how she came to know the players' heroes in a blind alley, for how she exposed the crime of her father and the council, for how she achieved a peace agreement so the Humans and the Elves would work together to weather the storm, all these contingencies were comparable to winning a lottery. To break through such tragic circumstances, was even tougher than to slay a

dragon barehanded. Therefore, this series of tide-turning legendary stories would no doubt become the best-selling novels!

"Damn, here comes another hole. It seems that the story writer was keeping all the Elf players in the Order Faction with the Hand of the God again. Of course, that was just a game, who could accept such a strange plot where all the people suddenly switched to the same camp. Being a real world, Eich had no such thing as the main protagonist of a story.

Unfortunately, Eich was not a game, and Suana was not destined to be the emperor, so she was dead, miserably so. In the end, her death had become the spark of the war she hated the most. This was indeed a perfect irony, but also a warning sign for me.

"I have only one opportunity, everything's over if I fail this. Hence, there must be no risk involved, all the bad consequences must be taken into account, as any additional preparation is always a plus."

At this moment, however, I suddenly regretted, because some of the things should have been done far more modestly.

"Aren't you guys going too far? I was only asking for several supporting equipment, what are all of these you have brought me?"

In front of me was Pier Papin (Runa's Daddy), the vice captain of Borealis. He was demonstrating the equipment requested by me.

"Sailor outfits? Fake animals' ears? You call these weapon equipment? What I want are single-soldier communication devices and enchanted armours, did you hear wrongly?"

A muscular man dressed in a skinny-fit women's sailor outfit, flaunting his muscular figure beneath the tight outfit was indeed disgusting. Besides exposing his two thick legs, this muscular man in sunglasses had even put on the cute fox ears and tail, one could hardly stand the sight of this!

"Yes, your highness. These are what you requested. Look, this pair of fake ears are installed with a call function, the magic bullet within it allows more than two hundred times of short-distant calls. Also, the wide-eared design is very intelligent, it's able to improve the data transmission rate. This skinny-fit enchanted armour may look thin, but it will harden to be as solid as metal once you activate its magic bullet as well. As it's so thin, you can even wear one of it as the underwear, then put on another one as the armour. Double protection, safe and assuring!"

"And this Fox tail is more than a decoration, it actually contains a small battery which can recharge all the body equipment for more than three times. It is estimated that a single soldier will use those equipment for more than three hours."

Unbelievably, I had tested and found these equipment to be super effective. Many theoretical limitations had been overcome and their completion was much beyond expectation.

"Who is the designer? I would like to have a serious chat with him. Has our technology advanced so rapidly? Why implement

such decent technology on these strange designs? Can’t he make something normal? Something just like plate armours and headsets!"

"The chief designer, Little Timmy Lade was here a moment ago. There were some who questioned him too, he answered ‘The well-concealed equipment were the best to play a crucial role, not to mention, cuteness is the true justice!’ That seemed to be his principle as a designer, and nobody was able to change his mind."

At this point, Pier shook his head in disappointment. He wasn’t regretting how he failed to change Timmy's mind, but how Timmy had turned down his suggestions all the way, which was just to add one naval outfit in the samples.

"It appears that people with different principles could never plan something together. A little kid could never discern the romance in the large metal warship and heavy artillery. Lady warships are obviously the most gorgeous... but following your instructions, he should be marketing the lite version of the enchanted armour and communication animal’s ears to the coalition army right now."

"Yes, he was impressed by the creativity you have, especially how you used your ally units as guinea pigs."

"Little Timmy?"

This had prompted me to recall the name of the little kid under my sister’s guardian. Was it again the Hand of God that had assisted him? How could he instantly rise to such a great fame?

"Certainly, a lot of things had happened in the middle. He was just a little kid. Anyway, why do these designs keep reminding of one wicked man...Wait, you said that he is now promoting the lite version of the enchanted armours to the coalition army? And that includes these messy and inexplicable things?"

"Yes, here is the purchase order by Lord Olivia, she asked for your thorough review. These products are designed by Little Timmy Lade. There are twenty-seven kinds of animals ears, such as cat ears, dog ears, fox ears, etc. There are nineteen kinds of enchanted armours, in the form of swimming suits, bikinis, black and sexy lingerie, etc. There are four kinds of chargeless magic swords, and three hundreds of them for each kind. At last, there are four kinds of demonic explosive grenades, and two thousands of them for each kind. The grenades are a weakened version which is specially modified. Please send this data back to the headquarters immediately. Is there any question?"

"Big question! Can these toys be sold? How am I going face the people tomorrow?"

To think that I was peddling underwear to the generals of all countries, I really wanted to kill myself.

Perhaps the news would spread across all countries on tomorrow, and everyone would be jeering me for taking the path of a pervert, I must stop this from happening before it’s too late.

"He has just left for a while, hasn’t he? Alright, I just need to stop

him as soon as possible. It would be great if I catch him alone, as that will only be treated as a prank of a kid."

After all, the Bear kids were notorious for their pranks, so the adults should be able to comprehend it. Yes, they should be, reluctantly. It had taken a load off my mind by thinking this way.

"Oh no! Lord Xueti had joined the party and even volunteered to be the model. The last time I saw him, he was wearing a pink swimming suit that revealed his belly, and a pair of rabbit ears... I must say, that was a total tragedy, and the researchers had vomited on sight."

"...Your expression not convincing at all. You are nothing better. Ughhh, stop him now!"

Compared to the big guy in sailor suit at the front, with a little imagination, one could figure out how disgusting is the outlook of the stupid cow in pink midriff-exposing swimming suit, it could make everyone go blind. Who would have thought that he even acted cute by putting on the rat ears! At that moment, I would rather destroy this world than to bear the imminent humiliation.

At least, I would not need to prevent that from the happening.

"Chase him! The pervert beastman is heading towards there!"

"Barf, our brothers have thrown up in disgust. Can we chase later?"

"...must catch him before more victims appear. Hunters? Keep chasing."

"Chasing is not even needed, just follow these vomiting residents as the sign! Even my baby is fainting. An army dog which has been in training for almost ten years is still unable to stomach this horrible sight."

Looking out of the window, I immediately covered my eyes and knelt down.

"You fellows know no limit, I will transfer you all to the mines for mining!"

Not to mention about the foremost Minotaur in a pink belly-exposing swimsuit, for a muscular man who was two meters tall but wearing a women's swimsuit, it was indeed a living blasphemy. Elaboration would be unnecessary, as the scene of thick belly shaking periodically below the swimsuit while running was more than enough to render the spectators blind.

Behind him, there were even more "surprises".

The goblin, Kabala was wearing the trendy white nurse costume, but with his neurotic appearance, he looked more like a psychiatric patient who needed treatment. Meanwhile, Casio was wearing a black erotic lingerie which covered the two nipples. It was almost impossible for one to stare at a Centaur with his two nipples covered!

The twin-headed Wendigo was wearing cat ears on his left head, dog ears on his right head, and a maid costume on his body. To one’s surprise,he even put on lipstick on his bloody mouth... As one who was especially fond of maid costume, my eyes had gone blind right away.

For Beifeng... he was very normal, but his eyes were glaring at his comrades who were wearing the animal ears. He seemed to be thinking about hunting these people down. At this moment, I genuinely oppose the design of animal-ears communication devices! It was too dangerous in the presence of Beifeng.

"You bunch of bastards! I’d rather you all went streaking!"

Chapter 156: Fortification

There was an ongoing debate about truth and culture in my office. I, on the other hand, was receiving a challenge from a junior.

"As a race that openly looked down on the other races has no future, those foolish long ear-ers are the most obvious examples! If you look upon the younger and different races as savages, you have as well closed the gate of advancement."

"Yes, well said! Keeping the old ways of thinking and closing up one’s mind will only lead to mental rigidity, and one will, at last, be left behind times."

"That is why, we should be adept at learning the cultures of other races, perhaps today, they will be looked upon as wannabes, uneducated, uncultured, wild and unruly, but who knows, they will be looked upon by future generations as pioneers! Any artist who is more advanced than his era, has always, in the beginning, not been accepted in his own era."

"Yes indeed, there are a lot of such examples, many of the classics today are unconventional revolutionaries of the past. The non-mainstream bands of the past have, to everyone’s surprise, become superstars, and those strange convoluted looking puzzles actually became some sort of impressionist’s holy work. For an old-timer such as me, it is really confusing. Perhaps I will never ever begin to understand, but I will not hinder the development of new conceptions, on the contrary, I will even try to support them."

"Glad that you understand. Your majesty, we are progressing into a new era, to build a thriving new era, we must accept the cultures of other races and personal preferences. To respect and attempt to understand is the beginning of all communication, and this world is in such chaos because it is lacking sensible and wise people like you."

"Hehe, Little Timmy, you and your silver tongue, you flatter this old man’s heart with your words."

"Well the, what about my designed plan?"

"Hehe, it still won’t do."

Seeing Timmy Lade sputter and frustrated, I grinned cruelly, you scum humiliated me and told the world I was vengeful and petty, then I shall show you how vengeful I could be.

"You say all these just so that your cat-eared communication devices, animal-tailed battery, armoured swimsuit series can be approved? Are you serious? Or do you think I am so easily tricked by sweet words? True, I have always respected the culture of other races, but are you certain that these perverted inventions are according to normal aesthetic standards, and not just to satisfy your selfish desires? You dare to swear it on your conscience? Do you dare swear it on your sister’s reputation?

Good, Timmy Lade was at a lost for words now, but I continued.

"What’s more, even if it is for your selfish desires, your considerations are way too simple. Everyone says that the maid look is good, and you know that I do indeed like the maid outfit, but how would look if a 6 feet tall strong man with a three feet waistline wore this maid costume? It burned my eyes, and I had completely lost all my senses! I had to stare at Elisa the whole night to recover from that!"

"...you are way too naive, all you thought about was the youth and cuteness of young ladies in bikinis, but you had never thought about the horror of old ladies in these swimsuits. You only thought about sailor girls and young girls, but never about the old women who think they are sexy sailor girls or hot witches. And don’t even get me started with those old men and their hairy legs and chest. They burned my eyes, I had nightmares that entire night!"

I was not exaggerating this time, I could vividly describe the scenes in the dream right now.

"In that nightmare, a bunch of buff strong men wearing the maid costume were marching in an orderly manner, and giving me the army’s salute. They perked up their butts as they swayed as if on the catwalk, and purposely raised the little witch’s wand as they shouted the war cries, some nonsense like "representing the moon to punish you", "love and bravery", and that’s not all, there are other mentally polluting ones like "Niko Niko Niko", "I didn’t take my medicine today, and I feel that I am so cute", what is going on!"

"There’s more, I am not saying that I am that educated, but what do they think they’re doing, raising one arm and shouting "Hail, the King of Gents!". Isn’t that sort of plagiarism a little too

obvious? I’m not some King of Gents!"

My roar could be heard from outside the walls, but that was only the beginning of my venting. Due to that strange parade, I was so shaken that I couldn’t sleep after that, and was staring at Elisa with my blood-rimmed eyes for half the night, she must have thought that I had gone completely insane.

"Scoundrels are not scary, what’s scary are cultured scoundrels. Perverts are not scary, what’s scary are perverts with knowledge. Naughty children creating mischief are not scary, what’s scary is when their mischief goes unpunished!

It has been years ever since I had it so bad. Even my reputation got dragged into this and developed towards this strangeness. How could it be possible if I didn’t take my revenge.

Naughty children must be disciplined, the more twisted they were the earlier they should be corrected and reprimanded. Otherwise, it was only a matter of time before they evolved into mega naughty children.

"Bam!" At the snap of my fingers, the main door was thrown wide open, a group of burly looking men glided in, they were all strongly-built, but wearing the costumes designed by Timmy Lade... Well, I won’t describe them in detail as I still wanted to have lunch later, anyway, even if I managed to shut my eyes before I saw them, the sound of the flesh bumping against each other made me nauseated.

"...I think I can guess your preference since this is your own design, then you should enjoy this properly!"

"Wait a moment, your majesty, I know what I did was wrong! Argh! Get your chest off me, that is so disgusting, don’t rub your oily face against mine, my Lord, help, I see that I am wrong now!"

Even though I closed my eyes before seeing the scene, the tortured screams of a naughty child still made my heart glad.

"Wrong? Play with your new friends for a few hours and think about it. Take him away."

"Little Timmy, my apologies, these are the orders of his majesty. But relax, the leader has already approved your application to join the Gentlemen Alliance, from now on we are all brothers. After he allows the remaining few of his core members down the flagpole, we can hold an initiation ceremony for you. Everyone likes your design very much, so your designs can be directly passed through internally in our team, so you need not worry about the lack of research funding."

"...wait wait, when did I ever applied to join some alliance for perverts... don’t touch me, I brought honor to Mist Kingdom! I bled for his majesty! You can’t do this! You can’t! Your majesty, I beg of you, hang me on the flagpole too."

As I heard that he volunteered to be hanged on the flagpole, I started to discern his repentance. Timmy Lade had probably learned his lesson this time, and would think over carefully before

doing anything in the future, thereby, I made a decision.

"Hehe, no way!"

A naughty child's promise? Even if he was sincere when he made the promises, but judging by the forgetfulness of naughty children, they can completely forget about their toys after two days, and if he wasn't severely punished this time, then the next time he'll most probably make the same mistake. I shall let you remember this for the rest of your life.

"Aaaaargh! Sister, princess, your majesty, save me! Idiot! Don't touch my ass! Aaargh, my first kiss. I was saving it for sister!"

Good, that tortured scream was delightful, and hearing this naughty child's scream, my mood seemed to be better.

"Oh by the way, add some spice for the guys hanging on the flagpole, let the demonic marksman use them as targets, don't let them be idle. Don't worry, target practising has never killed anyone. Don't think I do not know, these guys are experienced now that they have been hanging for so long, "What is the most energy saving pose to sleep when you are hanged upside down?". Ha! I'd like to see how you sleep while you are being shot at."

After settling all these nuisances, it was now time to put my attention on serious matters.

My Undead patrols and Aurora Air Cavalry were reputed as the

highest-rank spies amongst the battlefield. With their efforts, I had a certain amount of confidence about the battlefield.

I had no idea what the allied armies were doing on their side, but there had been several military meetings where I was not even invited, most likely they were up to some schemes. Of course, I had made my own calculations on this, the information that I shared was chosen very carefully.

Putting aside their years of prejudice, Beastmen and Elves were working together closely, whereas humans were playing political games among themselves, no matter how I looked at it, the situation on our side was unfavourable.

However, since the Elves made their entry, I was no longer worried about the problem in Antoin. This was not a military problem, but a political one.

If my predictions were not wrong, the elves were raising the flag of vengeance, the war was on the horizon, and will eventually involve the mega powerful countries of Humans as well as the cathedrals. And then, since they had declared war against Sleuweir, if Antoin falls, and Sleuweir razed to the ground, should they not consider returning back home?

I was afraid this was the reason of Beastmen being inconsistent with their invasion of the city. The Antoin of Sleuweir was but a large bait in the plan. If the bait was dead before the plan could be executed, then how the plan plays out had to be reconsidered.

Considering the current situation, if the final battle was lost, killing half of the seven kingdoms in the Northlands should be enough. However, if any of the mega kingdoms interfere, for example, San Antonio with personal connections, those little elven kingdoms in the Northland would not stand a chance.

"Elisa, do you know the inside story? Have you any news?"

"None, this is not part of our responsibility, but I can smell the stench of devils in this. Their hands had played a part in this chaos, it is their favourite game to come up with all these pointless evil schemes. If the demons were leading, they would have definitely begun with the blood sacrifice to summon the demon generals. When the army arrives, they will steamroll through the whole way, these useless little tactics are so laughable."

Indeed, this also matched my understanding of the two races of Chaos faction. Demons had been known to be lurking among other races, to create disputes or to hatch evil plans, with many devilish strategies.

"No, I must go and have a look."

Sitting at home, blindly giving instructions is not my style when the situation is unclear to me, hence, I did not hesitate when I jumped onto my steed, the Frigid Nightmare, and rode to the front lines to investigate.

The flying Frigid Nightmare suddenly transformed into its ethereal form, dodging the lightning casted by the Lightning Eagles. I transformed into War Angel forms while I was in the mist, and silently flew away from the clouds.

"Dismissed!"

At the next moment, just as the Lightning Eagle Knights had their attention shifted towards Irene, whose body just recondensed again, in that split second, the giant sword coming from up above struck them down straight away.

With the strength of Irene's legs, Antoin shouldn't be far, but these air cavalries, who kept intercepting along the way were indeed troublesome. I had already met four of these little groups on my way. Although Lightning Eagles who had Hammerburst as their only superpower, were not difficult to be dealt with, their extreme speed and outstanding eyesight certainly made them worthy opponents, one might run but might not escape, and would be at last forced to swallow all their attacks.

At this stage, even my transfiguration and Irene's invisibility which could be performed only thrice per day, had all been forcefully spent, it seemed that we had reached our limit.

Not far from here, Antoin was surrounded, but I would not take a step further as the alarm in the Beastmen's camp had rang out abruptly. Uncountable air cavalries started flying up into the air, two-legged flying dragons, Lightning Eagles, bird-bodied witches, and as if all these traditional soldiers were not enough, I even saw a young green dragon knight.

"This has completely sealed off the air route towards Antoin. Let’s go home, Irene."

Just as I sent orders to back home, the black cat which was hiding from the wind in the snuck out by itself.

"Don’t be hasty, circle around more, do you see what is below those stone pillars? Look closer, God forbid there will be new problems."

Very well, a word from the expert, and the officer broke his leg running. After I flew around the stone pillar twice and began playing hide-and-seek with the little green dragon for a full ten minutes, Harloys finally nodded and began speaking.

"It has been confirmed. Go back, since they have decided to act this way, I’m afraid that the final battle is before us."

"Why is that?"

I skillfully dodged the dragon’s breath attack from behind, while I leisurely flicked my middle finger towards the dragon rider. This dragon did not even have a fully formed beard, I reckoned he was not yet a hundred, he might even be a livestock from a Beastman’s farm. Perhaps his abilities were quite strong, but totally inferior in terms of experience on the battlefield.

After Irene transformed into a bird form and flew at full throttle,

the green dragon was nowhere to be seen after mere minutes. After we managed to shake off the Beastmen air cavalries, I could finally ask Harloys on her discovery.

"All of you meat on a stick, how could you possibly understand the secrets of sorcerers... don’t shake, don’t shake, I’ll fall! Fine, I’ll tell you, the Earth elemental beings are building a city. You must have heard of the Fort of Elements, perhaps in a few days there will be another gigantic city around here. At that time, you will be invading a big city whereas they will be attacking a small city. Oh, that would be amusing."

I shook my head in disbelief.

"Don’t play with me, Fort of Elements can only be summoned on the elemental plane. This is but the main plane.

"Yes, this is then the second problem, the main gate to the Earth elemental plane is opening as we speak, very soon you will be swarmed with uncountable stone men."

Chapter 157: Plundering The Foundation

No matter how unsettled and agitated the world below was, there was always a calming peace beyond the sea of clouds.

In my eyes, clouds moved, formed, and changed shape in sync with their own slow rhythm. Just looking at them was sufficient to slow down the heartbeat and mind, the heart would be at peace, but the aggregation of the wind before the eyes was certainly out of control.

Above the throne high in the clouds, a raging cyclone aggregated into a dark vortex, from which the Lightning Fury was overflowing without a halt, and his roar was as resonant as the thunderstorm.

Yes, it was him, not it, the powerful Wind Elemental God, Camdian, the last member of the four great Elemental Gods, and also the youngest among them.

"Puny little thing, do you mean to say, that dull-witted block of stone actually planned to open the main gate towards the Earth elemental plane, on the main plane? That is absolutely impossible! Even if it is him, he would never be able to sustain such an enormous rate of consumption. Besides, this is different from the agreement we had in the beginning!"

It sounded like an interrogation, it sounded like a question, and after hearing this, I just smiled.

"Agreement? Ow, Lord Camdian, did you just come upon the stage? You actually believe in verbal agreements? Let me guess, the agreement you had must be that each of you would fight their own wars, and the lands you win would be yours to keep."

The storm continued whirling, an indistinct face remained solemn. However, this solemness was explanation enough, in a sense, this sketchy agreement is also the only agreement that could be accepted.

"Haha, speaking about honour with demons and dark gods, I applaud you for even thinking of that! Do you think, that if you were in such a position, someone would be willing to help you open the main gate towards the Wind elemental plane, the gate towards the territory of howling gales? But what about your relationship with Emordilorcan? Haha."

"Besides a few special planes, a main elemental plane must maintain its balance. Regarding the reality of the situation of Eich Continent, the great philosopher Aristotle once brought up the subject of the four elements. In his eyes, everything was made up of Earth, Water, Air and Fire, and can be separated into solid, liquid, air, and plasma states. At the same time, the four elements were also the combination of dryness, wetness, coldness, hotness, and other properties. For example, dryness and coldness produce Earth, and Water contains wetness and coldness. The ensemble of all must remain balanced, and thus between the elements, competition for the land would always persist, this is the fundamental law of the world.

"From any perspective, the properties of the elements are all

different. Yet they are always in pairs. The flames that represent high temperature and the ice that represents low temperature; the land that represents solid and the storm that represents a free state, they fight each other yet achieved balance, this was decided by the basic properties of the element. When this world and the rocky caves of the Earth elemental plane are chained together, do you think there is still a place in this world for you to interfere, Wind Elemental God? Perhaps you and your race, will forever be sealed within this world."

The solemn silence continued, but from how Lightning Fury flowed over this entire gigantic body, my message was successfully delivered. As the two were old rivals, Camdian certainly knew that once the Earth Elemental plane and the main plane interlocked, it would not end well for him too.

"This time, I come to represent the Gods of Law, with the purpose of extending the hand of friendship, to a great existence such as yourself. Why should you bend your knee before the junior? There are many things we could discuss further."

"Order faction? Hehe, do you think there are any differences between them and those bastards from the Chaos faction?"

"No, I only represent the Gods of Law. Of course, there are some big-shots that I can not reveal."

He extended his arm, and within the white crystal ball was a message that could only be heard by the designated receiver, and just as the shining crystal ball finished transmitting the message, he crushed it with his large hand.

"Do you think, with a clever tongue, you can convince the mighty peak of Winds to serve you? Get out of my sight! I do not wish to look at you now."

The order of expelling guests rang out like a thunderstorm. I turned and left without a word, but with a smile on my lips.

From what I understood about this old antique being, not only did he not order his guards to attack me, but instead gave out the order that I was to leave. This meant that he was convinced, and appreciated the gesture.

There were no complete secrets in this world, the news of my rendezvous with Camdian would not be utterly airtight, a bad parting such as this was, in fact, the best ending. From my view, as long as no swords were drawn, it meant that the deal was done. If that fellow actually wanted to repudiate, he would have crushed the ball without looking at it.

"Earth Elemental God? Fort of Elements? Haha, Emordilorcan, I have found you a worthy opponent. Hmph, if you could lure the Elves from the Order faction, why I couldn’t lure the Wind elements from the Chaos faction?"

Before a country, a war is the birth of politics. A war is for benefits, and behind every sudden war, there are the invisible arms and batons.

At this point, I could almost visualise the plan from the Chaos

faction.

In this whole sacred war, the invasion of the elements was just the appetizer. Their core benefit was still to increase the degree of the elemental tide, to prepare for the upcoming Entree.

Perhaps it was unfair to the Beastmen and the Elves, but in a sense, their actions of war were just a form of voting, and more importantly, it was but a camouflage of the real strategy of the Chaos faction.

"The interlocking of Elemental planes? What a joke."

If the elemental tide being blown up by the four great Elemental Gods was one on the scale of 1 to 10, then the complete interlocking of an elemental plane was, fearfully, at least ten. Then, all the strategies of the Chaos faction could then be brought forward.

"If the invasion of demons and the arrival of dark Gods happens now, who can stop them! Most importantly, this is not some game where you only need to accomplish your mission, and the enemies will not come one at a time to increase your level, they will come all at once! The elemental gate must not be opened!"

To increase the elemental tide is a gradual process, countless elemental creatures on the main plane would be killed, or banished to their own elemental plane. Remaining elements would be dissipated across the whole world. The Elemental Tide would then rise because of this.

Not to mention the influence of elemental Fort of Elements and tremendous Earth elemental reinforcements towards the situation on the battlefield, just based on the strategic significance, I did not wish in any way to see the Elemental gates being opened.

But if I were to stop it, there was one problem.

I would not be able to defeat it.

Yes, I could not do it, there was no chance at all. The opening of the Earth Elemental plane will of course be done personally by the Earth Elemental God. Should one stop him from that, he would definitely fight you to the death.

Although Emordilorcan was not highly ranked among the Elemental Gods, and did not have any notable achievements, just the fact that he could survive to this day albeit his horrible relationship with the other Elemental Gods, was more than enough to prove his astounding might.

It had been said, as the oldest existence of the four Elemental Gods (if a God of Element dies, a new King of Element would be ascended to the God of Elements), he was thus reputed by all as the strongest Elemental God. I was afraid his abilities weren't below any of the Gods.

Demigods could be killed by being swarmed by a sea of soldiers. But with such an existence, unless there was an intervention from the gods, with such an opponent, sending any number of people was to no avail.

Therefore, I thought of looking for help.

The group of true Gods from the Order faction need not be considered, but the one going on a hunting trip with the Black Winged people, wasn't he Camdian, the nemesis of Emordilorcan?

Was he an enemy? Indeed, but what could be done? The Elves and the Elven Gods were still the allies of humans, every sacred war brought about a reformation of the forces across the whole continent, such events like the switching of sides and betrayals, were too common.

Therefore, after finding out that Camdian and the Black Winged people were not far from the Northland, I rushed here personally without a word, even though this "not far from here" was at least half a month's journey.

"Realising that the Earth Elemental gate is not something that could be done at once, the Chaos faction would definitely not like to see the final battle take place yet. Antoin, on the other hand, will be safe."

Regarding Camdian, it was still handled by me. These old antiques were very particular about reputation and ostentation, and if these were lacking, you were considered lucky if they just showed you the door, as normally they would just destroy you. Especially in such an important persuasion, sincerity was even more stressed upon. Obtaining the anticipated answer, I was now a little more relieved.

Stepping into the long-awaited vulture-shaped assault ship, I started my own journey home. Even with the short-noticed preparation, the signals from the front lines remained unbroken.

The drivers started preparing themselves.

"A strange peace remained on the battlefield, the Elves seemed to be reorganizing their troops, the main legions of four countries are moving, the total numbers have already exceeded one hundred and fifty thousand. Taking into consideration the adult Elves are at least Silver rank in terms of their battle strength, they could be a formidable strength."

"Of the three walls of Antoin, only the innermost one is left, but the attacks have stopped. The troops of San Antonio have set foot in the Northland, and have officially taken over the defence of Maple City. If we went back now, I’m afraid we might encounter some problems."

"The human allied forces have already started fighting with the Beastmen, both sides have wins and losses, it is just as you expected. The Beastmen from three different routes have started merging, this has been a cage from the beginning. Damn it, they dare to deceit the Demon King."

"Moreover, just as you predicted, the second snow storm came, and sealed off the mountain. Now, the troops are trapped within their own city, and the supplies consumed on a daily basis are sky high. Only the stronger soldiers will manage to survive in such a

freakish weather, you need not worry about missing the year's great show."

Elisa's report carried some resentment, it seems that when she was making fun of the Beastmen Warchiefs, the Beastmen Warchiefs did not tell her their real strategy, and this made her very upset.

"And that little nonsensical stuff, like the group of bastards from the Gentlemen Alliance, they came looking for me when you were not here..."

My departure and the recent appointment had caused a lot of errands to fall onto her shoulders, but in a sense it meant that if she was not here I would not have left, feeling assured.

"Eck, didn't I have important matters to discuss? Oh yes, how is our situation here?"

"Our firearms are selling like hot cakes. The chargeless magic sword has, after experimentation, received unanimous good reviews, the order list for the demonic explosive grenade is full until the year after next, we are not able to make them all the next year. The profit of the first sale is at least four times the capital, we are earning so much!"

"How's the training situation?"

"The training of the smaller groups are going smoothly, but there

had not been many chances for training our troops. The fighting matches between Elite Air Cavalries have become very frequent as of late, but obviously the youngsters will not be able to interfere in this. Your Skull Dragon Knight Timier recently assaulted that Azure Dragon Knight and Storm Dragon Knight, it was sensational, and there have been rumours that he has been named "The number one Air Cavalry of the Northland"."

"What about those little toys?"

"The first batch of war machines have arrived at their destination, the deal was just concluded two days ago with that Blackface. The first batch has three types of the seven-staged ones, specially built to fight against the Beastmen's Behemoth, and the profit for this sale is at least four hundred thousand gold coins. Nothing is more profitable than selling war machines in times of war."

Elisa stopped, but there was some hesitation in her words.

"Waiting idly for the war to escalate? Doesn't that contradict our original intention?"

Hearing this, I could only laugh bitterly. Of course, I did not wish for the war to escalate, but this was laid out by the Chaotic faction. What could I do before breaking this?

Reaching out to crush Emordilorcan? I supposed I would be the one killed.

"I too, want the war to stop, but this peace game cannot be talked out, only when enough blood has been lost, only will there be a true desire for peace, and understanding of the preciousness of peace. I only hope that after this war, the Northland will be quiet for a few years, to give us enough time. Oh yes, since there is nothing going on at home, I'm afraid I will be taking the longer route."

To stop the war? Have both sides obediently sitting on the negotiation table? Besides having a neutral position, the most important factor was that one must have the ability to make both sides set aside their differences. However, I did not fulfil both these conditions, and I absolutely knew not where I should start in order to stop the war.

"Longer route? Are there more important matters?"

"Yes. It's three more days till the winter veil festival, and that will also be the day of the appointment of the Knights in Mist City."

"Back to East Mist to celebrate a festival? You seem to be so free."

"Of course to celebrate, only not with the humans, the Appointment of the Knights, particularly the kind of knights only the Mist Kingdom have. You must have understood that by now."

"You mean...the Aurora Knights?"

"Winter Veil festival is also the day of our appointment with the Frigid Nightmares, and if we miss it, we would have to wait again until next year. Don’t we have insufficient power right now? If I can bring them back here with me, maybe it would be enough."

Every year, during the Winter veil festival, the royal family and the Frigid Nightmare met to unseal the altar. And only on that day, the members of the royal family could retrieve the newborn Frigid Nightmares. If we went a year later, the formation of the Aurora Knight troops would have to be put off for a year. Since the war at the front lines was hindered by the snow as predicted, then, taking a detour to take care of a serious matter would be a rather wise choice.

"Alright, if there’s nothing else, let’s talk when I get back."

"Latest report, the commander of the Elven Kingdom is King Atrion of Tassel Kingdom, the target you wanted me to keep an eye on."

"...I got it."

I sighed, as expected, I knew that this ambitious man would never let pass such a good opportunity.

"Can you tell me what is your relationship with him?"

Elisa’s question took me down a trip to memory lane, I thought of that brilliant, uninhibited elf.

"...just about, more or less like the relationship between me and you."

"Aaaaaa! You really do like men! Who led you astray, Adam or Krose? I will kill him right now!"

I was immediately at loss for words, she even said "really do", how long has it been, would Elisa have reckoned I was gay all this while?

"Get your mind out of the gutter, I have no interest in men! I was talking about the relationship between a teacher and his student, but the relationship was soon broken. Sigh, the teacher-student relationships in our batch seem to all be like this. Harloys, were you really cursed, why is it always such an outcome?"

"How do I know, all I know is that you cut me off, twice!"

Fine, teacher and student were joined by a life of misery, we looked at each other, our eyes filled with tears, we trembled with emotion. It seemed that we are all miserable people.

"Go to hell! Unfilial student! I do not have a follower such as you!"

"Fine, from this unappreciative gesture, I guess I was misunderstood. This damned cat only thought of the past and went crazy with rage.

I picked up the damned cat by its neck, shook it twice, wheeled it three times, and threw her into the waste paper basket prepared specially for her.

"Sigh, seems like this is indeed a tradition. Elisa, next time before you take a student, you better do some background checking."

"Don’t worry, master. I don’t even have the intention of getting students. Just by observing the two of you, I have to spend time nurturing them, and when they grow up, they would most likely be some naughty children who return to kill their own teachers. What is the point?"

I do not know why, but after hearing this, I felt an unexpected sadness, could it be that I brought this upon myself?

"Okay, this topic ends here. Elisa, beware of Atrion. He is, in a way, still your senior, and he is definitely not an easy opponent."

Chapter 158: All Parties

"The snowfall is getting heavier, it seems that the provisions team will be late."

Elisa glanced at the thick, fluffy snow outside the window, and shook her head dejectedly.

This was not the first time a delay is caused by bad weather, from the dreadful anxiousness in the beginning, and the endless, helpless probing for news that never came, and now, the numb dejection and dulled expectations. I suppose in a way, this is a dejected, resigned, acceptance.

After all, this terrible weather not only affected us, and since both sides had to ceasefire, there was nothing to be nervous about.

I must say that the Beastmen chose a very delicate time to advance their attack, the heavy snow that came and went had sunk the war situation into an awkward atmosphere.

Final battle? How does one fight a war while skating and trembling in the cold? Now, just the preparing and distributing of food supplies became a great responsibility, no matter how powerful an army is, they had to learn to respect the majesty of nature.

"Damn it, if only we started half a month earlier, or perhaps, it’s also fine to wait until spring next year."

It would seem that when every Beastmen had been frozen past freezing point, they would have such thoughts. Normally at this time of the year, they would be at their hibernation spots, sleeping around the fireplace.

It was just like procrastination, where initially, everything went according to plan, but as the preparations went on, due to influences from many sides, it resulted in a delay to the most unsuitable time node.

"What? Is the car stuck? Don’t worry, we still have two hours to go. Hmm? Took the wrong way? That’s fine, we still have one hour to go. Airport Runway under construction? No big deal, probably, hmm, half an hour to go, we won’t be late. Hehe, finally we arrive, I told you it would be fine. What! Airport bag checking? At least half an hour? Hey! Hey! Stop joking! Plane, wait for me!"

Yes, it is similar to the above feeling, it was just as an example, of course, definitely not from my own experience...

Eck, back to business, truth be told, this was undoubtedly the evil plot of someone and some demon king. If the expected strategies of the Beastmen went well, there should be no chance of this happening.

However, at this moment, Elisa was not pleased, although her trick went as planned. After all, as time went by, and the warfare continued getting more critical, the burden that fell on her shoulders were becoming too heavy for her.

Yes, she lied. How could it be possible that in war everything will be fine, the Beastmen and the elves were not easy opponents. Although the general circumstances were as she described, the actual pressure was greater than expected.

"I will take care of the house. Don’t worry, didn’t Roland teach me all that I need to know? At least, even if that dumb lass Annie can be the Underworld autarch, how is it possible that I cannot handle all of these alone."

For some reason, Elisa always like to compete with Annie. Even if her capabilities far surpassed that of Annie, she still wanted to prove that she was the most outstanding leader.

But obviously, not everything could be taught, the confusing situation on the battlefield in front of us was way more challenging than the hostile forces in the underworld, which had mostly been cleared up already.

"The Beastmen Air Knights have come to challenge us again, this time with two Lightning Eagle teams, and that Dragon Knight. On the side of San Antonio, they need Master Timier to lead the war, but it seems that Master Timier has not yet recovered from his wounds."

"San Antonio has its own Air Knights already? Didn’t they have the Griffin Knights? With the mythical Griffin Knight providing support, why can’t they go themselves?"

"...they said Elsen is sick, in other words, we must use our military gains to prove our worth."

Hearing this, Elisa adjusted her glasses without any expression, no one could tell what was on her mind.

"...the mythical Griffin Knight, sick? I should have crushed those jerks! "Flash Crimson Knight" Elsen, is it? Good, I will remember you, I will wait patiently for the day you pass into the river of Styx, or perhaps, I shall send you there myself!"

Even in the human world, a super powered kingdom was, in other words, tyrannical. In their eyes, their willingness to provide aid to all of you in the seven kingdoms of the North is already a god-sent favour. How could a superpower allow a tiny country to instruct them, the right to control the alliance naturally belongs to them.

Kasmi Kingdom, which was in command, was only under the prerequisite of the San Antonio states. Since the arrival of the reinforcements, the commanding power of the allied armies was transferred to the arrogant San Antonians.

At that moment, it was obvious that the people of San Antonio were very unsatisfied with the way the East Mist were claiming the spoils of the war, especially since the reinforcements they sent were the least among the six countries in the North.

But the quality of the lowest Gold Rank East Mist Air Knights had to be taken seriously, even by San Antonio. Therefore, they

summoned the East Mist Air Knight to war in the name of the Allied Commanders.

In the very beginning, the East Mist Aurora Knights and the Skull Dragon Knights never lost a match in every one-on-one battle, so much so that East Mist, which had been known to be weak for many years, gained quite a reputation.

However, the Beastmen had no plans for one-on-one battles. If one is to compare the numbers, the new generation of Aurora Knights from East Mist were not yet mature, the numbers of Undead Air Cavalry were too few, and they have other responsibilities in the war, as even Timmier had been wounded by the opponents.

"What about the other Aurora Knights? Are there any left who are capable of battling?"

Even at the height of its glory, East Mist did not have more than a hundred of Aurora Knights that were above the lowest Gold Rank. At this time, due to certain reasons, among the fifty Aurora Knights from the Undead Air Cavalry, only fifteen are situated in the Northland, and majority of them were not in Maple City.

"Two Aurora Knights have not recovered from their injuries, three are in good shape. The rest are undertaking patrol duties. His majesty Reyne, on the other hand, applied to join the war, but was heavily berated by Lord Timmier."

It is obvious that even if the three Aurora Knights were of

legendary rank, they were still not enough to handle the opposition's two allied forces of nearly a hundred Air Knights. Although Aurora Knights were good in air battle, the sky was definitely not their most optimal battleground.

Hearing this, Elisa sunk into a deep silence. She was hesitating on whether or not to just destroy the seal, and squash that Dragon Knight to death, then with the same swipe crush those arrogant San Antonians. This would, however, lead to the falling apart of everything, ending with the will to return to the abyss.

"If Roland was here..."

In a sense, this is Elisa's first time carrying the burden of a national scale, so she was hardly to blame for hesitating. Even if she knew this hypothesis was completely meaningless, she still had to consider such a possibility.

"...Mistress Elisa, actually His Majesty Roland had left a letter."

After a long hesitation, the servant finally spoke up, as if the current situation has reached a predicted dilemma.

Did he have to leave a letter when he could have just contacted me directly? Elisa was stunned at the news. However, she could just shake her head reluctantly.

"This guy saw through me again?"

Indeed, Roland had from the start knew Elisa's character, and naturally he made some preparations before he left. In order to preserve her dignity, obviously the letter could not be revealed until it was absolutely necessary.

...since you are reading this letter, then, probably the situation is not pretty. Let me guess, what troubled you, yet made you hesitant to tell me is probably the internal issues within the Allied armies. There are too many external factors in this war, the stand of both my enemies are unstable, it is no surprise for them to betray each other to prioritize their forces. Regarding the other countries? It doesn't matter if we offend all of them. If they cross a line, even if they are our allies, they must also be punished. Just assume that you are in the abyss, and learn how the old demons treat their allies, you know how they handle these things better than me.

Although Roland seemed unreliable, in reality, he was extremely experienced and astute. He might trust anyone, but he does not trust anyone fully. From the beginning, he had already made many plans and contingencies.

In Roland's eyes, even if San Antonio did not come, it would still be difficult for East Mist, with its sparse members to be given the power to command the Allied armies. And once they lose the power to command, or not even having the right to speak within the allied armies, it would be very difficult for them.

This had nothing to do with one's determination. In this temporary coalition, it would seem as if it is the law, that whoever had more strength would have the say. Once the central power of command falls into the hands of another country, it is possible, or

even probable, that you would become cannon fodder.

This was not Roland thinking badly of others, as he would have done the same as well.

He was firmly convinced that if he held the power to command, he would, without a doubt, sacrifice the armies of the other countries, to conserve his main strength. And reality has proven his hypothesis.

However, it appeared that there were not many of them, as in the past few days, East Mist Kingdom actually suffered the least casualties. The kingdoms that suffered the biggest losses were the Kingdom of Lothnen and Anzolo Empire. Small-scale conflicts had occurred during pauses, their infantry and knights were ordered multiple times to cover the rear and the front lines. At the moment, their war losses were three tenths, and more complaints were rising.

This was also the deviation of political factors in the battlefield. These two countries were, among the seven Northland countries, the Four Southern Countries (four countries that are leaning towards the southern powers). With Sleuweir Kingdom, the Four Southern Countries is on the verge of ruin, and the Kingdom of Kasmi being independent of everything else, and with the three Northland countries not that keen on taking orders, it was very obvious who would be used as cannon fodder.

The most unfortunate one was probably the Kingdom of Lothnen. Although politically, they leaned towards the North, as members of their Royal family were made up of Southern

royalties, after many disputes, they were instead crushed by the Southern superpower San Antonio.

For the three countries in the North, apart from East Mist there were two more countries: the Kingdom of Shuya, of the Barbarian bloodlines in the Highland countries; and another one almost as ancient as Mist Kingdom, Kingdom of Phoenix's Down. They completely disregarded the ridiculous commands from the people of San Antonio.

Of course, these things could not be told as it is, but if one were to put aside all the facade and pretence to look at the results directly, the interactions between any countries are usually that brutally direct.

In reality, with Elisa's capabilities, how could she not see all these twists? It was only because the responsibility of being the substitute of Roland was a heavy role, and had made her too scrupulous. This led to her inability to make hostile decisions. Now that there is the relief from reading Roland's assurance in the letter, naturally no longer hesitated so much.

"Let's say even our Air Knights are sick, hmm, a cold and fever of forty degrees Celcius, how can they fly in the air to fight? What? Do spectres not have fever? Then diarrhoea. Hmm, yes, I plainly only want to toy with them and shame them. If they don't like it, then first ask them, how can Elsen get sick. If the negotiations do not fall through, then let Timier meet that Griffin Knight, and see if he has recovered already."

When Elisa made up her mind not to fulfil everyone's wishes,

and let them have a piece of her mind, she felt a little bit more relieved.

Just when she was planning to make herself a cup of Black tea and take a break before taking care of those annoying official affairs, an obtrusive silhouette barged in.

"Oh no, latest news. Anzolo Empire suddenly switched sides before the battle, they attacked our army camps, we lost!"

"Hummph."

The seven Northland countries changed to the six Northland countries in an instant. No matter how cultured Elisa is, she still spat out the Black tea in her mouth. At this moment, she finally understood what Roland meant.

"Every holy war is the time when each country and each superpower renew their stance, the stand of both my enemies are unstable, it is common for them to betray each other to prioritize their forces, we must maintain the superiority of our strength."

Within the hangar of the Borealis, a group of engineers were busy working. For some unknown reason, the team of youngsters including Cohen and Timmy Lade became the leaders of the research group.

"Why does his majesty still not allow us to do trial runs on the battlefield with these? If they could perform as well as they did in theory, our situation would be much improved, then we will show the Northies what's good."

"Wisdom of ordinary people."

Ever since he started rubbing shoulders with His Majesty Roland, Timmy Lade took a liking for such contrived speech.

Nowadays, if one were to ask him anything, he will always adjust his glasses (plain lens), and intermittently added phrases like "Foolish humans", "commoner's mentality", "even monkeys are smarter than all of you".

Whether or not it made him seem wiser was another matter to be discussed another time, but it does make one want to give him a good beating.

Hmm, many of those in the Gentlemen Alliance had given him a good beating, but obviously, little Timmy had forgotten.

"...what do you mean by saying this? We are not Gods, so obviously we are ordinary people. You have not told me why can't we enter the battlefield."

Fine, facing the serious-faced Cohen, facing multiple playoffs, even Timmy Lade, who is experienced in escaping had to tone down a little.

"My foolish brother..."

It seemed like, in a way, this toning down is limited.

"I am older than you, and additionally, we are not related."

It seemed that Cohen was a stubborn guy. It is just with this character that, after receiving the command from Roland, he made Timmy Lade work over time obediently, and finally, Timmy Lade had become a little impatient.

"You blockhead, you haven’t got an ounce of humour or the likes of an artist, are you really a sorcerer? You are just like those meat-on-a-stick Knights!"

"I was never a sorcerer. Am I really like a Knight? That’s great! Hehe, I am not as good as you say I am."

All right, next, it was time for the delighted little Timmy to go on a rampage, but even if he was given two extra limbs, there is no chance for him to defeat Cohen. Somehow, this young, yet stubbornly old-fashioned Cohen is the natural enemy of Timmy!

"Fine, I will say it as it is, his majesty’s wish is that right now, these people below are completely unreliable. They are meant to be used as our back-up, they can’t be used if we are not in a critical moment."

"When is a critical moment then?"

"A lot of times, but before those critical moments, we will not use them. Only when those at the higher ranks decides that it is time to use them, then the light at the hangar will turn from green to red."

"Green light? I don’t see it, am I colourblind?"

"It’s just at the top, The red light means... hang on, the light is red!! It’s war!"

The Xiluo Swamp, Karda Desert, Bejya Highlands, were forbidden areas for the living, and the territory of Xiluo Empire.

Yet it had become a war zone, countless undeads were killing each other at this moment. The battlefield was filled with the screams of that shapeless Black God of Death,the ground was scattered with bones and the putrid scent of rotting flesh. The Undeads from both our side and theirs were using actual battles to exchange their own understanding of the art of death.

The civil war in Xiluo had continued for many months already. At this stage, both sides have already suffered terrible losses, and the time has arrived for the war to end.

Yet at this crucial moment, more than thirty Air Knights

appeared. The black cloaks they wore hid their identity, but from the way the transparent white apparitions rode and the way they exuded the terrifying aura of death, they appeared to be Death Knights of very high ranks.

Just as they touched the ground, a silhouette was already there, waiting.

"Finally you have arrived. It must have been a tiring journey, too bad there is no time for rest."

"Ha, as if we need rest, little Lionheart. In accordance with the orders of his majesty, we have arrived. Our plans can now begin, of course, depending on how you look at it, it could also serve as the ending."

The once great city Antoin had suffered the worst catastrophe in history, not only did the city lose a large portion of the city wall, more dangerously, the master of the city had lost the loyalty of his people.

During the long invasion, the people and soldiers had willingly sacrificed themselves without complaint, and yet, when the supplies were depleting, not only did the royal court not open up the national coffers to distribute food, they gave out orders to retract the army’s provisions, and this had incurred public anger.

From the start of the war, King Fismer Caso had never been seen. In addition to that, previously before the attack from the Beastmen, it was said that Prince Roland had sent a warning, but not only did Fismer paid it no heed, he even suspected that the Prince had other intentions.

Now evidence had proven the stupidity of his majesty, and his behaviour of hiding within the palace walls proved his cowardice, and on top of that, his hoarding of food supplies, proved his selfishness. This majesty's name had been ruined beyond repair.

In this perilous world, the people had the responsibility to provide for their leaders, but leaders have the responsibility to protect his people. This was the fundamental element of trust between the two parties. When the leader refuses to carry out the most basic of his responsibility, then how is he going to sit on his throne?

"Fismer is unworthy to be King!"

There were already such chantings amongst the people on the streets and alleys, but at this moment, the King who had just executed a concubine who advised him to show up at the city walls and fight with the people continued hiding and quaking in fear within the palace.

"All of you want me dead! All of you want me dead! All of you are assassins sent by that Roland, you want to take away my throne! I will never grant you that wish, I must live!"

In the meantime, in a household in Antoin, two illegal passengers were at a loss on what to do next.

"Margaret, I really want to kill jerks like this, must we keep him?"

"...if it annoys you, then by all means, help yourself, but don't kill him. Or else this city is finished. "Spare Antoin" Hmph, that Roland really knows how to assign tasks at leisure."

"Don't worry, he will get his retribution soon, my intuition is always accurate. It's like the commonly known...Shu...Shura?" [1]

"...Shuraba you mean? Huh, and Roland invented this weird noun, but it fell upon himself every time. But this time, it most probably won't happen in front of Elisa, I do feel that Reyne is not a threat at all, your intuition is probably wrong this time."

"Hehe, it's not entirely an intuition."

The red-haired soldier shook the scrunched up letter, that was a greeting from his hometown, and the expected visit of someone.

"And you did not tell Roland? You plan to deceive him?"

"Hehe, I really forgot this time, it was absolutely unintentional."

"If you forget every time, then it is on purpose."

Few people knew that the most hidden pathway in the Northland which led to the Underworld, was actually within the Elven territory.

At this moment, a group of adventurers, formed by two young ladies were wandering within.

Anya, are you sure this is the road? Why do I feel like we are on the wrong path."

"Sister Annie, believe me just this once, there is no mistake, I swear by my grandfather’s name, my iron hooves are guiding me now, the way is before our eyes."

"You said that half a month ago, why not find someone to ask?"

"Can I find someone who can answer this... hey, sister witch over there, may I know where can I find the Elven territory from here?"

TL note: "Shuraba 修罗刃" is a living demonic katana from the game Bayonetta. Its unique traits include quick sweeping strikes and jabs which excel against small and agile enemies.

"You are my little Applet, no matter how much I love you it is not enough, your little red cheeks warms my heart, lighting up my

life’s fire, fire fire fire fire!!"

There are many matters waiting to be taken care by me, yet here I am in the snow mountains, drumming and singing away. Why? I guess it is the sing-alongers around me.

"Fire fire fire fire!"

"What is fire? Is it edible?"

"Definitely edible! Didn’t you see that human singing until his tears almost fell, he must be drooling!"

"That’s great, I also want to taste. There are only snow dregs in the snowy mountain."

Among the ones talking are yeti, snow monsters and snow ladies, in this celebration of the Winter Veil festival, they organized large-scaled entertainment activities. When they heard that I am the descendant of the legendary singer, the Mist King, of a thousand years ago, I was informed that if I did not give a good performance, I would not be allowed to take away even one Frigid Nightmare.

Yes, the legendary singer, the one the Mist King used all those years ago to take care of the Frigid Nightmares.

At this moment, how can it be that I am holding back tears because I am drooling? Humans do not even have this ability, I am actually just driven mad with anxiety.

"Encore, encore!"

"What an excellent singing! Little little applet! Marvelous! Little Apple must be the lover that you long for."

"Yes, there are more than enough cubs on the altar, the more songs you can sing, the more you can take away with you."

I finally realized why the Mist King never told anyone what he saw all those years ago. Even if history was all a cover up, but to have such lies to such an extent that must be the only one! If it had been me all those years ago, I would also have died before telling!

I wiped the tears away, with such a show of support from the audience, I could only continue.

My musical talent was extremely inadequate, the lyrics that I could remember of the song were mostly the melody that entranced me by the Demon’s song all those years ago.

"The love who betrayed me forced me to leave, my tears fell as I at last found out the truth..."

Hundreds of years later, there was a legend here, when the mountain people lost his way in the snowy mountains during the

Winter Veil festival, if he came back, he would become foolish and silly, and he would crazily sing the Demon’s song that drives people insane. The ones who heard this music will also become foolish and silly, their whole body will know only to sing along.

"My love is as vast as the sky, the soft ground on the green mountain below my feet, the flowers are blooming..."

TL note: this is the chorus of a popular Chinese pop song.

TL note: Part of the chorus of the song above.

Chapter 159: The Great Snow Mountain

The mystery of nature knows no bound, and as the myth of God of Creation coupled with the wrath of nature, any incredible scene might be crafted, whether it’s a fatal impasse, a magnificent view, or a wonderful sight.

The Great Snow Mountain of the Northland, officially graced as the Great Mountains of the Northmost Snow White, also dubbed as the "Everfrost Arctic Prison", was connected to three of the Seven Northland Countries. The area it occupied was nothing less than a small kingdom, but its inhabitants were rather unique, and the population was indeed small.

Along with the rise of sea level, one could barely see any region uncoated with snow.

The endless snow hills, the miraculous snow-sculpting rocks, the icy stalactites, the silver trees, the skyscraping snow towers, the small world beneath the elemental glacial lake, the frozen upside-down waterfall, and the various strange monsters as rare as the Ice Phoenix and Silver Unicorn, and all the unparalleled breathtaking views of the Snow Mountain had won it the reputable name of the most beautiful life-forbidden zone in the world.

Of course, it had to be a forbidden zone for mortals. It was one of the most frigid places in the world, with an average temperature of negative fifty-degree Celsius. Other than several special occasions, the mountain was always blanketed with heavy snow, and was a place of absolute despair, where no normal living creature would survive.

There were some who even treated it as a sole frost plane. From the perspective of sorcerers, this land held the characteristic of the other world, especially with the overspreading Ice elemental crystals (every elemental plane produces its own elemental crystals). If there comes a day when the Ice Elemental God is born, this would have to be his previous cradle.

This place might not have any signs of normal lives, but it was not until the point of dead silence. While the normal lives could never relish the coldness from the land, it turned out to be the playground of the elementals, spirits and extreme monsters.

The gigantic ice dragon that noticed the flattened person stuck to the sole of its foot after half a day of crawling along the mountains, the elemental wild boar that could make the mountains tremble by just walking, the super ice phoenix that stirs up blizzards by just its falling icy feathers upon its flight, these few creatures were living in this place of no man.

There were even some who were born in the same age with Ayer and possessed unfathomable strength and hidden power. Nevertheless, they had been living here across the centuries, and would never leave here even if the world had come to destruction.

"You heard of it? Two days ago, the ice boar in the north gave birth to a herd of shots, and one of them was a mutant with wings, it could be a boar king of mythical rank in the future."

"Ah I see, that is a big fortune. I’m going to prepare the gifts.

How about visiting the Ice elemental lake to ask for a piece of ice crystal from the old Dragon King?"

The time was crawling pretty slowly here, as it was rather remote. Besides, this snowy land was much more peaceful compared to the outside world. Those lives which coexisted here had known among themselves for hundred years and were no different from the kind of neighbours who chat on a daily basis.

It was probably the nature of ice and snow monsters to embrace peace. This place was always silent and peaceful, but lately, something was different, they had started a new hot topic.

"You heard of it? A superstar singer visited the home of Frigid Nightmares on the birthday of the Pork King’s son. She was the master of ceremony as well as the singer, and her singing was amazing."

"Was it the song "Happy birthday you pig, happy birthday you pig. Pig’s head pig’s brain pig’s body pig’s tail, but a child who is never fussy in eating. Sleeping till the noon day by day, never brushing his teeth and never fighting"? Oh, I heard it once from the neighbours, Ader (the yeti) and little Mi (ice unicorn), so this song was from there. Not bad at all, it sounded pleasant and fitted the occasion!"

"That’s right, everyone calls her "Our Snow Diva". Those people swarm up to her every day?"

"It’s a she? But I was told it’s a boy?"

"...I met the singer once. I may not know much about the gender of the little meaty man, but how could such a cutie be a boy? Could it be that they are just like as us, genderless?"

"Who knows, anyway, the Frigid Nightmares had so much fun lately, it seems that one could only enter this place with their Soul Contract. Is this possibly the first occurrence since the past three hundred years?"

"Certainly, they could be seen singing and dancing on the square above the straits, every day, and it’s that "Little Little Applet" song?"

"...I had been there once, those Frigid Nightmares were dancing and transforming themselves at the same time. In the end, it turned into a chaotic dance performance by a group of monsters."

At this moment, between the straits, before dawn, the sound of singing and dancing from the square was hurting my head again.

"The boundless mountains are my love. To sell of my love, to force me to go away. Your hearts are always too soft, your hearts are too soft. You are my little applet, little applet! little applet! Humph!"

"Damn your little applet, it’s getting pretty old now, you know?"

Unfortunately, this ice cave had no doors or even windows, so I

had no choice but to "enjoy" this insufferable evil sound that was penetrating my brain.

Albeit the unanimous praises from the Frigid Nightmares, I terribly regretted the performance that time, especially after some discovery later.

"A song for a Frigid Nightmare? Oh Oh Oh, that’s just a joke. No matter how unreliable we could be, we will never trade our own people"

What I was feeling that time... If I couldn’t beat it, I could put the lion-alike Frigid Nightmare into the Goblin cannon then fire it, or I could try to barbecue its lion head. I would abandon the fact they were any ancient creatures or even my ancestor’s friends, as the lion head must be delicious...though there was still something wrong with it.

I arrived here out of a promise, regardless of the abundant tasks in hand. Was it easy for me? And yet I was fooled by these Frigid Nightmares, I didn’t know whether to laugh or cry for myself.

"How could you wear a fake face here? You should meet everyone with your real face."

This lion head seemed to make a good point, in case a mighty existence was agitated by this, things were going to be problematic. With this immature young look and androgynous voice, it had brought me some little trouble too.

Snow Diva? What was that? I did not know.... Alright, I admitted. It was the fault of that talkative Irene, a black history that should be concealed in the history. Once I came out from this mountain, I would risk my life to fight anyone who dares to mention that name again!

Nevertheless, things ended in this way for a reason.

Frigid Nightmare was a kind of unique spirit creature, their bodies were phantoms of ice and snow... Akin to the Lava tribes who grew up by devouring the lava, they grew up by devouring the freezing ice energy and gem. Unlike animals with flesh, they had no appetite and desire for sex, thus they would never perceive the physical intimacies between the meaty men.

Being a phantom, yet having an authentic existence, they still had their own hobbies.

Without any sense of physical satisfaction, the spiritual satisfaction would naturally be the aspiration of these spirit creatures. As they were not able to compose music, paint, do poetry nor other cultural arts, they thus admired the brilliant aura of the other races in the outside world. For them, these were the nourishment and luxuries for cultural development.

Even so, the Frigid Nightmares did not intend to hide their interests. Rumors had it that the predecessors of Mist Kingdom had spent quite some time preparing their presents and performances just to trade for their cubs during their visits in history. This had inspired the Frigid Nightmares to start celebrating the Winter Festival, which was originally not their

tradition.

On that day, the visiting contractor from far away would perform the exquisite show he had innovated or offered some seemingly valueless artworks by the craftsmen and painters. Meanwhile, the elder Frigid Nightmares which had returned from their adventure in the outside world, would tell stories about their past experiences. In the end, during the closing ceremony, the elder Frigid Nightmares would be gazing emotionally at the departure of newborn Frigid Nightmares, just like any young parent who is sending their children to school for the first time.

Over thousand years, the Winter Festival was always the day most anticipated by the tribe.

It appeared that the Mist Kingdom had not fulfilled its promise for nearly four hundred years. This was the reason which encouraged me to curb my temper and sing along with them.

Frankly speaking, my skill of singing was just like everyone, although my voice was not bad. I had always forgotten the lyrics amid singing and often went out of tune too. An innate weak sense of rhythm had multiplied the mistakes in chanting the lyrics, as the words might get tangled up, too long, or too short.

At the sight of the snowy ladies who were skilled in singing and dancing to sing, singing the off-tune song better than the composer, especially at the moment when the tune went off, I was extremely embarrassed.

Along with the melody of these "divine songs", the Frigid Nightmares were fond of the unique culture and ideologies which were not found in their world. The new and deep cultural details were indeed alluring for them.

However, I had been counting the days with my finger, as I had not much time left to be wasted here.

"...Aroyin, You are the friend of the Mist king, you are also an elder of mine. You should have been to the outside, the Mist Country is in danger now, and I have to hurry back."

I had repeated this sentence several times but had not been taken seriously by the ice-crystallite lion head, after all, he would get me to do some trivial tasks, such as singing to celebrate the newborn shoat of an ice boar staying at the mountain side, or celebrating the ten-thousand-year-old birthday of an elder phoenix.

"I could not wait any longer! If the answer is still a no, I have no choice but to go back now. I will come again next year."

This time, I was standing in the doorway of Aroyin. Seeing that I was so anxious that I would leave in any second, he finally stopped prevaricating on me.

"I know, I am aware of the news outside, and that you are in pursuit of power here. As an elder, I will not stop you, but look at yourself now, how are you going to attain power?"

"I? I am good."

An inexplicable anxiety had urged me to answer without thought, but the face of the old lion was then filled with a benevolent smile.

"Is it good? You are a caster of Freezing Force, and the Frigid Nightmares' bodies were composed of the Freezing Force as well, but have you ever seen anyone of us rushing at things?"

"It's too peaceful here! That's the cause." Just when I was about to retort, something flashed across my mind, staggering me.

Every element has its own nature and characteristics. Similar to the Fallen Magic and Holy light, which would influence the personality and mind of the casters, the elemental magics could, however, be controlled under patient and consistent training.

The elemental force might corrode its own caster. Fire magic would make one fierce and irritable, earth magic would make one moderate and steady, water magic would make one amiable and peaceful, wind magic would make one capricious and voluble. Whilst ice magic that was evolved from the water magic would make one "cold-blooded", most of the casters were unusually calm.

"The affinity for elements implicates the harmony between the elements and you. In brief, how much the elements like you. Magic is a miraculous power formed by the strong will, and a will comes from the soul, thus the soul is the origin of this miraculous power. The incantations, casting techniques, and materials are just the

supplementary, the most vital part is always the soul itself."

"Many years ago, you might have been blinded by hatred and could not see the path clearly. You should have identified your path now, why are you still not opening up your heart to the elements? You closed your eyes and ears, barricaded your heart, how could you win the affection and intimacy of the ice element?"

"Since you are in pursuit of power, and the ice element is a power to be reckoned with. The elemental spirits love your singing, why did you deny their entries to your soul? My son, you are still too rash. This is a golden opportunity, look around yourself, you will probably see a new world."

Hearing this, I broke out in cold sweat.

"All the miraculous power does arise from the soul? My bad, I have forgotten this foundation and was wrong all this time."

To my surprise, I had unconsciously abandoned the imperative foundation along the path of seeking power. My Power of Law was due to my yearning for fairness, while the Holy light of God of Holy light was due to their dedication to the rules. Also, the wise practitioners had always corresponded to the nature of power by adapting their souls too, if it was power manipulating power, one would have fallen and not able to achieve the ultimate heights.

Outside the window, was an endless view of snow, along with the white sky, it happened to be the home of the ice and snow spirits, full of singing and pleasure. Albeit my presence in this snowy

region, I realised that my heart remained with the secular world.

"You really thought a Soul Contract with the Frigid Nightmares was everything for Aurora Knights? Certainly not, that would be too crude for our sights, just like using a divine equipment to cut the fingers, what a waste of talents for yourself and Erebella's. Besides, the maturity of your magical sword system was rather low, and the perception and utilization of elements were even worse, that was like begging with a golden bowl."

"To keep the Winter Festival longer in full swing, please wait until you have cooled off, and we fellow elders will show you how to master the ice and snow. The Elemental Gods? Haha, before some ancient existence, they are just the juniors!"

"I may not be the strongest one amongst our tribe, but I could let you know the perception of Mist King towards the ice and snow. If my partner is still around, these younglings wouldn't dare go on a rampage like that!"

In Chinese, "beg with a golden bowl - 使用金盘子讨饭" means, waste one's talent or ability in trivial matters, while it could be used for greater things.

Chapter 160: War of Betrayal

In this war of mythical proportions, which was known by the later generations as "The War of Betrayal without any dignity", the alliance formed by four Elven kingdoms in Northlands, unexpectedly, was the first to launch an assault, just as the snow fell.

Indeed, the first who broke the deadlock was not the most aggressive Beastmen who favoured war, nor the Humans who were protecting their homeland, but the Elves who were eager to express their stance towards a certain existence.

It was six at dawn, and without prior declaration of war, the Elves sent their greetings through their crossbow arrows and magic attacks. The Human alliance then dispatched their main forces into the battle. The Alliance of seven countries (excluding East Mist and San Antonio) had gathered more than 500,000 troops, with 400,000 of them engaged in the war.

The Elves had a total of 160,000 troops, which might sound like a tiny garrison before the mega kingdom, but their real power should not be underestimated.

Belonging to the Silver faction, the grown-ups of superior Elves would at least be of Silver-rank combat power, while the lower Elves could easily match the Silver-rank humans with the help of their splendid weapons and equipment. Also, with a greater ratio of exceptional magic craftworks and sorcerers, the real power of the Elves must not be trifled with, despite their smaller army.

"...We thought that this would just be another day of military manoeuvres, to think that the long ears could care less about the past and swipe the land immediately with their tactical magic. Our people are under heavy fire. They even used enchanted crossbows and the Elven Ancient Tree against us, they are playing for real!"

Perhaps this commander who had lost almost all his troops could explain the reason behind this debacle of a war. Not only did the proud Humans not anticipate this war, but they also had belittled the determination of the Elves.

Bearing many years of grudge, the Elves had finally come up with the resolution for a final showdown. The fellow Elven kings, as well as the keepers, had as well realised that there was no turning back once they had taken this step, but the proud people of San Antonio had probably treated it as nothing but a reckless assault on the city border.

During the ambush of the Elves, the humans were still waiting for the outcome of the cathedral and political diplomacies. There was not even the formulation of a strategy to counteract the attack of Elves on the list of priorities.

For the other countries in the Northlands, they did not worry much ever since the participation of the great San Antonio, believing that it could be the pillar which would hold up even if the sky fell. When a great calamity was at hand, however, misfortunes would usually strike the weaklings who moved the slowest.

As a consequence, when the two armies crossed swords, their differences in perception and attitudes towards the war had

reduced the Human alliance to absolute rubble.

The tall War Ancient Tree was lashing at the united force of cavalries, its gigantic roots powerful enough to send a few unlucky ones flying. In contrast, the attacks of the Human cavalries proved futile to this living creature. The knights tried to execute the Surround and Net Tactic which was used against the Giants, only to be countered by the Ancient Tree, as it sprouted and grew into an incredibly huge monster.

On the other hand, the mighty Griffin Knights were facing a big challenge from the Hippogriff Archers, where the mighty sky lions had finally met their worst enemies. The Elven archers, who never miss their shots, were very skilled in mounted archery as well, they could easily shoot through the diminutive gap between the heavy helms of the Griffin Knights. Although they had an absolute advantage in close battle, being well-read by the enemies, the Griffin Knights could hardly keep the optimal distance for their fights, instead, they were regularly shot down, whether they were chasing the enemies, or being chased.

As the war had come to a stalemate, the precise and vicious magic of the Elves, like a heavy hammer, had shattered the balance of battlefield.

The strength of a sorcerer came from the accumulation of time and knowledge, thus longevity would provide an absolute advantage here. To confront the massive army of Elves, most sorceries of the Human sorcerers were subdued, because the sorceries of both sides were not at the same level.

The Human priests and holy knights might be the pinnacle of strength in chaotic battles, but they could hardly perform now due to a shortage of strong offensive sorcery.

The Humans had the least experience in fighting the Elven soldiers, whom they treated as allies. However, the Elves in Northlands had always imagined the Humans as their enemies.

At the stalemate of the first round of battle, the second attack of the Beastmen was executed, surprisingly not with their own hands.

The troops of Anzolo Empire, who were the leading force of the right wing, suddenly turned their blades against the allies, slashing them violently.

San Antonio as the central force, would never predict the sudden revolt of its ring wing. In the meantime, the assassins who were long prepared, had burst out. To be murdered by the allies within the chaotic battlefield, coupled with the assassination of the commander of San Antonio, Alan Rem who ranked 98th on the contemporary great generals ranking, the entire battlefield had sunk into an impasse.

Just after the news of betrayal and assassination of the commander spread out, which was also the crucial timing when the alliance forces of all countries were wavering, the massive army of Beastmen had made their next move. The arrival of the gigantic Bis Behemoth, along with the shaman priests who carried battle drums towards the battlefield, which implied the end for the Humans.

The Beastmen who were notorious for their brutal massacre, demonstrated to the Humans what was it to knock back an enemy with only their bodies, and what was it to charge like a beast.

Could two Human warriors possibly beat a Beastman? Wearing armour enchanted with earth elements, and going into frenzy mode upon hearing the shaman's battle hymn, even an old ordinary Beastman soldier would become a killing war-machine. Hence, even a standard small troop (12-men) was not able to take down such frenzied Beastman of multiplied attack power and defence.

In this battle, the trap set by the Chaos, under the collaboration of three parties, had finally achieved its target, as the Humans suffered a crushing defeat, in just the first battle.

Amongst the large army of 400,000 being sent to war, the defeated soldiers who retreated back to Maple city with their lives were less than half, and most of them were wounded, the Human alliance had been pushed to the defensive.

On hearing this news, Elisa was utterly astonished too.

"A Human country turning against the entire Human world? Do they still want to live?"

"In a sense, Anzolo Empire did share some similarities to the old Mist Kingdom, both of them had undergone tremendous sufferings. However, the spark of this outburst was none other

than those bastards from San Antonio, for using them as the cannon fodders."

"Indeed, that was too much, I even feel sorry for Anzolo. Our small country has limited power, and this time, Anzolo had given everything it had. It could not be helped if it had to be sacrificed, but to be sacrificed as cannon fodders is seriously too much! It was no wonder they would turn against their allies."

Without any surprise, a strongly worded declaration for war, had very soon be announced.

In the announcement, the Anzolo Empire, as the country which declared war, had rallied against the evil act of the leading San Antonio to treat the soldiers of other countries as cannon fodders. Also, they swore that they had never betrayed the Order faction and the Humans society.

Of course, no matter what the explanation was, the reliable context would be taken, while the unreliable one would mean nothing. In the end, actions always speak louder than words.

"Well said, but why band together with the Beastmen, and Elves?"

In consequence with the betrayal of Anzolo Empire, Maple city was now left in chaos, there were people taking care of the residual forces and spies, there were assassins who did their killings amidst the chaos, there were even some middle-to-high rank forces in this city, who abruptly murdered some important people.

Even the city lord faced his demise on the battlefield. Just before a political turmoil would come, a chamber of commerce named Schindler Chamber had stood up as the new commander of this city. They were formed by the natives, carrying the slogan "Restoring the beautiful life of our past using our own hands!"

They were not soldiers, and were not interested towards the massive armies in the outside world. They fought for a simple reason, which was merely to quell the lawless mobs and restore the order and vitality of this city.

But only few would have known that the chamber with the history of Elven slave trade was just an association founded to keep the Beastmen civilians alive, and its chairman was a foreigner.

"The alliance army is in a turmoil, all the authorities in the city had stopped functioning, and the chamber is soon running out of capital. This, could not last any longer, please, come back Roland!"

"Waaa, that’s pathetic, how could there be such cruel parent. No worries, you can now count on Anya. If he dares to appear before you again, Anya will send him flying with his four-hoofs kick. Oh, I still need one leg as the stand, so it will be a three-hoofs kick!"

In the forest located at the exit of the Underworld, three ladies from three different races were having a pleasant conversation beside the bonfire.

"You….you all are not afraid of me? I am a true Banshee."

Faced with this confused white shadow, Annie and Anya looked at each other, sniggering with their mouth covered.

"The man Annie used to love was a Lich. Yes, but he shall no longer be one. We have no prejudice against the undead. What's more, sister, you look like a natural undead, to which only an extraordinary person could transform, and it only stems from two extremes, whether she is especially kind, or extremely resentful. How would I be afraid?"

"That's right, Princess Suana, why don't you walk along with us? We are heading to a kingdom which holds no prejudice against the undead. Perhaps, you will find the answer to what you have been pursuing your entire life - Peace"

Chapter 161: Natural Undead

It was a cinch to become a Undead, any necrolyte could help to reincarnate the dead souls (necromancy), and even preserve their consciousness during life.

The low-rank undeads may have no intellect, but if a sword saint decided to be transformed into a undead, as long as his body and soul were complete, he would not even fall below Silver rank.

Subsequent to the growth of necromancy, there came the easiest path to immortality. A strong one who had acquired considerable strength, would just need to approach the necromancer and sign a secret agreement before the end of life.

Tempted by this immortality, every year in Xiluo Kingdom, there were secret visits from countless swordsmen in black hoods and sorcerers in a grey robe, these included quite a number of names which were famous across all countries. There were even some unknown ones who emerged as new powerful undead warlords annually.

Even I, the demigod undead emperor, in conjunction with the most exquisite ingredients could not guarantee a successful transformation of dead souls every time. Nevertheless, it was not a secret when it came to the methods of maximizing the success rate of undead transformation.

The soul, all energies originated from the soul. It was the foundation of the world and was thus the key to increase the

success rate of undead transformation.

The transformation between life and death might sound miraculous and magical, but in the eyes of mine, it could actually be explained with logic and knowledge.

Just like the living, the undead was also made of a body and soul, just that theirs may no longer be the original ones.

A complete living being was analogous to a personal computer. The living was manufactured by the factory, with a perfect combination of software (soul) and hardware (body), along with the capability of auto updating (growth in life).

The undead might carry the same software after reincarnation, but its original hardware was definitely not viable anymore. The new body was similar to a computer assembled by several compatible parts, its performance might be superb, but system collision and inexplicable crashes were very common with it.

It was now evident how the undead transformation would fail, whether it be a collision between hardware and software, or the data loss of software (soul).

The former could be overcome by changing another body, but the latter could not be saved. No matter how good a computer was, it was not able to read from a hard disk with a piece missing, no matter how important the contents of the hard disk was, how passionate and wild the performance of the actors was... Cough, it was just an example, get your mind out of the gutter.

Of course, the necromancer could have completed the soul by incorporating the souls of others, but that might completely change the contents of the soul. Besides, such mingled souls were susceptible to defects, as the present technology was not able to retain the vitality and memory of the souls for a long period, there was a 90% chance that a cobbled together soul might become retarded.

Hence, the fundamental and imperative factor for a successful spectre transformation was quite obvious --- Keeping the soul in its complete form.

The undead always arose from the bitter grudge. Grudges (unresolved regret) were undoubtedly the culprit of non-dissipated souls, while the strong will, a pure character, would render the soul more solid, and thus increase the success rate of a undead transformation.

And then, the conclusion was obtained.

According to my experimental theory which contradicted the general idea, the success rate of a undead transformation had nothing to do with the strength of the soul during life, but the will of one who had undergone hundreds of battles could never be weak, leading to a higher success rate of transformation.

There were no deaths without casualties, preserving more than 80% of the dead's memory was good enough. Taking the hard disc as a metaphor, if it had more than 20% of data loss, the hard disc

(soul) would have 20% of unusable space.

Speaking of which, the difference between natural undeads and reincarnated undeads by necromancy was discernible now.

Theoretically, they were the same. However, the will of natural undead was incredibly firm, and their character was pure to the point of no sundries, the grudge they held before death could stir up six months of blizzards.

Their souls refused to undergo transmigration after death, and were not dissipated at all. Without requiring the guidance of necromancer, they performed the transformation from life to death on their own.

This explained why the capabilities of natural undead were so astounding. Their souls had not dissipated at all, and were almost like their previous form. Moreover, having wandered across the boundary of life and death, they had discerned the arcanum of their own soul, developing a profound understanding of the basis of strength.

Losing part of their souls, the growth rate of common undeads would be severely affected. There was an exception however, which was none other than my Seven Deadly Sins, they were not strong at the beginning, but grew rapidly later.

The common undeads had concentrated on the creation of strong undeads bodies (hardware engineers), but I spent my effort on the soul, which was the foundation (software engineers). Of course,

this was due to me being natural undead too, yet I had been to the styx for several times. It was already difficult for the other necromancers to start dissecting the souls, as their level of expertise remained at the soul transformation theories on the blackboard. Therefore, they might have regarded the creation and assembly of the soul as the sole authority of the God of Creation.

And I, had created and innovated numerous souls, these included bigoted and distorted souls, flawless, newborn yet talented souls, loyal and unyielding souls, and some which were completely reinvented with the souls of others as the ingredients. In a sense, it was right for Omar and Adam to call me their father.

The perfect but bigoted souls, had formed the basis of the incredible Seven Deadly Sins. Being the culmination of my research, their souls were flawless, coupled with the specially prepared bodies, they even outmatched the normal livings in their flawlessness and bigotry. In a way, they were the artificial natural undeads.

But actually, due to some flaws in my technique, in comparison with the genuine natural undeads, their capabilities were lower by a certain level. After all, the natural spectres I had met were all super monsters, these included I myself, Harloys, and Ayer.

In mythology, the Valkyries would greet the Einherjars and bring them to Valhalla. Frankly speaking, they were not all too different compared to the necromancers. In recent times, the Einherjars below the sacred thrones had no fundamental difference with the artificial undeads as well. The disparity was merely that the Gods performing the necromancy, which preserved even more the

memories and battle techniques during life, under influence of the divine force.

Everything arose from the soul, the Einherjar souls were already strengthened to its maximum. These looked good apparently, but had actually ceased the advancement of the Einherjars. The undeads were suffering the same fate. Disregarding the dazzling halos, the Einherjars and undeads had too much in common, and they were both incomparable to the natural undeads.

The natural undeads mainly existed in ancient times. In recent times, however, the resurrection rate of natural undeads was negligible, as the soul of recent men were too fragile to attempt reincarnation, not to mention resurrections with complete souls. Aside from this, the hardest condition to satisfy was the furious rage, the unbreakable will, the desire of wanting to destroy the world.

Suffering the destruction of our countries, me and Harloys were also the final royal descendants who witnessed the annihilation of our own people and kingdoms. You might say that we were undeads who remained in this world for the sake of vengeance, Ayer did not share what he had encountered, but it must not be anything good.

Even when the conditions were satisfied, a certain amount of luck was required, so the figure of success rate started to count only after the decimal point.

In consequence, in the perspective of recent men, the undeads were merely the undead reincarnated by the necromancers,

transformation to natural undead was never an option, some necromancers were not even aware of the existence of natural undeads.

Hence, the reincarnation of Suana as a banshee was never known or expected by anyone, perhaps even the Elven Gods who were the brains behind all schemes, would not have thought of such a miniscule probability event.

The pure souls were most likely to transform into undeads, and thus, female Elves would be one of the races which could most easily transform into banshees. Ever since the reincarnation of Suana as a banshee, the title of Queen of Banshees was no longer exclusive to Harloys.

In a sense, there were quite a few similarities between Harloys and Suana. Not only did they come to birth as Elven princesses, they both suffered the betrayal of their most trusted people and Gods, and their demises were also equally tragic --- the sacrifice of war.

Ironically, the fellow Elven gods who were once supreme and ascendant, had created a godlike enemy like Harloys, as the undeads had more than enough time to investigate the truth, when everything was revealed under the sun it would be feared that even Suana would arise as the next godlike enemy.

Nevertheless, it had been a tradition for the Elves and Elven Gods to dig holes for themselves and jumped into them. The typical examples was none other than the golden Elves and Lorci, who had both triggered the extreme transition of the Elves from riches to

rags. And this time, if the fellow Elven gods had turned into Gods of Chaos, Lorci’s actions, who was notorious for being incredibly vindictive, was indeed something to be anticipated.

Back to the story, even though the Humans had been gathering up for a final, defensive stand, with Maple city as the heavily fortified core zone, it would be futile to stop the group of a legendary warrior, a golden archer, and a natural undead Elf.

"Ah. Mr. Skeleton is not here. Sister Elisa, how did you come back?"

Annie gave a sigh of evident disappointment, not only because Roland was absent, but mainly due to the return of Elisa. This false intimacy had Elisa stunned, with her eyebrows flickering. What did Annie mean, to ask about her boyfriend as soon as meeting her? Besides, was it like the previous fight they had never happened?

"I thought you would first ask about Adam and the others, they were here a couple days ago."

"For sure I know about stepfather and Sister Margaret, I am always in touch with them. By the way, didn’t stepfather tell you that I’m coming?"

"Adam, a bastard as always..."

Suddenly, the picture of that man giving his big middle finger,

like he always did, flashed across my mind, his face filled with the watching-for-fun smile --- "I did what I could, don’t thank me"

"Alright, I certainly welcome all of you, but as you can see, I am too busy to entertain you. Pardon me for any offense."

Outwardly, Elisa said so, but her lips deliberately uttered a "soft" grumble.

"An Underworld Autarch, an Underworld Beastking, sneaking out just like this? They are both very much adults, but simply ran away from their posts without letting anyone know, don’t they know the severity of that?"

Obviously, judging from her past experience, Elisa believed that these two people were not here for business, most likely, they were just annoyed of their work and ran out from their houses after shaking off their entourages.

Unexpectedly, an embarrassed expression was not seen, instead, a triumphant smile was hanging on Annie’s face.

"We are coming for real business this time, by the way, still remember the manifesto "the Underworld people have the right to sunlight too"? We are coming for this!"

"So, going to war?"

This was the first response of Elisa upon hearing this sentence,

the call for "the right to sunlight", wasn't this about the invasion of Underworld alliance army mentioned in the Roland's prophecy?

Considering the situation where Roland was still in East Mist, to battle against two sides was absolutely impossible, Elisa's expression immediately turned grim and unpleasant.

But luckily, Anya intervened in time to prevent the atmosphere from getting worse.

"Most of the Beastman warchiefs had requested to form an alliance for an invasion, but we are still assessing the possibility of concession."

"Concession?"

"Yes, either purchase or rent. Lands without owners are good as well. This is the will of Emperor Roland, the most imperative part of it, is to form a delegation to contact the possible buyers, and we are the frontline of the delegation."

Perhaps there was such a possibility, Suana did not talk any further after nodding her head. Nevertheless, the banshee who had been constrained since her entry, broke out of her silence.

"Roland? Are you referring to the legendary holy knight, Emperor Roland?"

"You are?"

At first, Elisa supposed she was a random banshee coming from the Sulphur Mountain City, but now it didn’t seem so, as the banshee was a high-rank undead, and a natural one was even rarer, could she be the envoy from Xiluo?

"I’m Suana, Suana Newleaf."

This name was the recent headlines, and was also the fuse of the war, Elisa definitely knew about it.

She was first astounded by that, but recalling something later, she nodded her head, smiling.

"...This is indeed interesting. Perhaps the cunning Lorci would be pleased by your arrival. Oops, I was impolite for not answering the question of your highness. Yes, we were talking about Roland, the Roland who was a holy knight three hundred years ago."

"Please don’t call me princess... Now I’m no longer a royal member of the Tassel Kingdom, not to mention an Elven princess."

Gazing at the dejected Suana, Elisa was about to say something, suddenly the guard outside the gate, barged in with an excited look, like he had some important news to report.

"Lord Elisa, our reinforcements have finally arrived!" (To be continued)

In Chinese, "挖坑自己跳 - Dig hole for oneself and jump into it"

means asking for trouble)

Chapter 162: Death Egg

Within the depths of the great snow mountain, the sun was hard to come by. The sunlight shone upon the snowfield, bringing out the vast expanse of white even further, dazzling the eyes.

Childhood is one’s most treasured memories, and the duty of children is just to play well and grow well. From the games, they develop living abilities for the future. This is the instinct of life, and also an inevitable path to be taken by the young of all races.

At that moment, on the snowfield, the children of the Land of Snow were chasing around and playing together.

"Hey, Little Snow. Don’t run."

"Only a fool won’t run, come and chase me quickly!"

"Don’t run, I can’t move anymore..."

"Wahaha, Little Rollie has no stamina, his legs are short and runs like a tortoise, loser, loser."

Apparently, this group of naive and lively children were playing hide and seek, while the seeker could already move no more.

Yet those children who were still energetic, was running around him. Just when he put his last effort together to start chasing, they

suddenly scattered and fled in a blink.

No wonder he could not catch up with them. Although they were still children, can his stamina compete with the child of snowmen, the foal of an ice unicorns? Moreover, the young of a snow dragon and snow phoenix could fly!

Watching the little friends running further and further away, the child who was the seeker started to laugh. He had chased them for the whole morning, and at that moment he was exhausted and hungry.

"Hahahaha, this is fun, my tears are coming out already..... Continue to run, naughty brats, the seeker is coming to catch you guys. Eternal glacier bringing eternal destruction, the eternal darkness has descended, finally, the Ice Aeon will arrive..."

The destructive spell brought a dreadful magic wave, a blizzard formed in time, Laughing hysterically, the seeker started the preparation of a forbidden spell to destroy everything, although the target was just a bunch of naughty brats who were impossible to catch up with.

"Hehehe, there are two types of naughty brats, one tends to move around and one doesn’t, the latter one is the good kid. Soon, all the brats will no longer be able to move, this is great..."

"Personality Correction Kick!"

Following by a sudden struck of a huge fist of ice crystals, the forbidden spell Ice Aeon was interrupted by a sudden flying lion head. But the seeker who was sent flying away still manage to leave his last comment.

"What kick? This is your fist! You called your four paws legs? Do you eat with legs?"

Ok, I admit. This unlucky guy who was forced to be the seeker was me, and for these three days, I am doing the things I hated most in my life - Playing with naughty brats!

"As a grown up, but can’t even compromise with children, and you dare to tell me you are going to inherit Raven Date’s will, how many days only have passed? It seems like the descendants of Mist Kingdom are becoming more and more useless."

"I... I can’t stand this anymore! I have played with those naughty brats for two days, I’m going nuts soon, finding inner peace you say? My heart is about to explode! Are you sure this is really useful to me, I am just getting more anxious."

It was a mistake from the beginning, to listen to the lion head’s nonsense, playing with children with a smile can help in finding inner peace you say? Maybe it worked for others. But to me, this was simply suffering in a purgatory, it made me sick.

"... Already three days? Oh, then let’s go to the next stage."

The lion shook his head, then he made a new decision.

"Hellcoming... are you sure that you are not fooling me around? Why do I feel like this is just something random."

Despite the giant size, this ice crystal lion had a rather eastern name, this peculiar naming sense seemed to be the hobby of the first generation King of Mist.

"Hmm, actually playing with children for meditation purposes was just a prank. The actual target was to expose you to the scent of the young ice beasts, which was already achieved yesterday."

Great. By hearing the word "prank", I started to lose my temper.

"Then why didn't you tell me! You know how hard was it, to pretend to love building snowman, have snowball fights, and hide and seek, especially with these naughty brats who were so unreasonable, purposely going for the dangerous games, simply not listening, and treating me as their little friend... I can't stop thinking of throwing all these naughty brats into the cannon and firing them!

"Ah. Everyone thought that you were playing happily with them. After all, you are a lot younger than they are, their parents were very happy to see a foreign playmate, and seeing that you guys were enjoying, therefore we decided to let them play for an extra day with you.....What are you drawing your sword for? And why are you chanting the spell for?"

And at this moment, my mind was only echoing with "enjoying, therefore we decided to let them play for an extra day with you."

"As expected all naughty brats have parents without common courtesy, if so, let all of you turn into dust, oh eternity glacier, listen to my rage..."

"Haah! Passed on by the King of Mist, Personality Correction Punch Specially For Abnormal People!"

"Arghhh!"

Reinforcements? No doubt, this was totally out of Elisa's expectations.

The news of the defeat just spread, and San Antonio's reinforcements were still thousands of miles away. As the main force of the five northmost kingdoms were already gathered here, the second wave of mass mobilization will not appear in a short period of time, not to say any reinforcements.

"The lords are awaiting for your arrival, they hope that you can join the reinforcement welcoming ceremony."

Elisa was shocked upon hearing that, as the East Mist was not really in a good situation in the alliance, clearly they were in a marginalized situation, and also, the arrogant generals of big

countries, would never be concerned for her and the Mist Kingdom.

"...The fellow generals are waiting for you. This is allegedly the request of the reinforcements, as they refused to enter the city before meeting the deputy of East Mist.."

Afterwards, tons of news reached her ears, and from there she started to understand what was really going on.

In that defeat, rumours had it that San Antonio's commanding general was severely wounded, and the command was taken over by "Black Bear" Ainro who was also a San Antonian.

Despite having lost half their forces, San Antonian was still the largest force in the alliance, and East Mist was further marginalized instead.

And now the new reinforcements clearly would not listen to them, and only took command from East Mist, and pained the alliance generals from the bottom of their hearts. But as others had sent them reinforcements, they did not have any reason to refuse.

At least they could not reveal the alliance's poor collaboration, therefore they would have to pretend, and assigned Elisa as the representative of East Mist.

"Where did the reinforcements came from? The East Mist Kingdom is already having a hard time dealing with the monster

waves, seeing that these reinforcements behave obediently in front of me, could it be..."

The gaze of disbelief turned towards the two in the room, in a sense, these two were the super boss. Of course, from their smirks, one would never know how honourable they were.

"Not me, my accompanying army and the dragon guards are still waiting in the passageway, without my command they will never come out.

Great. Accompanying army? Dragon guards? In a sense, Annie was doing a lot better than her adopted father.

With the support of dragon queen Xiao Hong, in a sense, she was also a dragon princess, plus the retreat of devil forces in the underworld, Annie and the Liu Huang Mountain City became the symbol of human forces that reigned the underworld. Seemingly, Annie was getting increasingly better in being an Empress.

Elisa turned to the other, a centauress who was a kitchen destroyer and a lightning rod of misfortune, who a while ago showed a smirk on her face. Currently, she was the leader of underworld beastmen, one of the four underworld Autarchs. At least for now, she was on the same table with Annie.

"My ranger army and tribal warriors are also resting at the passageway. Together with Annie, I will be secured, and I don’t want to cause any trouble, especially bringing an army that would limit my freedom."

Well, she seemed to be honest, and she also brought her own army. Speaking of how her freedom would be limited, however, it probably meant that she would be severely restricted, trying to move about while being accompanied by an army.

" You two..."

For a while, Elisa's tongue was tied. What could she say, the two of them had now become the reputed Underworld Autarchs, it would seem awkward if they came to earth without the escort of a few armies.

"You're not afraid of causing big trouble? An Underworld alliance appearing on the outside world, moreover in the war zone. If this goes by the conspiracy theory, you can write a few legendary novels. Like "The Dark Conspiracy of Underworld Autarch and Beastmen", "Two Spies in the Sacred War - The Double Agent Dark Elves". Well, if Roland was here, he would have commented something like that."

"... We never expect to see a war, that's why we left everyone in the passageway. With this chaotic situation, I wonder if they will be fine."

"Don't worry, as long as they don't come out from the underground passageway, nobody will go there. It's close to the royal tomb of the elves, even the superior elves are unable to get near to it. But actually, it was also a secret tunnel controlled by the royal family, and that is why I lingered there to hide from my

people."

With Suana’s explanation, everyone on spot felt relieved. But after that, a new problem came, if the reinforcements were not from the underworld alliance, then who would it be?

"There were two groups of reinforcements which happened to come across each other and ended up travelling together. One of the group is the alliance of Sharal Autonomous Region and the barbarian tribe, they are here to support Lord Roland."

Elisa nodded when she heard that, Roland did mention the secret contract between the three places, but never had high hopes on them on sending support. After all, the covenant was still in the testing stages, with a lot of uncertainties, and moreover, Sharal itself had its own problems too.

"The second wave of reinforcements is here to support Lady Reyne, they are Aulander. It is said to be sent out by King Darsos, to thank Lord Roland on fulfilling the "Key" agreement on time.

"Pfft." Listening to that, Elisa smiled, while Annie laughed straight away.

There were things that cannot be hidden from the resourceful Annie even if not being told by Ronald, but for Annie who was always in the underworld to know, it would seem to be odd.

"Father mentioned to me before, was it that weird eyed Emperor

who take a fancy to Uncle Bone? Seems like he is quite faithful towards Uncle Bone. But it is understandable, as Uncle Bone looked very cute when he was alive, when he was young he looked really like a cute girl, I wanted to give him a hug."

When she heard the sign that Adam was indeed Roland's number one bad friend, and that both of them never did anything good, Elisa burst into laughter.

"Annie, don't mention this in front of Roland, or else he will cry in front of you."

"If you force me any further, I will really cry in front of you!"

"Hatch an egg? Are you crazy or am I crazy, I may look like this, but you can only complain it to my mom, I'm actually a male... No, I'm a guy! Look, look at this! I am a guy, how can I hatch an egg."

My roar was echoing within the cave, travelling far away, the reason? The lion in front of me suggested a new training plan.

"Hatching it is your second step of training. And because of this purpose, I exposed you to the young scent of the ice beasts."

That was a black ice crystal, from that mild chilliness and the magical engravings, it should be a frigid nightmare's egg. But, wasn't the frigid nightmare's egg supposed to be white in colour?

"This is a death egg, all this time it never successfully hatched, theoretically, it should have been dead, but looking at the magic engravings and ice crystals, you will know that it's still alive."

"Isn’t this one of you? Can’t you just hatch it by yourselves?"

"Three hundred and seventy years ago, it did nearly hatched once, but after that, no matter what we did, it won’t even budge."

I was stunned when I heard this, at this point in time, it made me think of something bad.

"Twins are the most miraculous existence on this world, they are classified into many types, and one of them is the rarest, but is the true twins amongst twins. The wavelength of their souls are the same, it is like they were originally the same person, just that it is a soul that has been torn into two..."

"Enough!" I started to roar, but then stopped, what was I angry at, what caused the bottom of my heart to be in such panic?

But the lion head seemed to hear nothing, he just continued explaining on.

"The gemini of misfortune? It should be the gemini of luck, there is always a special linkage between them, moreover, they are the best corresponding partners. Oh yeah, by the way, this egg is also Erebella’s brother, or sister, who knows. And it was also sent here

by a descendant of the Mist, and I don’t need to mention his name."

At this moment, if there was a mirror, I was afraid of how pale my face would have been.

"I have finished what I have to say, the rest is up to you."

Chapter 163: The Old Soldier

"Hoooooot!"

The citizens of this middle sized city showed a vacant look just as the war horns were blasted through the freezing wind.

Although the news of the alliance’s defeat had spread, none had expected the beastmen to come so quickly. Moreover, they retraced the routes that the human armies had taken, just to remove their opponent from play.

Gigantic battle beasts marched from the shadows, and hill sized dragon war turtles shook the earth as they neared the city. On the massive shells stood pale battle fortresses, from within, the sound of war drums and war horns could be heard.

The gigantic war turtles were quarter dragons by bloodline, and the spread of their massive bodies was not any lower than city walls. These were the beastmen’s most terrifying siege weapon.

"Doomsday Turtle! The bear king is here. It’s his white-tailed battle bear army.

Not many dragon turtles exist in this world, but only the one owned by Bear King was packed with a fortress. It was named "Doomsday Turtle", and was Bear King Dunn’s mount and also his moving fortress.

Behind it, the quietly approaching behemoth could not be ignored. One by one, they walked out from the shadows, transforming into an actual nightmare.

The beastmen were planning to make it a quick battle from the fact that they were sending out their trump cards from the start.

"Behemoth!! A behemoth army! We, we’re finished... Everyone, run!"

The actual immediate threat was the dragon turtle, but the one bringing the greatest fear was nevertheless, the docile looking behemoth.

They were far less robust looking compared to the dragon turtle, and they did not roar like beasts due to the quiet nature. Dragging their three meter long sharp claws, they left a ditch on the earth, quietly moving forward, like a group of marching lazy boys.

Their sturdy gigantic arms, the thick hair standing straight like a gorilla, and under the thick hair, were a pair of fearsome eyes. From the looks alone, they were far less scary than the dragon turtle with horns and fangs, instead, they looked a little dimwitted. But reputation preceded all else, so nobody would ignore these fearsome giants.

Their silence was only to accumulate strength for their outburst. A true war beast does not have the habit of roaring, but only when the flesh and blood fell onto their gigantic claws, they will bask in the rush, and reveal satisfied smiles.

"These are the wildest battle beasts on earth, the number one species in land battle."

Although that number one land battle beast still had a lot of rivals, but rest assured that they lived up to their reputation as the wildest battle beast.

By only showing their presence, it had already terrified the city folks, although the army only consisted of three behemoths, it was enough to sweep the north clean.

"Clang!"

"Hoot!"

Surprisingly, the gigantic beast stepped onto the back of the dragon turtle and with a powerful stomp. Using it as a jumping ramp, it took another step and landed on top of the city walls, like agile monkeys.

Giant beasts who were not any shorter than the city walls but were as agile as apes. Just like that, the ferocious battle beasts crossed the strong walls, but by the footprints left by them, it seemed like before the strength of the behemoths, the sturdy three layered concrete city wall were not much different from mud piles.

After the gigantic behemoths entered the city, the silent beasts finally started to grin. Under that crooked face, they showed their

strange teeth, each molar as tall as a man, bringing great terror.

Blooming from the centre, causing internal damage, simple but effective.

And this was also the speciality of the white-tailed battle bear army, they did not use the commonly used "adding oil tactics", instead he practised a direct breakthrough. Faced with these tough behemoth vanguard, when the gates were opened by the behemoths and the beast men entered, the individual strength difference would finish the rest. Dozens of cities had already fallen by such methods.

When one of the gold haired behemoth started to open the gates from within, the other two silver haired beast started their wave of destruction. The shivering humans could not even bring out anyone strong enough to stop the behemoths. Strong individuals no doubt dwelt in the city, but who would be foolish enough to try opposing an entire army?

The grinning beastmen could already see the future, it just like the other cities. Wherever the fearsome battle beasts went, people would scream and flee in all directions, and the mighty army would step into a city which offered no resistance.

But this time, there were some differences, some stood their ground.

An old soldier stood at the city gate, his rusty chain mail covered with dirt, and his brandy nose turned red under the freezing wind.

The old soldier did not charge towards the gigantic beast insanely, he did not even try to stop it, but only stayed where he was. And in that chaos, he still caught the eye of the behemoths.

Where he was standing happened to be the way the gold haired behemoth needed to go through.

The gigantic beast seemed to find himself challenged, and in a frenzy of rage, the beast's eyes turned blood red, charged towards the old soldier.

"Old soak, you're mad! Run now!"

He was not the general of this city, just an old soldier from the city defence army.

"Old soak" Ike, yes, this was his nickname, and was also his code name, the reason is that he loved to have a quick drink in the pub after his duty. Even while on sentry duty, he would definitely be carrying cheap wine in his arm.

"Old soak, aren't you afraid someone will have to pull your drunken corpse from a drain pipe some day?"

Every time, when someone made this joke, the old soak would pat his belly, and laugh with his mouth wide open, showing his yellowish teeth.

"Come on, as long as Old Buck gives me bottomless dry gin, I will choose to die in the drain of your house tomorrow."

At this moment, as if he did not hear the shout of his colleague, old soak Ike rubbed his nose, his blurry eyesight still staring at his own wine bottle.

"Bah, this ale is just as bad as usual, how much water did that bratty Little Buck add. Perhaps it is water mixed with a bit of ale after all. Hey, seems like he is losing his conscience, Old Buck is still more honest."

After tasting this three coppered coin pot of diluted ale, Ike narrowed his eyes, it was as if he had returned to the past, at that time, when his brother and wife were still there. Although the dry gin in Buck's bar was also bad, at least they served sufficient portions.

But during that time he was not called an old soak. "Arrow of Kashgar", Ike was a well-known elite ranger, before he was transferred to the city defence army after he took an arrow to the knee. He was a famous bad a**.

"Somehow it feels like, something has changed."

Although the weather was still as freezing, the pay was still as low, the ale from the "Old Buck's Pub" was still as bad, but at that time, his life was considered well, perhaps. It was because those old bast*rds and old sods who accompanied him were still there.

"D*mn, these good for nothing beastmen! And the useless nobles! Running away even before the war starts, Little Synden, I'll soon see your dad in hell. The things I'll say to him, he'll spank your butt when you join us, just like old times. Why, when you grow old you will start to recall these useless things."

While pondering on how to complain to his former, now deceased superior, the old soldier drew a rusty standard iron blade.

"Puff."

A spit of the ale, the wet long sword finally shone with dim light. The gigantic beast was already in front of him, but the old soak who was shaken by the earthquake set his helmet slowly.

"Old synden said, we soldiers are the face of his lord, we need to be aware of our appearance as we charge. Oh yeah, I remember it now. During this moment, we should shout that line, what was that again?"

A gigantic arm which could easily crush a bridge reached his front, and the old soldier stopped pondering, he shouted the line and started to swing his sword, with the full weight of his heart and soul. The sword that he gave all of him, bringing an arc of light, a faint blade aura appeared, this was the highest level of power Ike had achieved throughout his life.

"Slap!"

But with this absolute strength difference, it was not something that could be made up for with fighting will. The steel claw of the behemoth fell, and the only thing left was a lump of meat sauce and some blood stain.

Perhaps startled by the old soldier, or due to the fact that the old man and actually punctured the skin of the beast, the gold haired behemoth slowed down and stared. After having a good look at the corpse of the old soldier, only did it continue to hunt down other deserters.

The old soak was dead, and died in a terrible way. He did not have the power to defeat the enemy, nor did anyone witness his final, valiant act. His death did not rouse the morale, nor did it turn the tide of the battle.

This is war, there are no heroes. No miracles, only the bloody strong ones will prey on the weak ones.

But when he died, his last charging slogan still echoed in the air, carrying afar by the cold air...

"... The Spirit of Mist will never yield!"

"You murderers! You are the beastmen’s accomplices!!"

As before, it was the old theatre that acted as the conference

room, but this time, it was the furious Reyne who was spluttering at the alliance generals.

After the news of the beastmen renewed attack spread, the joint conference of military officers from different countries had a meeting for the whole morning, but they merely started from blaming each other and progressed to brainstorming on how to fortify the defence of Maple City. However, they still did not have any intentions to send reinforcements to other cities which were attacked.

"Ahem, your highness, you should maintain your royal manners and keep calm. You see, now that the enemy is strong, the best strategy is to retreat, and you see, fortifying the defence and gathering troops for the final battle is the correct way for now."

"What happens to the cities and the citizens near the marching army of the beastmen? They are still waiting for our rescue. We can’t leave them to die."

But her proposal did not get any response, instead, there were people mocking her on this.

"Why would you be so agitated over the matter of other countries, be careful, others might think that you have ulterior motives."

"Hmph, can’t even see the situation clearly, no wonder she was marginalized. If it was not because of Lord Roland’s absence, I’m afraid that she wouldn’t even have the authority to attend this."

"A princess should just be an ornament, better not to command blindly in a war. Rescue? Do we even have enough troops for the final battle?"

From a tiny and weak country, plus her lack of reputation due to juvenility, she was faced with prejudice, from the start of the discussion, even the aggressive, war-pursuing factions were focusing on the defence on fortifying Maple City. Reyne's opinion had already been ignored more than once.

Her face turned red, but still she did not have any choice and finally, she left angrily.

"Being marginalized? What is happening nowadays?"

In a sense, that guy's wild guess was near to the truth, being marginalized, this indeed was Reyne's concern.

From some point, Roland purposely kept Reyne away from important matters, and this had caused the internals of East Mist to make wild assumptions.

If this had been done by others, Reyne would had suspected if they had an ulterior motive, as if they had the ambition to climb to the top. But for Roland who had no interest in power, nobody seemed to understand why he did that.

"He seems to have kept me from fulfilling any role."

Thinking of her juniors who were busy in various aspects, while she was set aside, she couldn’t help to stop thinking on these.

"It started when Elisa came here, I wonder what did they discuss about. If she was only bad mouthing me, Roland wouldn’t have been changed so easily. Furthermore, his attitude towards me did not change, so why did he isolate me."

After putting some in thoughts, Reyne faintly recalled something, but it was difficult to confirm it.

Then suddenly the sky turned black, leaving her no time to think, and she immediately looked for shelter to hide.

After just a few seconds, the clear sky turned into chaos, a huge flock of harpies tossed tar bombs down and retreated, driving the city fire brigade throughout the city.

And at the same time, the city air calvaries had embarked, bringing down as many of the enemy as they could.

Although unable to remove the enemy thoroughly, at least they would draw some blood in return.

"... Your highness, the generals request you to attend the discussion, now that the beastmen are gathering up, we fear that they will soon bypass the barrier and attack the city directly."

In Chinese, "添油战术 - Sending troops slowly and increase them

until the enemy is defeated

Chapter 164: The Puppet King

"What is elemental magic? The combination of sophisticated incantations and baffling rules? If it's that difficult, how do we demon beasts perform it? We have not even inherited words."

A warm voice was filling the hall, and the surrounding crowds were listening, attentively. The body was so gigantic that even its borders could not be seen. Closing its eyes, in a slow pace, the ice dragon was passing down its perspective on magic.

"The way of magic, "magic" is miraculous yet incredible, and "way" represents the rules and influence towards the reality, together, they indicated the altering of reality by utilizing some incredible means. Nowadays, a majority of the accomplished magicians are undoubtedly Human sorcerers, whose magic are derived from the Elves. Of course, compared to the Elven age which revolved around the four elements, they have very much improved, but the methods and techniques of research are passed down from their ancestors. This becomes obvious as they put emphasis on all sort of sophisticated incantations and ceremonies. But I have to say, those complicated stuffs are not needed."

A melodious voice was heard, as if it was carrying the musical notes. The ice phoenix rested above the head of the ice dragon. Being the pinnacle of the ice spirits, her mere presence had given rise to a light snowfall in the air.

"Those long ears are a bunch of paranoids. They are sensitive and bigoted, insisting that magic is a craft work which could only be explained by words, they had created all sort of confusing runes,

though they had actually made up something. Sadly, they had abandoned the origin of the magic from the very beginning."

A thick voice filled with sarcasm and disdain had come in. The ice demon lion lay on the back of the ice phoenix. Although it was a giant itself, it looked like a kitten compared to the phoenix.

"The Humans are learning from the Elves, while the Elves are learning from nature....Hehe. The so-called nature, aren't they some natural magical beings and elemental beings like us? Sadly, they have not realized the foundation, and ever since the moment they adhered to research instead understanding, they were getting away from the truth, further and further."

"The will of Gods is actually divine art, while the wrath of demon lords could reform the world, even my beloved ice phoenix, Aiseia Liven, could summon a blizzard across the entire mountain with a single glare. Aren't they altering reality by utilizing some incredible power?"

"Those long ear-ers always like to complicate stuff, just to lose sight of the foundation. Only by achieving legendary status suffices to condense one's seal of will? Only by acquiring the holy-rank allows one to change the world with his or her will? Hahahaha, that's ridiculous, going a big circle just to come back to the starting point, we could have done this since the beginning."

"The warlocks carry alien bloodlines, and the unique tribes of all sort of talents, aren't their miraculous powers considered magic? The definition from the Elves is rather bigoted."

"So, all you young-uns, abandon those unnecessary complications and arcanums, they are not for you. What you need to do, is just to build up your will to change the world, something like this... liz slen nus!"

As the miraculous spell was lifted, the will of ice dragon descended, the tremendous force in the air could make one breathless, the boundless strength instilled fear in all livings on the spot, that, was the wrath coming from the ancient times.

"The might of Doom Dragon? What is that? I'm just awakening my own presence. I don't care about the fear of those insects. When I glare, all weaklings must close their eyes. When I descend, all scoundrels must bow. When I am furious, all despicable ones must kneel down. My will, also my presence, I am the Doom Dragon, Akeseusith! Beneath my ice wings, is the land where the doomsday will befall."

The gigantic dragon gave a snarl, declaring his presence, and the entire mountain answered this by trembling in fear.

"Everything originates from the soul. Listen to the voice of your soul, and you will discover your own magic, the arcanum that works best for you. That might just be magic, but when you have truly understood it, it could be any kind of magic."

As the ice phoenix fluttered its wings, the snows in the air were turning into various forms, should it be snow meteors, snowflakes, or snow blades, luckily, they all would become just some adorable

snow babies upon touching the ground. To one’s surprise, the snow babies were jumping around and started to build their own snowmen, they were alive!

"To go by the terms of those witless Elves, we have called this the premier magic, you may also call it as innate magic. It’s not something to be attempted by the ordinary sorcerers, but is absolutely worth-trying, for one has already condensed his seal of will, and thus is able to interfere the world with his will like a monster. Roland, you get it now?"

The snarl of the rowdy lion had made the world tremble, the reverberation of the sound had shattered the ice hills. The kings of the frigid nightmares were imparting to their youth the truth of the magic.

Finally, I had known why those little devils would always run away from the lessons, and why the three elders were so delighted now. As their only audience, my face had remained thoughtful, but I was actually pondering over it.

"That, can I ask a question?"

"Ask, I know you must have a lot of doubts, as our theory of magic is totally different compared to what you were exposed to in the past."

"My son, relax your mind, we are not frightening. In a sense, we are even relatives."

"As I have spoken, the etiquette in the world of Humans mean nothing for us. Speak out."

Nodding my head after getting an affirmative answer, I decided to point out something I had been watching since the lesson begun.

"That, I am somewhat obsessive and afraid I will have a sleepless night without knowing the answer to this..."

The gaze of three highest ranked beings had rendered the air frozen, in fact, the air was actually turning to ice, and thus, I finally posted my question.

"Why must the three of you stack on top each other like the Buddhist arhats? Do you think this is cool? And that, I find this interesting out of the blue, can I stand at the highest point? I am very light."

"Is this even a main point?!"

The gigantic dragon gave a slight quiver, which had triggered an earthquake.

"You two fools, what's with this three-sages pyramid posture? And even forming a group of four heavenly kings with that old tortoise in the lake? I have said that this posture is disgusting!"

"This mentality is exactly the same as the old Mist King. A Mist descendant definitely. But...no way! No one should stand on my

head."

"Lion head! Why are you standing on our heads then? Have you proposed all of this just to stand on top of us?"

With the two members at bottom retorting with the same voice, there came the joyous time of watching their silly bickering.

"Sigh, please mind your reputation before the juniors. Besides that, did you not perceive anything?"

In a twinkling, the ice phoenix flickered as a stream of light and reappeared in front of me.

"...One has to be serious in choosing a nickname, and more serious in thinking of the opening line. Puff, what's with this Doom Dragon? That's too embarrassing, "I am the Doom Dragon, beneath my wings..." Alright, my lord, please curb your dragon rage, this name is fantastic, and doesn't sound like the idea of a sophomore at all."

"Not knowing what 'sophomore' means? It is reputedly the moment when one being is so handsome that the rest could hardly bear the sight of it. Indeed, that is one's precious moment, the moment when one shines the brightest, which always brings out an excitement whenever one looks back. I suppose the nickname 'Sophomore Wings' is meant for you...You like it?! That's awesome, Lord Sophomore Wings!"

After creating the name "Lord Sophomore" out of fun, I turned to the lion head before me, smiling and waving my hand.

The invisible cold air appeared to be dispersing. There was no spectacular spark of magic, and no stirring bang, just the turquoise ice crystals whirling in my palm.

"Alright. Thanks for your enlightenment, seniors, I have found it, to think that it was always within me..."

In a sense, I had gained a lot, the three pinnacles of the ice had led me to a new path, a path which was absolutely different from the conventional elemental magic, I could not wait to try out the new abilities I had mastered.

Just when I was crowing over my new insights, the silver ring on my finger started vibrating. The arriving news very much displeased me.

"Damn brat! Unfilial son! Imbecile! I will kill him!"

As the vultures of war were hovering in the sky of the Northland, some changes had taken place within Antoin, amidst the army.

Under the cover of the dark night, some figures in black cloaks had snuck into the castle, they were then guided by the royal attendants into the castle, furtively. Should they be gone with

smiles before the daylight, everything would be different.

"Will of Mist. Haha. Never surrender? Bah!"

The scorn of men in black cloaks could still be felt in the air, but on a nearby windowsill, a young couple was whispering, and their vision could penetrate through these buildings.

"How could this be? Haven't we pledged to protect the damn fatty?"

"Hmph, he had believed in no God, would he believe us?"

"Damn, how could this be? This has gone beyond Roland's prophecy. Should I wipe out all of them?"

"Would it help? Unless you slaughter the damn fatty on the crown, no envoy could be sent off. Not really, even you have slaughtered him, that wouldn't help. We'd better get in touch with Roland, ahh...it's meaningless now, if my prediction doesn't go wrong, very soon, this news would spread across the world and astonish all."

"How would Roland be if he heard this news? To think that the thing he had protected with his life was trodden under the feet of others, yet its head was spat on, he must feel terrible."

"What else could be done? You should ask what else the Northland could become! In a sense, Roland had been always

fettered by morality and some evident rules, should he be on rampage...not only the Northland would be completely different, but the whole world will not be able to stop him either."

As predicted by Margaret, the news had shaken the world on the very next day.

[Sleuweir Kingdom announced an unconditional surrender, indicating their willingness to be ruled by the Beastman Warchief, thus recognizing Eymond Bloodaxe. My stepfather, King Feimer Carson had even held harsh negotiations with the Humans within his territory, for their troops to be withdrawn immediately, or else it would be perceived as an act of aggression.]

"Shameless! How could one be so shameless, those countries are coming to his rescue! Aggression?"

"Can this be possible? The people of Mist have no history of surrender over thousands of years. Despite numerous times of being on the verge of annihilation, they had survived. This news must be false, the Mist Kingdom never surrenders!"

Reinforcements from all countries were pretty much in the dark. A moment ago, they were coming to rescue of their allies, in a twinkling, they became the intruders. Should this war continue to be fought? What was the purpose of our blood and sacrifices?

The people of Sleuweir, were feeling even more devastated, when they had decided to fight until their last breath, their king had however given in. Imperceptibly, they had become the people of a

subjugated nation, yet they had to banish their liberators.

That was the deepest despair. The people of Mist, who was always proud of their unyielding spirit, had never suffered such humiliation. For the first time, they fathomed betrayal, despair and disgrace, severely. "Even staining the face with mud doesn’t feel so dirty!" Some people said so, while some people, had committed suicide on the second day, never would they accept such sickening truth that their country had surrendered.

Being so adamant that they would rather break their bones than bowing, they might be seemingly foolish, but that was the backbone of this race. And also, it was why they could stand up again every single time they were defeated. It was impossible for them to consider surrendering, even amidst the darkest impasse. Even though the Mist Kingdom had fallen three hundred years ago, they were able to rebuild another Mist Kingdom.

"You can kill me, but you will never make me kneel! The people of Mist knows no bowing, we won’t give up and won’t be slaves!"

For many years, whenever they dealt with invasion from Beastmen, Devils, Elves and other countries, whenever they reached the blind alley, this was the battle cry of the people of Mist Kingdom. They would risk their lives to fulfil their promises, and also due to this trait, they had been standing firm in the north of the continent.

This time, the pain and sufferings while battling the Beastmen were beyond endurance, but that didn’t deprive the people of Mist of their resolve to fight until the very end, No matter how hopeless

the circumstances had become, they always believed the final victory belongs to them, and their countries.

Being in such a blind alley, however, they could still talk about the past and the present, and chuckle "You call this a dead end? We had experienced it for countless times!" They still believed they would achieve victory, the knights would protect them, and the royals would lead them to the victory of glory and pride, once again.

"Those northern men know no despair, they are stinky and stubborn, just like the frozen stone in the Northland, there is no way they could be subdued."

The people of Mist considered this comment from the southern men as a compliment, no matter how many difficulties lay in front of them, they would never learn about despair, as they were confident that they would be victorious in the end.

The World had always presumed the people of Mist would never surrender, but a letter of surrender delivered from the king in the distance had written a new chapter of history, the very first time, the people of Mist was deprived of their desire for victory, seeing that bewilderment and disappointment in their eyes was simply heartbreaking.

Some people had chosen to commit suicide in disappointment, while some had looked upon the man above the throne with hatred.

"We won’t surrender, the Mist Kingdom won’t surrender, that man doesn’t deserve to be our king! If the news is real, he is none other than a puppet king."

Right after that, another news had reached the ears of the entire Northland, staggering the whole world, but it had helped the people of Mist to regain their confidence and hope.

"I’m the descendant of Mist, Roland Mist. I now declare Feimer Carson as a puppet king, and all the decisions he made have no credibility. Henceforth, I will make a crusade order, a vow of crusade! We will all raise the war flags of Mist, I hope all the people of Mist will fight along with me, to crusade against the puppet king! The Spirit of Mist. Never surrender!"

Colloquially, it means:

"Damn it, what’s spoken by that bastard doesn’t count, Feimer, you scumbag, just wait, I will take down your head!"

The notice was short and was not properly legislated, but very soon, the people of Mist in the Sleuweir had torn down their previous national emblems and the king’s portrait, and replaced with the new one.

Would they not know his facial features? His statue was in the centre of all the city square. For so many years, he was never apart from all his brothers.

Above the flag which had been risen again, it was still the same old fortress, standing firmly in the gale, but this time, the people were cheering a name.

"The Mist King Roland, our king has returned, our real king has returned, we have not surrendered! The people of Mist, never surrender!" (to be continued...)

TL Note: In Chinese, the word "sophomore - 中二" roughly means, immature but pretend to be cool and competent. Or as the japanese would call it, chuunibyou.

Chapter 165: Feast of the Traitors

On the boundless ice field, the scenery appeared stagnant, and when the sun rose, the black horizon turned out to be an assembly of cavalry and warriors.

"The beastmen are here!"

After the simple announcement, the first wave of catapults and tactical magic started to perform their duties, the huge rocks soared through the sky, following a dreadful noise. Every time they landed, dozens of lives were taken away.

Originally, the Maple City was just a normal double layered wall city, but after countless investments from the other countries, it had been upgraded to a four layered wall fortress.

Earth wizards may not have the strength and magnificence in attacking magic compared with other elemental wizards, but in civil engineering tasks, they would show advantage that other elemental wizards cannot compare with.

One by one, high walls were rose in a blink of an eye, followed by the chanting of "Turn soil to mud" the city moat was widened by seven to eight meters, and the alchemical venom that flowed within may not be lethal, but could slow the foe down.[1]

At least the city walls were more than three times taller, on the towering high walls, it was full with ballistics and heavy artillery. Griffin cavalries were patrolling in the skies, searching for spots

that might be missed.

On each platform on the city wall, countless catapults were built up, such historical siege and defence weapons, as long as there are enough scholars and craftsmans, it will bring sufficient power. What difference is a huge stone falling from the sky and the meteor spell, when it would kill anything it hits anyway.

Simple, violent, effective, low cost, were the reasons that catapults were essential in wars.

But this time, the enemy had just entered the shooting range of the largest catapult, the distance was very far, it was impossible to hit precisely and pose a threat, but mostly it was just a type of deterrent.

"On the battlefield, there is no safe spot."

Not to be outdone, the beastmen fought back. Mobile catapults had limited range, even the largest ones can barely scratch the city walls. Their projectiles raised some dust and rubble, and made the guards laughed.

Not long ago, the rocks and boulders were already being cleared, and the usable stones were stored in the city storage as ammo. To find suitable ones for themselves, the beastmen had no choice but to bring in their own ammo from afar.

And meanwhile, at the west city gate, the East Mist army was

assigned there for defensive purposes, and as a temporary leader, Reyne’s palms were full of sweat, this was only the second time she encountered war, but is her first time being involved as a militant.

"Hold on, hold on, Reyne. You can do it, in those years when brother Roland went to the battlefield, he was younger than you are now.""

What she did not know was that as she encouraged herself silently, a few persons were keeping their eyes on her, while some kept on searching for the mysteries of the world through her eyes.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions, this is something common, but there is also something called doing good with bad intentions, rare as it is.

"The Coward" Feimer Carson’s surrender, brought Sleuweir Kingdom great disgrace. He was the first of the descendants of Mist to surrender (Nominally). At the same time, he was labelled as the clown of history, it was a very strange but important influence on the war.

Firstly, due to the fall of the kingdom and the surrender of the royals, Sleuweir was turned into the subordinate of beastman tribe, Suddenly, the castellan and lords of other cities and towns were lost. However, the beastmen army got to bypass the city-states, directly reaching Maple City, the core of it all.

"Why fight when we have already surrendered?"

The second influence had a deeper impact, that was the declaration of war against the beastmen from the elves.

Yes, they declared war. That silent alliance only lasted for less than half a month, and suddenly changed to a hostile relation immediately.

This time, the elven king of Tassel did not show mercy, the human bast*rd chosen as the tipping point was a San Antonian, moreover, he was a noble of the Karsomi Communal Country. He was also the one pulling the strings behind and a slave trader.

Therefore, they changed their targets to Sleuweir and the Karsomi Communal Country suddenly. After that, San Antonio which was next by default, was not able to get off of this situation.

His plans were good, and as long as the war went well, he could use the tipping point and escalate it to stimulate the grievance of people, letting the war continue spreading. Since it was all for the revenge of Princess Suana who was the anti war faction, the peace faction and anti war faction could not disagree on this.

But if the targeted chief culprit Sleuweir surrendered to the beastmen, and in the end was protected by the beastmen instead, from which side should they get their revenge from?

General "Black Bear" Ainro was quite sharp at times, and also

quite courageous. When he knew about "Peace Dove's Death", immediately he discovered the conspiracy. Right away, he removed the family of that bast*rd noble's name from Karsomi, captured his brothers and gave it to the elves, and added a genuine and sincere apology letter.

"... Hearing of that tragedy, at the same time we grieved, we deeply regretted. We will never let the murderer run free, as he himself had already died, we hereby present his brothers and wife as an offering, to propitiate Princess Suana's soul in the heavens..."

Well, this was actually not very appropriate, and also shameless, but in a sense, it worked for the elves who were famously stubborn, the human kings also fathomed that these elves had proud nature and do not yield to strength but can be persuaded by reason.

"We offer a few unworthy descendants of a family, and we apologize sincerely, for the Karsomi Communal Country had already done a great job. By using a sinner's wife as an offering is no different from the barbaric beastman, if the news spread, it will affect the reputation of Tassel Kingdom and the elven tribes."

When this kind of news spread out, the war-pursuing faction of Tassel Kingdom noticed that there were something wrong.

In fact, the elven kingdom was the home to the administrative system and congress system. In the eyes of the world, it represented equality, a symbol of peace, and the elven states with different regimes were regarded as the Kingdom of Freedom, but the throne was comparatively weak.

In the eyes of the emissary of the war-pursuing faction, if most of the elves had fulfilled their revenge, and wanted a truce with the "alliance", then wouldn't Suana's "sacrifice" be wasted? How could this nonsensical ending be accepted, how could they face the elven gods who wanted to intensify the contradiction.

While the elves were very particular about reputation and fame, wouldn't a war without a righteous cause make them evil invaders? How would the kind and peace loving elves become sinful invaders, we needed to be on the side of justice, our targets must be the wicked villains.

Therefore, a report with completely solid intelligence was dug out. Within it was the proof of elf trafficking of recent years, and surprisingly those elf traffickers and slavers had official backgrounds, the arch-criminals or the one behind these directly pointed fingers at Sleuweir, and their nobility and royalty.

The truth was that when slavery exists in this nation, the officials actually turned a blind eye on it, when the bloody chain of benefits exists, how can the upper strata be clean?

Well, then it would all be the fault of King Feimer, but speaking of the truth, from the fact that he kept hundreds of elven dancers in his palace. It surely seemed that he was not wronged falsely.

In the eyes of the elves, they were not invading and instead, they were exacting revenge and bringing justice, the evil Kingdom of Sleuweir must pay the price. The evil humans shall be expelled

from the land of elves.

But then, the elves met some trouble. Sleuweir had surrendered. The people of Mist who were stubborn mules actually surrendered? To these longevity tribe, it was beyond imagination - as if the elves had turned cheerful and magnanimous, the dwarfs turned clean and tidy, the beasts had turned educated and reasonable.

The surrender of Sleuweir aside, the elves had to ask themselves if they wanted to continue with this idea of revenge.

If they do not exact revenge, they just cannot let it go, and it would feel like they cannot face certain existence.If they chose on revenge, wouldn’t it be an act of aggression towards Feimer, which was under the dominion of beastmen? Would the beastmen willingly give up their hard earned trophy of victory?

"Dumb savage beasts, hand us Feimer and his filthy minions, we still can talk... wait, why are you holding me back. Ah!"

The elven envoys were as arrogant as usual, causing a weak negotiation attempt to end up in failure. But this was also the outcome that some elven kings needed.

"To all high priests, please inform "him" that "his" will be carried through.

Anzolo Seustad Adelband, this tediously long name that was an

abbreviation of itself. A lot could be said about his life, and he had a handful of names, but there was one adjective that could describe him well - Elven God.

The Gods of Order was composed of a mixture of various divine systems, and among the god level existences, there were only seven of them, proving how formidable he was. By the way, it was he who exiled Lorci, caused the falling of dark elves, and the target list of Harloys' vow of revenge was also headed by him.

As Elven God and the guardian god of the whole elven tribe, how could the will of Anzolo be violated, and therefore the elves declared war upon the beastmen, they declared war towards the beastmen who "attempted" to protect Feimer.

"As expected, the thought patterns of elves... I'm afraid that our elf study needs to be revised again. Hmph, the more intense the battle is the better it is, it will be best if they slay each other."

As the human militarists were raising their eyebrows, they were also looking forward to the comedy, but very soon they were to find that this declaration of war was just a pretence.

When the beastmen gave up on other cities and focused on the final battle, suddenly the elves began the slaughter, but of course, in the dictionary of these arrogant elves there is no such filthy word, they prefer the term, 'purge'.

The overflowing hatred was infectious, the blood-lusting madness spread with no end, and quickly, judgement was out of

control, any proof of nobles whose ancestors took part in slavery was enough for the whole family to be hanged.

"What? Your grandfather served as a mercenary before? And you weren't clear of where he made his living? I'm sorry then if you can not prove that he was innocent, that means he was guilty, and if he was guilty, you are guilty."

The elven pastors served as judges also fell into an inexplicable fever, in their discernment of guilt and in the trial of implicated offenders, rarely anyone escaped unscathed. The only merit compared to the beastmen was that they had not yet acted upon the commoners for now, or in their terms, they had not started punishing them.

How is it possible for a war to have no casualties, facing their losses, with the so-called elven gracefulness, to let the city defence soldiers choose a not too embarrassing death.

Therefore, all around the fallen city hung human heads, the commoners who survived by luck stared at these long ears with their eyes full of hatred.

"They are truly some frenzied warlords, I'm afraid that the northern elves will never return to what they once were, maybe after this havoc, elves would be no more."

But I saw sadness from the elves' frenzy. The only one who can lead the pastor's will was the gods, and since the gods did not care about dignity anymore, they themselves had already fallen into

despair and madness due to the loss of their dignity.

By choosing to betray the Gods of Order, by acting as the vanguard of the War God, in an era where vanguard is almost the synonym of cannon fodder, soon the collective fall of the elven gods will come.

"This truly is the feast of traitors."

Even while saying such words, I was repeatedly reading the letter written to another betrayer, considering on whether or not to reconsider their stance that would directly affect the outcome of this war.

"Dear lady Lorci, good day, I am your loyal fan Roland Mist, you may have heard of me, I have always been intrigued by your art of interrogation, and would like to find a chance to learn from you (omitting the flattery of 5000 words)... You should have heard of the recent happenings, and here, I have a little suggestion..."

Chapter 166: No One is Immortal

Among the snow coming down from all over the sky, there was an eerie laughter, and with lips that flapped out some peculiar and incomprehensible phrases, a visitor in silver robes was knocking on the door of the palace.

"Bang, bang, bang!"

The sound of his ring pounding the door was inconceivably loud, that it could reach the ears of the citizens, reminding them of a funeral bell.

"Bang, bang bang!"

The knocking sound was reverberating, an intangible magic power could be sensed within it, which was quite vexing.

"Little Fismer, are you there? Hehe, I’m coming to play with you."

The unwelcome guest seemed to be whispering below the city walls, his voices however, was able to transmit around to every room in the palace through an uncertain medium.

King Fismer woke up abruptly from his dream, a nightmare in which he was being pursued by a fierce demon. Right after that, the reverberating voice and eerie laughter rang in his ears.

"Hehe, Little Fismer, I’m coming to play with you."

That eerie voice was just behind him, in a split second, Fismer turned his head but it was just an empty wall, there was nobody there.

"Little Fismer, I know you are home, stop hiding!"

This time, the voice came from the side, Fismer stood up violently. He pulled out his sword from beneath the pillow and swung it towards the direction of the voice, just to find it directed at his Elven slave, who was petrified.

Just when the corpulent Fismer was frightened by this spooky scene and took a deep breath, "Bang Bang Bang", the sound of knocking door sent him over the edge.

"Who!! Who dares to disturb me now?"

"I, have, found, you! Come, play, together."

That creepy and chilling voice rang up again. At this moment, Fismer suddenly recalled, that his room door was in front of him, while behind him...

"Bang Bang Bang."

The window was still making the banging sound, under the

pounding of a peculiar white hand, an ash-pale grinning face stared through the window, with a pair of glowing red crescent eyes.

"Wait, for, me, little, Fis, Mer, I, am, coming, for, you!"

The more it spoke, the laughing face laughed even more gleefully. The grin got wider until it could reach the cheek, and now, it had actually turned into a scary demon face.

That was absolutely not the face of a Human!

In a twinkling, an inexplicable coldness crept up everyone's spines. The surrounding slaves were shocked into fainting on the spot, meanwhile, Fismer Caso was frightened to such an extreme that he threw down his sword, which was supposed to be his all-time life saver.

"Boom!"

The very precious elixir had triggered an explosion, and flames sprang up over all the place, half of the room was blown up to the sky.

"Sough sough sough."

Right after the curling smoke dissipated, the cold wind was drawn in, but nothing was left before the eyes.

Seeing that the remaining room had become a terrace, however, only the snow-drops could be seen coming in, and there was not a single trace of the man who uttered the voices.

The hoarse chuckle, again, rang in Fismer’s ear.

"Lives forever (no one lives forever). You can run, but you cannot hide!"

In the end, he still could not get rid of the eerie voices around his ears. The cowardly Fismer was falling apart and even screamed like a woman.

"Guards! Guards! There’s an assassin! Somebody wants to kill me!"

He ran naked into the hallway, the guards who hurried to the scene, looked incredulously at the most unsightly king.

After running several steps in the corpulent body, he had collapsed on the floor, gulping for air. Subsequently, the screaming Fismer pulled a sword abruptly from a guard and furiously slashed at the curtain swinging with the wind.

"What are you looking at? There’s an assassin! You bunch of junks, have you been bought over too? Want to kill me? I tell you, if I’m dead, I will take you down with me, I mean it!"

Seeing this, the guards and the knights were shocked, at the same time, their faces were filled with a disgusted, yet pitiful expression towards Fismer. In their eyes, this man who had just reduced them from respectable guards to junks, had probably gone crazy.

"Why are you looking at me? You bunch of useless scum, should you be not so useless. I wouldn’t have had to surrender to those filthy and worthless Beastmen! It was all your fault, it was all because of you, bunch of useless idiots!"

The enraged king violently wielded the sword in his hand, his grounding in swordsmanship left behind since young was barely acceptable. However, before the knights, this moronic way of wielding the sword was meaningless. As they dodged the attacks without a hitch, they continued to look at each other, and then at the insane king, pitying him even more.

"...ha, ha."

Very soon, Fismer who had abandoned himself to wine and women, slumped resignedly on the floor. Gulping for air strenuously, he was feeling short of breath.

Unconsciously, he tried to pull something away from his neck, but unexpectedly, what he touched was not the flesh of man.

That was a pair of ice cold arms, grabbing him deadly by the throat, and the ice cold breath had already reached behind his ears, it was still the same hoarse voices.

"I, caught, you!"

"Aaaaaaaa!"

The king screamed madly in terror, only to elevate the strange feeling of the guards, they could see nothing unusual except Fismer, who was flailing madly for no apparent reason.

In their eyes, Fismer had suddenly squeezed his own neck, while screaming, yet rolling on the floor, his tongue had been squeezed out, but he squeezed himself even harder, as if he would not die.

There were people who derived pleasure from seeing such misfortune, but most of the guards still rushed to his assistance, after all, as the bodyguards of the king, their reputation would vanish if the king whom they served loyally, died in such a ridiculous manner,

But this time, they would very soon realise that Fismer was not just going crazy.

"Roar"

The entire wall was shattered by a brute force, the head of a huge lion formed by the frigid ice had come in, its unspeakable majesty was as deadly as the pervasive freezing air. The visitor in silver rope on top of the lion, wasn’t he the unwelcome guest who knocked the door just now?

"Yo, no one opened the door after so long? Well, I came up here on my own. Well, buster, I told you, you can run, but you cannot hide!"

The guards acted as they were facing an incredible opponent, by simply swinging my hand the ghostly blue phantom had risen from Fismer, and then they revolved around me like kids who yearned for candy.

The flames at the back were rising, the gleam of magic had lighted up half of the sky. Along with the plan, it seemed that Adam and Margaret had successfully distracted the strong ones, of course, I had seized this opportunity too.

Hence, I drew my sword. As the blue phantom revolving joyously above the sacred sword of Roland, they transformed into a raging frosty sacred flame.

Obviously, the way I pulled my sword had agitated the audience, so, shaking my head, I returned the sacred sword to its scabbard.

Following the return of sacred sword to its scabbard, the blue flames finally went out, and the ghostly phantom was sent back into deep slumber, and even I had breathed a sigh of relief, as the power of this newborn creature was too unearthly, that even I felt uncomfortable with it.

"Ow, this power works so well in finding and scaring people. Unbelievable!"

Nevertheless, this moment was not the end. The Royal Guards were always the most refined warriors, and those surrounding us, was definitely the most refined ones. They stepped into a formation, protecting Fismer, who was at the centre.

The one who comes isn’t kind, the one who is kind doesn’t come. When I came, I had created a major turn of events. Now, they were no longer interested in merits, but only strove to avoid any mistakes, and prioritized the protection of their king before everything else.

"You... Who are you? Did that fellow send you to kill me?"

Perhaps the guards had given him courage, to my utter surprise, Fismer was yelling at me.

"You’re half right, indeed I’m here to kill you, but, I work for nobody. It’s just my very principle to clean up my own mess."

And thus, I took off my hood, shaking off the snow, and smiled to him.

"Aaaaaaa, Roland!"

He had, however, made a more piercing scream, which was quite impolite. Hence, I reached out my hand, and blue magic power

radiated from my palm, the blue handprint had reappeared on the neck of Fismer, but this time, it directly dragged him towards me.

In a twinkling, Fismer was dragged by the ghostly hand to me, and the surrounding guards had turned pale with terror, but still tried to snatch at him.

The few royal guards, were, in fact, Gold-rank fighters, and they were charging in full throttle, murderously. However, what they were facing was not just me alone.

"Shut up you idiots!"

As one of the elder Frigid Nightmares, Hellcoming was the friend of the first-generation Mist King, he should be around 1700 years old now, his skills knew no bounds.

A single roar had sent some unlucky knights, one by one flying towards the wall.

Looking at the useless man who was overwhelmed with fear, the flames of fury were rising in my heart.

"You, a descendant of Mist? Scum like you, the Mist King?"

It was all due to his feebleness and selfishness, which led everything down the worst path. Should he have listened to the advice and prepared for the war, all of these would not have happened, never would the Beastmen armies invade the hinterland

so easily, it was just like walking into an empty castle.

Owing to just a wrong thought, the blood was flowing like a river.

"Bang!"

To think of the countless lives being sacrificed, was beyond my tolerance, and thus, I threw the heaviest punch I could, right on his face.

"Believing the villain, ignoring the earnest words, sitting aside while watching the invasion of Beastmen... arrogant and ignorant, committing all manner or outrage, willful and outrageous, do you deserve to be king?"

"Bash!"

It was another punch, falling violently on the right side of his face.

This time, a few teeth had fallen, Fismer mouth was full of blood, he sobbed in tears, and started begging for mercy.

Watching him beg for mercy just enraged me even more.

In this war, I have seen countless heads hanging off trees, and I was afraid that they didn’t even have a chance to beg for mercy.

That aside, they wouldn’t have even begged for mercy, they would go to any length to protect their families and homes, but this damned fatty before me...

"Sitting aside to watch the country falling, keeping all military forces to protect himself, not even sending a fraction of his military forces to assist the other cities... coward, selfish, foolish, non-visionary, do you think you’re worthy to be king?"

"Bash"

This time, the violent punch had fallen on his stomach, it hurt so much that he had bent over like a prawn.

"...dissolute and dissipated, being promiscuous in the palace, you worthy to be king?"

Looking at the bewildered Elven slaves at the front, I couldn’t help to think of how Fismer, as a king, would indulge in slavery, which had invoked so much resentment, creating such a chaotic situation.

"..., colluding eoyj the other races but bringing ruin to your own race, do you call yourself a king?"

To trade for Beastmen ladies with the Beastman Chief, he had removed the defending troops for the Beastmen to snatch away the famed Human beauties, I couldn’t believe my ears, upon hearing the news, and never would one imagine that there was such a

shameless king.

"...murdering his kin, usurping the throne, do you call yourself a king?"

Unlike the royal families in the past, all of Fismer's siblings had died a miserable death. Before all of these disgusting crimes, how I was stabbed was but a trifle.

More and more punches came down, I was getting more furious the more I attacked. If it wasn't because of this imbecile here, things wouldn't have come to this point. The Spirit of Mist that we had been guarding at all costs, wouldn't suffer such a humiliation.

"Just when all the people were striving to leave, how dare you surrender? How dare you surrender! How could you have the audacity to surrender! Over two thousand years of Mist Kingdom history, and you're the first King to surrender... clinging to life cravenly instead of braving death, abandoning honour and justice, and you call yourself a king? Why?!"

"Ah!"

A vicious arm, coupled with a leg, had shattered the backbone of Fismer, leaving him to lie prone on the floor, breathless.

Nevertheless, this was just the beginning.

"Losing honour as a leader, losing people as a king, losing virtue

as a man." I, Roland Mist, as the last descendant of Mist, hereby impeaches Fismer Caso!

"I, the Hellcoming the Frigid Nightmare, in the name of the first-generation royal family, exempt the proposal of Fismer Caso, and propose that Roland Mist be the temporary Mist King.

Chapter 167: History

"Losing honour as a leader, losing people as a king, losing virtue as a man". I, Roland Mist, as the last descendant of Mist, hereby impeaches Fismer Caso!

The former King's lion gestured with his hand, and with the help of the sonic wave ability, of which the Frigid Nightmares were all gifted with, my angry roar was spread to every corner of the entire city.

The mangled king laid on the floor, but, enraged as I am, stood on the dais of the palace, and announced my decision to the world.

The prepared sheep-skin paper was spread out, the crimes that were little known were being read out, one by one for all to hear. The magical prestidigitation allowed these blood-like words to float in the air, catching even more attention!

"Crime number one, in a cruel manner that lacked all compassion, the slaying of blood relatives...of kin."

...

"Crime number fourteen, uncontrollably extravagant; wastage of resources; watching the people die of hunger and yet wearing clothes of silk and feasting to his heart's content!"

"Crime number fifteen, collaborating with foreigners, bringing

danger and enemies into the country..."

As one after another shocking crime was read out, the windows of every house opened, to listen to the announcement that came from the palace.

The more I read, the more furious I became, looking at the long list of remaining crimes, I did not feel like continuing any more. I just tore it apart and started berating with the rage that bubbled from the bottom of my heart.

"We will take care of all these crimes, but most importantly, I can not stand the sight of you weaklings anymore! Therefore, I demand that you get your ass off the throne as King of Mist!"

"One thousand and seven hundred or so years ago, Northland was a wasteland, with perpetual coldness. Wild beasts were everywhere, and all the bad conditions we see now, have remained unchanged since then. But at that time, this land was famous for being the land of exiles. Every country exiled their criminals here, and they usually died within three to five years. If any survived, then there were more trouble, without any survival skills, a majority of them turned into bandits."

"Natural disasters, crimes, wild beasts all at once, even if at that time Northland was not hell on earth, it was very close!"

Following Roland’s description, and comparing it to the current scenario, the Mist people were starting to guess where this is heading.

"At that time, former King Raven Date, who had suffered under the hand of the bitter North, unexpectedly received the Frigid Nightmare Contract and gained strength, he was determined to build a country of his own in this barren land. He never planned to be the great man who aspired to build a safe haven for humans, he just had had enough of those precarious days, and he hoped to build a land to call home for himself and his own kind, a home that protected them from the oppression and bullying from foreign races."

As the sun rose slowly, the roars rang through the whole city. After the citizens were temporarily stunned into silence, Prince Roland's name and deep voice stopped the people in their tracks to listen attentively.

"During the beginning, everyone sneered at him for trying to bite off more than he could chew, they thought he was an idiot sleep talking. And building a country here is equivalent to building a fortress at the frontlines of the war between men and beastmen, the beastmen were certain to oppose its construction. And he, this penniless lad, who couldn't even take care of his meals, where would he find the resources and food for self-sustainability?"

"However, there is no impossibility in this world, Raven Date, no matter how many hardships he had to experience, forced the impossible to become possible, and built his home on this frozen land."

"No valuable local products or riches? He believed that where there is a will, there is a way. He found himself a group of Dwarves

friends, and formed an engineering team of natives. Measuring inch by inch, digging spade by spade, they stubbornly found their own special local products in this barren land -- Magic Minerals."

"No sturdy defence against the threats of the outer world? At the border, his followers and himself dug the gully and sentry by their bare hands, and replaced guarding troops on horses with their legs, and used their flesh and blood to build the other walls to protect their own people!"

The young people preparing to go to work, the woman preparing food for the family, the old man walking, when they heard these stories about their former King that were not recorded in the history books, they stopped in their tracks.

"Praise the former King! It is you, who pioneered our homeland, and allowed us to live with dignity."

""We admit that our lives were very hard, we had nothing in our pockets. I could not guarantee that after fighting so hard with me, that there will be any change, but what I know for sure, is that if we do not do anything just because there is no guarantee, then we will never do anything. If we must die in this cold and hunger, I hope that at least, I gave all I could give until the very last moment." That was what our former King said. In the harshness of nature, there were no miracles from heaven, no mysterious hope. All there was to rely on was yourself and your companions, and this was what that was known as the Spirit of Mist. And the Northlanders that were chosen by our former King to follow him became the earliest Mist people."

"We are different from the other ancient races, a majority of us have mixed ancestry. But what identifies us as Mist race, is never our bloodline or skin colour, all Northlanders with the Spirit of Mist, are considered Mist people! These are the true words from the mouth of our former King, and the truth that we, the descendants of Mist, always believed in!"

"One thousand four hundred and twenty-three years ago, that was the first time Mist Kingdom almost faced annihilation. The Demon army, as if appearing from our very own nightmares, broke open the gates that led to the underground. Uncountable demons and devils swarmed towards the gates. Overnight, seventeen cities in Mist kingdom were taken over. In Diffindor, the capital city, a state of emergency was announced, but the Mist people did not give up their homes. To protect their homes, they sacrificed countless lives, determined to send the demons back to where they came from."

"The marks of what had happened remained to this day, and that is the Aweimar, the abyss of demons. No, the most important mark and heritage left from that time is the war flag that is still dancing in the ravaging wind. That day, the Spirit of Mist and the War flags of Mist were stained with the red colour of blood for the first time. We went on to the development path that was completely different from the Central Northland. Grit and perseverance became the most significant aspect of our culture. Unbending will and an unyielding temperament became the insignia we wore proudly."

The citizens silently watched the War flags of Mist that could be seen everywhere, a new feeling of appreciation slowly grew from within. Perhaps, what was passed down was not only blood, but a secret buried deep within, waiting to be revealed.

"One thousand one hundred and twenty-nine years ago, there was a battle that involved many races. The Beastmen who could no longer remain silent invaded the Northland. In that cruel winter, it was a war that no one expected, but it lasted for twelve long years. The Mist people lost one million three hundred and seventy thousand men in battle, and countless wounded. Most of the royal family members were lost, and as for lords who were responsible for protecting their homeland, the Mist Palace lost four kings and seven royal members. The youngest lost was only five years of age. From the day he took the throne to the day he died in battle, it had been only twelve days. From then on, princes would always be the front line generals of the army. Every young child must receive training of the sword and horse because we never know when he might need it someday. And once he goes on the battlefield, no matter his age, he had only two choices - to return to glory, or to die with dignity!"

"Another new tradition that was formed was that when the King falls, his prince will assume the throne. If the prince has fallen, the princess will take his place, and when the princess has fallen, the queen shall lead. As long as the royal family survives, the defence will not stop. Since our beginning, we of the Mist bloodline will never be taken as prisoners. Because our enemies know that taking us is pointless. After all, our ancestors have led us by examples. Surrender? Be taken as prisoners? How can we, their descendants, disappoint our founders? We would rather kill ourselves."

"Seven hundred years ago, the war that started out of a sudden, came like a dagger from behind. The sudden rise in foreign slave trade represented an endless blood stain, but it also represented endless wealth. And our Mist Kingdom stood on the path to treasure, therefore many superior weaponry fell into the hands of

the Beastmen. After that war with the Beastmen, despite our torn homeland, we declared war with the many countries that were behind the war."

"Finally? Hmph, what are those weak Southerners against our Cavalry that had gone through countless battles and wars. When our riders dragged their foolish bodies, with their crowns still on their heads, to parade them through our cities, no country ever dared to look down on us Mist people again. Of course, from then on, our relationships with the human countries never recovered. And we have never regretted!"

"Time and time again, our calamitous country suffered countless ransackings and wars. Without us noticing, we became a historical "ancient kingdom", this is undoubtedly and unsurprisingly the perfect insult. The unattended wild flowers endured the bitterly cold of the Northlands and survived, yet those Southern saplings who were so well taken care of, withered one after the other."

"Three hundred years ago, in a war that I experienced myself, ferocious and bloodthirsty Beastmen, cunning and powerful demons, and those human comrades who always went back on their words, everything our ancestors faced, came all at once. That time, I failed, our defence failed, and our country was destroyed."

The low voice tinged with a sob, that soundless suffering and remorse pierced the hearts of the citizens, in the city, the Mist people would always repeat the same answer, despite their different opinions.

"No, our prince, you have done excellently, we are proud of you,

please do not condemn yourself. And look, here we stand. As long as the Mist people still live, how can the Mist Kingdom not be revived?"

"Yes, we have not perished! The Spirit of Mist never perish! Even if the Mist Country has perished, our Mist race has not! Did you know, when there was news that there are Mist people forming Mist countries in the Northlands, I was so happy that I couldn't sleep. Even if it is no longer the kingdom I once knew, even if it were split to several lands, but as long as it stands tall in the Northland, I am satisfied."

"Countless of times, I couldn't sleep for days and nights when I thought of our homeland. But when the hatred for our destroyed homeland appeared in my thoughts, I made an oath. If I do not get revenge and make those murderers hiding behind the scenes pay tenfold for what we had lost, then I will not allow myself to live a peaceful life. All the people I know have died, and those who live in that homeland are no longer recognizable to me."

"Beloved prince, please do not hesitate and wonder, this will always be your homeland, we are your family, and we welcome your return!"

I smiled, surrounded by such faithful and lovely people, how can I not smile happily? But when I look at the lump of lard in front of me, my joy turned to anger, and my wrath resurfaced.

But...you, Fismer Caso, in your veins flows the Spirit of Mist, yet you did such despicable things."

I used to hope that this is an imposter, one who is unrelated to the Mist Royalty. But after seeing him in person, and cast the spell that was passed down through the generations, I was shocked to find out that he is indeed of the Mist Royal bloodline. The descendants of Mist have degenerated to such an extent?

"You, ostentatious, lustful and shameless! It is a good thing that Sleuweir knew how to be flexible, it was our inflexibility all those years ago that caused us so much pain. But being flexible does not equate to self-degradation, or getting involved with the extremely evil slave trade, or sending our people to be trampled on by Beastmen, you call yourself a protector of the people? You, are not worthy to be king!"

"You, ingrate, greedy, traitor! You allowed our homeland to suffer so much humiliation, yet you hide in your palace and surround yourself with luxury and pleasure. The warnings I sent you were treated as trash, so many who should have lived are dead because of you! And yet you happily enjoy the offerings and gifts from the people! You have the audacity to claim that you are the leader of the people, the king who has the great responsibility to protect the land and its people? You are not worthy to be king!"

"You are cowardly, despicable and dishonourable! The spirit of our ancestors have never faded, the ghosts of our ancestors are always watching us. If ghosts could materialize into our world, they would have murdered you already! How dare you surrender? The Mist Royalty has one thousand and seven hundred years of history, the ones who have perished in the battlefield are uncountable, and there was not one coward who dared to surrender! You..."

"...You, are not worthy to be King!"

"I, Ancient Frigid Nightmare Hellcoming, Aroyi, companion of Former King, the first of the royal members, hereby witness the abdication of the king, and elect Roland Mist as the temporary holder of the throne! I will personally be responsible for being the warden."

The citizens and royal guards were stunned for a moment, and then, a voice out of nowhere shouted: "Long live his Majesty Roland!". Suddenly the crowd exploded.

"Your highness Roland, no, your Majesty Roland, welcome back!"

"Your Majesty Roland, please do not hesitate, our gates are always opened for you."

Very soon, with the driving force of some faithful subjects, the cheers rang out to all corners of the land and sky. I obtained the support of the citizens so easily, in a sense, it was thanks to Fismer.

Amongst the crowd, there was a couple of people grumbling and bickering.

"...why must you force me to shout, Roland knows my voice well, he will definitely hear it, then he will laugh at it."

"You have teased him so many times, let him laugh. Oh yes, how is the wound on your right arm?"

"It’s fine, that Beastman Shaman was injured worse than me. The others were just making up stories, this is no injury."

When everything of everything had been announced to the public, and the general situation has settled down, I mercilessly threw out the dying Fismer out.

"Aaaaaargh!"

Fismer’s high pitched squeal shook the air, if he hit the ground, he would not survive. Some of the women and children had closed their eyes, unwilling to witness the horrific scene of smashed flesh. Yet I fixed my gaze at Fismer, still not able to relax.

"Splash!"

As expected, just as Fismer was going to crash to his death, two fleshy bat wings extended out of his back. With a strong flap of the wings, he glided from the ground and flew out of the city walls.

"Damn it! He’s a cambion!"

The prediction has been proven, but it was not a good news at all. The descendant of Mist mixed with the blood of demons, no matter how I thought about it, there could only be one possibility.

"Karwenz...is this all your doing? Did you set this all up?"

Chapter 168: The Cambions

What are cambions? Perhaps the Templar Cathedral have the most say in this matter.

"Those hybrid scums are born for destruction and conspiracies, they should all be dragged to the square and burned at the stake!"

Alright, I asked the wrong person, this generous and passionate pastor was obviously from the old-school "retro group". Until modern centuries, for some reason the Templar Cathedral had undergone an internal reform, afterwards, whenever they were seen, the cambions would just be condemned to life imprisonment, instead of getting burned to death.

The steps of improvements taken by the Templar Cathedral were nothing better, but I have to say that this move was correct in a sense.

Just as the name implied, cambions were the descendants of devils and demons. Carrying miraculous power in their blood, along with ability to manipulate peculiar supernatural power, they were natural warlocks. Allegedly, half of the existing demon warlocks were cambions of mixed parentage in the under plane.

If the recessive blood of the other race was under control, they could be natural warlocks. However, if it went out of control and manifested traits of the devil, perhaps demi-devils or demi-demons best described these beings which were not supposed to live in the main plane.

Unlike the bloodline of upper plane (angels) which people embraced and yearned for, the cambions had always been a big trouble, not only did the sucking of blood and the inclination for chaos faction was in their blood, but the bigger trouble was, the ancestors of their bloodline had committed all sort of outrages in the under plane.

The angels resorted to orders and worshipped the Gods, their wills were not that strong to interfere with the lives of their descendants, and even then they were highly restrained. But in the eyes of the devils, their hybrid descendants were living treasures split off from their blood, the blood and strength derived from them were the best mark and linkage.

The cambions might be born kind, or a brave fighter, but with their devil ancestors whispering incessantly beside their ears, they would imperceptibly lean towards the chaos faction.

In the eyes of the devils, the descendants who carried their blood were but good seedlings on the battlefield. They would call upon the innate devil of the descendants through the blood, the moment they crowed over their growing strength, was the time they lose control of their demonic impulse, and grow into demi-devils, in the end, they had no choice but to return to the under plane, serving as the new backbone of the devils.

In the abyss of endless war, the "young men" whom they influenced, were undoubtedly the best pawns and war elites.

The world had given cambions the moniker of "mongrels fated to be corrupted".

Amongst all the planes, the reputation of these half-castes had never been good as they had been mere pawns since hundred years ago. A cambion might be kind at first, and carried out good deeds for half of his previous life, he was praised by all the people. However, his soul might be manipulated when the crunch came.

Indeed, until here, the ins and outs of the matter were pretty clear now, meanwhile, Elisa brought back news from the abyss --- the Mist descendant in the North was the lineal descendant of a devil mogul.

The Mist Kingdom was divided into several pieces, with East Mist and Sleuweir being the biggest, that cambion should reside in one of them. Previously, it was unknown as to which one was it. Therefore, I had no choice but to exercise vigilance further on Reyne and suspended her from her duties.

And now, it was obviously the royal member of Sleuweir, I had breathed a sigh of relief deep in my heart, despite that the situation was still unfavourable. And then, I kept my face straight again.

"Karwenz, what do you want!"

My roar echoed to the skies, even if Fismer Caso had twelve wings, but still, he would never escape from me, right now, he was impaled by a sacred sword on the wall, clutching his chest in disbelief.

"No, no, I can’t go back yet, I don’t want to go back! I’ve yet to relish the beauty of this world, too many beautiful women and delicious food in the main plane, I don’t want to go back yet! I’m not satisfied! I still want to be King, I don’t want to die!"

The scales all over his body was emitting an uncanny white aura, his red pupils were gaining slight sign of pale yellow, This, was the mark of the prime devil, Fismer had unknowingly transformed from cambions to half-devil.

The prime devil could prevail upon their descendants through the bloodline and the linkage of souls.

Perhaps in those simulated nightmares brought by the devil, Fismerr had fallen to the under plane for countless times, he had even harboured an illusion that he was part of the devils.

Looking at the pale yellow pupils which were utterly demonized, I knew he could be saved no more, the corrupted soul such as him had nowhere to go than the styx.

"Devil! The king...no, the puppet king was a devil!"

The royal guards had put down their weapons under the exclamation of the people, nobody was willing to fight for Fismer anymore, after all, the name of the devil had always been the common enemy of everyone.

"Answer me, Karwenz, what do you want!"

Fismer was dead, but I was still clutching his neck to interrogate, but the target I interrogated, was the person hiding behind him.

"Haha."

Along with the familiar laughter, dark flames were being radiated from Fismer's body. Sensing the rage within me, the will of devil lord had finally descended.

Along with that eerie laughter, suddenly, the sky was overcast by dark clouds, which had blotted out the sunlight, the rising sun could be seen no more, it seemed that even the Gods were getting sick of this sight.

This was not any magic, but just the influence of the descending will of devil prince towards the world. To witness such a wrath, I was a little surprised, Karwenz was much stronger than expected.

"Just the descending will is enough to change the weather? I'm afraid this is already a God-level existence".

In my perspective, Karwenz's prowess had gone beyond imagination, and would not be inferior to any God-level people in Chaos faction.

"Roland, I never thought we would meet this soon. How dare you ask me what I want?"

Fismer’s body started to burn, albeit demonized, his body still couldn’t bear the tremendous power of the devil prince.

Nevertheless, Fismer’s distorted face had given a familiar expression. That was a mischievous prank with innocence.

"Since you are so sincere in asking, I shall tell you benevolently… oh wait. Did you really think I’m actually benevolent? Really wanna know? You guess."

"Guess your sister!"

"Haha, isn’t your sister mine too? Unfortunately, I would prefer an adorable sister to a brother…and if I answer you so easily, how disgraceful is that! And I’m a devil prince, if that is known by the rest, how could I be the leader! Let’s be like always, leave the good play behind, the puzzle is meant to be solved in the very end…"

Burning vigorously in the demonic flame, the remaining body of Fismer turned to ashes, leaving a message behind.

"Roland, we will meet again very soon. Whoops, should I start calling you brother? Seems that I still can’t do that in your face. Ah, the time has come…I’ll forget about this time, the sacred war had just begun. We have a lot of chances to play together, slowly."

Following the dissipating ashes, Fismer’s ghost could be seen. As the devil mogul who had spoken his heart lost his medium of

communication, everything quieted down again, and the dark clouds started to disperse, the sunlight shined in again, the peace was restored.

"Damn it!"

Breaking the ground with my heavy fist, however, my unreasoning anger was meant to not receiving an answer.

When the war in the north had just begun, the civil war of Xiluo had finally reached its end.

The winner? There was no winner, although the crown faction who had always been in the middle, suddenly chose to side with Omar, the situation of this war remained miserable.

Miserable, was the best word to describe it, because in this situation, if both sides continued fighting with all their power, in the end, it would be a mutual destruction, and there's certainly no winner.

No matter what was the ending, both side would suffer severe casualties, the war between undeads always went to the extent of obliterating the souls of each other. After losing myriads of its cadres, Xiluo Empire was bound to be reduced from a super kingdom to just another strong country.

Nevertheless, with the sudden arrival of a small troop of knights in the battlefield to ambush the headquarters of the Council of Dark Night, the scales were leaning towards victory.

That wasn’t because of how incredible they were, but now, the rising flag of Mist now represented this man, and those red hounds were fighting as well, just for their owner --- Emperor Yongye.

At first, fellow undead warlords took them as the fake ones, as the history had indicated that the Red Hound Army had miraculously disappeared during the civil war. With the presence of the dreadful and gigantic black hounds amongst the skeleton knights however, all the doubts were now meaningless.

"The Demonic Spatial Hellhound, Bastian is back, only his lordship could ride on it!"

There were even conspiracy theorists, speaking as they had seen through everything.

"All of these was the conspiracy of that person, Omar, Lionheart, Ah DangCarnivore, Gria was once the retainers of his lordship, it must be he who urged the second senator to break the seal, and relied on his capability to stir up the civil war. The crown faction retrieved the crown when the time called for it. There’s only one truth, and this must be the plot!"

Alright, not to discuss further on how these theorists could classify everything as part of the conspiracy, the emergence of the red hounds were undoubtedly a big deal, for after all, the return of

Emperor Yongye had spread like wildfire, and if he really had returned, perhaps everyone should reconsider whom to side with.

The only demigod-level undead emperor in recent history, if this banner hadn’t instilled enough fear, he actually carried the dazzling ring of the mightiest necromancer of the time, nothing was more concrete than this.

There was an upper limit to the power of a necromancer or lich, perhaps to compute the combat power of a necromancer, one must take account of his or her undeads warriors, the limit of the Red Hounds of Emperor Yongye was never known, as they were never defeated, in other words, nobody had known how far the power of Emperor Yongye could go.

The truth was, "the infallible Diffindor" was one of the trump cards that had been hidden by Roland. Keeping it secret deliberately, Roland had only used it twice, and the opponents who had seen it were dead.

The standard tactics of the necromancers were to use his very best undead warriors as the bodyguards as well as the vanguards in battle, diverting attention from their enemies. And then, they would cast the most powerful magic to blast the entire battlefield, seeking to end everything in one blow.

Emperor Yongye was doing likewise. With the Red Hound being the bodyguard as well as vanguard, and with "Ice Aeon" being the most powerful and victory-decisive magic, that would be unstoppable for one.

There weren't a lot of semi-god sorcerers, and the ones who could manipulate such level of destructive forbidden curses, could be counted on just five fingers, but to cast the forbidden curse was like throwing vegetables, regardless of its consequences and damage towards himself, there was none other than Emperor Yongye, even after all these years.

More than ten fallen kingdoms had witnessed the strength and slyness of this tactics. Should one not break the seal of Red Hounds before Emperor Yongye completed his forbidden-taboo casting, it was feared that even entire cities and armies would fall into an everlasting slumber.

In those years, the Yongye's army wasn't even required to attack the castle, once Emperor Yongye started to wield the curse, the fate of the war was pretty much sealed, and the aftermath of it would include dozens field operations in which the survivors attempted to launch insane attacks upon the defending undeads.

To fight an attrition war with the endless undead army, was none other than a time limited combat where death awaited... Those formidable armies with profound history had always fallen under the hands of skeleton soldiers due to exhaustion, and this cunning combination of tactics was indeed the best example.

Some cadres in the Council of Dark Night were the main forces of Yongye's army in the past, would they not know the habits of Emperor Yongye to give full consideration before making any move?

"The decisive battle should not be avoided without having more than 60% chances of victory. Victory or defeat should already be decided before the war begun, and then, the enemies would be wiped out aggrievedly."

This battle style of this emperor had always been such dreadful. The moment Red Hounds charged into the battlefield, was the time Emperor Yongye was going to harvest the victory of war with his own hands.

The fellow undead warlords had always derived pleasure from seeing how their enemies vanished, but to stand in front of the emperor, who was probably in the preparation of forbidden curse...

"I’m having a little stomachache, I must answer the call of nature now."

Hey hey, you were skeleton sorcerer, since when did you had a stomach.

"My wife is about to give birth, I’ve to go back now."

A death knight had said so, it was a short sentence, but carried a big hidden message, the spectators were startled.

"My lover is about to give birth too, I also want to go back."

Alright, another death knight was getting shameless too, but

afterwards, the two who should fight each other had given a look of Freemasonry.

"How could you be so shameless?"

"I’m learning that from you."

Alright, the situation was clear without needing any more explanation.

In the end, feeling the heat of Emperor Yongye again, the influence which was established by the Council of Dark Night after toils and moils, was completely extinguished. When the Red Hounds had reached the headquarters, it was an empty building.

The civil war of Xiluo Empire had come to an end, the news about the second consuls, Feyman fleeing far with most of the armies from the undead plane, had very soon reached the ears of the whole world.

Just when Roland was getting so bogged down on the chaotic scene before him, in another plane, there was somebody laughing gleefully...

"What I did? Hehe, I did nothing, I was just playing. Fismer is my descendant, of course, he’s a cambion. Sigh, thought he would be a good part, to think that he would become like this after just a few

rounds of game. Mortals, so fragile."

The laughing young man was rather handsome, and his laughter was natural too, but to behave like so in a situation like this, that was certainly abnormal.

"Ha, to think the expression of a brother at that time, I had no words. Guess? I myself haven’t figured out the answer, how would you guess it?"

He was lying on the void, and the void had nothing at all, the only thing which caught the eyes, was the huge chess board, with all his chess (pawn) above it, that was quite a spotlight.

The chess was lives, which were all souls wailing in agony, and amongst them, with the power which could match the legends, they were probably the very heroes in the secular world.

And opposite him across the chessboard, there sat nobody, but the chess pieces were moving on their own.

"Northland? The Mist Country? Conspiracy? Nothing to do with me! I’m just looking forward to some happy games. My fellow cuties, show me what you got, don’t disappoint me like Fismer. Hope so."

Perhaps, due to his willfulness, Karwenz could be promoted to his level in such a brief time.

No goods, no bads, everything was whether fun or not fun. Should the mood be good, he would put down a few chess pieces, and dispatch several cadres of his to rebuild the Mist Kingdom, should the mood be bad, he would flip the table and do nothing, in a sense, this trait of Karwenz was, in fact, the nature of Chaos.

"The flawless Chaos devil", "the blue-eyed boy of the Chaos", "the loved child of the Goddess of Chaos(whoever dared to call him so had been dead for long)", all of these were the monikers gained by the Karwenz in the under plane.

Doing things in a capricious style, yet able to smile like an innocent kid when creating disasters of which even the devils couldn’t bear the sight, this son of the abyss who was completely in-character for Chaos, had made tremendous feats in just three hundred years. Stepping over countless corpses, he ascended to the highest sanctuary.

He had now earned an, even more, resound name --- the supreme ruler of the Chaos, the 14th existence of God level in Chaos faction.

Roland’s prophecy was absolutely wrong, to think that even Karwenz didn’t know what he would do next.

And now, Karwenz listened to the commands of no one except the Goddess of Chaos who was asleep, when the will to play surged within him, there was no one who could stop his game.

"This time, brother is playing with me, what a pleasure. Haha, defeating brother in a strategic game, this has been one of my

dreams. Brother, you are a good guesser, so guess what’s my next step, even I haven’t thought of it." (to be continued...)

In chinese, "your sister - 你妹" is rude way of retorting one’s sentence which you consider silly, done by appending sister behind the key word said by that person.

Chapter 169: Pride

"Foolish apes, how dare you despise my existence, I am the omniscient magic mirror."

"Is that so? What's the answer for 1692321 times 768392, answer that in 3 seconds!"

"Ten trillion and three hundred billion three hundred and sixty-five million nine hundred and seventeen thousand eight hundred and thirty-two. Impressed, kid? You thought that my almighty creator will forget to equip me with a calculator?"

After hearing that, the silver-haired muscular guy was stunned, but he did not answer, he was still counting.

"... Let's assume that you are correct, let me tell you, it's not because I can't calculate it out, father taught me multiplications before."

Just from the looks, this good looking muscular guy was behaving like a living hero from a classic mythology, he was tall and fit, thickly built and had delicate features on the face... Well, this may be contradictory, but isn't there something strange known as Lee Gou Dan in this world?

"Now, the next question, besides my dad who is the most beautiful in this world."

"Of course it is you, our honourable Lord Omar, your beauty comes only after Lord Roland."

"Haha, you are really very honest, I kinda like you now. Have you eaten lunch yet? Want to have it together later?"

"Haha, although you are exceptionally handsome, seems like there is something wrong with your head. I am a mirror, how am I going to eat?"

Looking at the half naked thick built guy who was counting his fingers, while making various bodybuilding posture facing the mirror caused Lionheart to feel nauseous even though he did not possess a stomach anymore.

"... This... is just a perfect match. I'm impressed of King Roland, just a small present and he managed to tame this stubborn Omar."

That muscular body shone with an oily gloss, but then the face had the delicate features of a cute girl, furthermore, it was seventy percent alike to Roland, in a sense, Omar's existence was the dark past of Roland.

Yes, the "Lee Gou Dan" before the eyes was the Pride of Seven Deadly Sins. It couldn't be blamed that he looked like this.

Roland used the standard template of Undeads to create his own Seven Deadly Sins, Envy and Gluttony were made using sewed-up abomination as a base, while Pride from the Seven Deadly Sins was

the same as Gluttony, a mutated spirit based on Banshee.

According to the initial design, he was an artificial soul who had no face, body nor gender, but as he grew, surprisingly he selected this as his appearance. Actually, it was caused by Roland who talked nonsense during his birth.

"As a man, only a muscular body is the true beauty."

Well, as a result, the muddled Pride viewed it as his gospel. And as the instinct of every life sees the mother as the most beautiful existence, without any doubt he used the face of Roland, and as everyone knew, Roland died too young, and the portraits he left was mainly from 11 to 12 years old. And in the end, this is how a child with aesthetic deviation was born.

Originally, if there were some slight misunderstandings, it was still possible to rectify, but in those years Roland was too busy (busy to start a war), Omar would not listen to others, and as a result it got worse and worse, and finally ended up being the most beautiful form of himself.

Parents understood more than the children themselves. Nobody understood Omar more than Roland, that was why by customising a flattery magic mirror, he could easily manipulate the few year old child.

Yes, only a few years old, only after a few years from birth he got sealed for rebelling, and during the sealed period he did not age. When he was released, his temper was just same as he was before

sealed.

While the civil war of Xiluo ended, as the only victor, it seemed that Omar would be in control of this country very soon, and with his ability, he would bring this country and himself to greatness.

The ability of Pride, Omar? Actually, it would be very complicated to explain that, it was actually a very peculiar ability system, not only a sole ability.

"Pride" originated from different levels, based on the understanding of Roland, as a superior that dominated the life and death of the inferior, they often did not reason with the inferiors, thinking that they can look down on the inferior like ants from above, this was the root cause of how Pride became one of the Original Sins.

There were ranks for Undeads too. If so, wasn’t it possible to create an innate ruler of the dead who was born with the ability to rule over the immortal Undeads?

Undoubtedly this was a queer topic, but Roland got his inspiration from the natural domination of queen bee and queen ant. They used a peculiar pheromone to build a network and used an intriguing method to take control of the whole group, causing the group to be dedicated to sacrifice themselves for their queen, even until death.

And the reason of selecting banshees as the standard template was because banshee was the few rare spirits which did not have

low levels of existence, and the fact that they were composed by pure spirits was also very suitable to create a spiritual network.

In the end, the final result of the research was Omar, he was the only one who did not use any additional materials, a Undead entirely created by Roland himself, in a sense, calling Roland as father was not wrong at all.

"The supreme power of Undead network", this was what the combination ability of Omar was called. He could use the Undeads under him to construct a spiritual network to exchange information constantly, and as the supreme power of the network administrator, he could control every Undead under him.

This is the only ability of Omar, it did not sound so powerful, but it was unexpectedly powerful when used.

Low level Undeads did not have any intelligence, while he could grant them fake intelligence, in a battlefield, he was like an invisible hand of command, which could even command the Undead under him to perform minor movements, such as moving the fingers slightly. To gain consciousness, a normal Undead needed to be at least silver ranked, while he could let countless Undeads to possess fake consciousness, it could be said that under his control, the battle power of low level Undeads which was only capable to be used as cannon fodder will at least be tripled.

And this was just the beginning, Omar’s powers were not that simple.

Spirit is power, the spirit of low level and high level Undeads will be connected to the Undead network, and how would someone such as him, who controls other Undead spirits, be weak?

Granting fake consciousness will not increase his burden, on the contrary, this lets him extract spiritual power to strengthen himself further.

With 300 low level Undeads under him, Omar would have around bronze rank battle power, with 3000 Undeads, Omar would be able to match Silver rank warriors, with 30000 Undeads, he could crush Gold ranked humans easily... When there is a spectral empire, his strength would be immeasurable, even for his creator Roland himself.

From this, one could tell that Omar’s power was leaning towards army battles, from the beginning, "Pride" Omar was designed as the commander of Undead army, the effort Roland spent was also a few times more compared to other Seven Deadly Sins, his expected design did not fail, and the reason it had some issues was affected more by the problem of his personality.

"I was born to be the top amongst those under father, why should I be listening to you old folks? How is that dumb mutt qualified to sit in my place, and command the army which I should have controlled! I’m gonna take back my Undead army and build a nation that belongs to Undeads. This is the duty I was born for, and it is also father’s expectations. We were born to be kings!"

Well, to a Undead formed from grudge, the crankier the soul the, greater the potential. But if the personality was too extreme, naturally there would be no way to discipline them, and in the end, it will end up to be the rebellion of naughty brats.

But in a sense, in those years Roland did not leave any room for manoeuvres, therefore it was still possible to communicate.

Only the Seven Deadly Sins and Roland himself understood the true power of Omar, the other Undead Lords only thought that he had very powerful undead control ability. The Xiluo civil war was meant to happen the moment Fitterland, who underestimated him, handed him the Undead army.

He could even his accept his own brother Bastian to have a higher ranking than him, for Omar who was arrogant, how could he accept an old lich above himself, hence as predicted by Roland, when Omar was released by Feyman, the second archon of Xiluo, it was as if they have set a time bomb for their own destruction.

Apparently, as the Civil War in Xiluo came to this extent, a choice was needed to be made.

So, Roland made a choice in advance, letting Omar ascend the throne, and sent Fitterland into the Undead plane.

At this moment, it was time for Omar to repay him.

"I understand father’s intentions. And I loved his present. After I

reorganize, I will fulfil my promise, and send armies to the northern lands to help father with the war."

Originally it was Roland who sealed Omar, Lionheart thought that this would be hard to deal with, but surprisingly it seemed to be going smoothly.

Hearing this, Lionheart hesitated instead, he was worried if Omar will plot something.

It seemed like Omar sensed Lionheart's hesitation, so he added.

"When I was sealed, I had time to think, and maybe I went too far indeed, in those years. And for father, who was all along unforgiving for betrayers to spare me, I should appreciate that."

Spare him? Didn't King Roland say that with the special ability of Omar, he could only be sealed, but cannot be killed? Lionheart was filled with doubt.

"Could only be sealed but cannot be killed? Hehe, for the almighty father there is no such thing. The Seven Deadly Sins were all created by him, he would have left something up his sleeve. At least being unable to control other Seven Deadly Sins is one of my weakness. And..."

Although speaking of his own weakness, but the smug look on face was as if he received blessings, and suddenly Le Gou Dan... Ahem, Omar turned shy.

With a big muscular body, but blushing like a girl, the pretty face showed some mysterious blush.

"... And, I also needed father’s help, to create another of my kind. I just entered puberty stage this year, and I also want to fall in love!"

Furthermore, while speaking, Lee Gou Dan shook his body vigorously, twisting his huge body, with the blushing face, and started daydreaming while closing his eyes, as though he had thought of something embarrassing.

"My request is not much at all, as long as they are not short like dwarves, if they are as tall and strong and pretty like me, that would be enough, yes, they can be stronger than me by all means, but their looks mustn't fall too far, a thickly built body plus a pretty face would be lovely!"

"Pfft!"

At that moment, Lionheart was so envious of the weak humans, at least they had the ability to die from spitting blood, while he could only endure the rolling thunder before his eyes.

"Although feeling shy, but now that I’m the king, having a few more choices seem to be fair. I had dreamed of organizing the "I'm proud, I have posture," competition under the moonlight. Ahhh, to say this out makes me really shy."

For a moment, Lionheart extremely regretted his outstanding imagination, he imagined that if this request is granted, every day, there will be a bunch of pretty muscular brothers making bodybuilding postures under the moonlight, Lionheart had an urge to bang the wall to death.

"Burp!"

An understandable nausea and the colleagues behind who were starting to fall to the ground retching proved that even for Undeads, there were thresholds for disgust!

"I... I will inform the king. And, kindly stay away from me, Lord Omar!! I have no interest in muscles!"

李狗蛋 (lee gou dan) is also 哪吒 (Ne Zha) in a chinese anime, featuring a cute girl with muscular body.

Chapter 170: The Elf Outcast

Situated in the Northland, sparse of resources, Tassel Kingdom of the Elves was nevertheless a great place, which was hard to come by.

The renovated cliff and magic-crystal wall became the artificial barrier of the capital, Santander, the endless hardy old pine trees served as the best shelter from wind, the ancient spirit of the Elves contained magical water, which flowed into streams, bringing warmth and vitality in this land, and also turning it into one rare green vitality in Northlands.

Just as Humans in the north were getting upset of the winter beasts in hunger, the Elven natural priests and hunters had tamed them into tractable livestock. Just as all countries in the north were endeavouring throughout the year to prepare the winter rations, the fruit trees under the manipulation of Elven Ancient Tree, were able to produce fruits thrice a year, producing all sorts of the sweet and delicious fruits that grew regardless of the seasons. These fruits were not exported and traded for mineral resources. In time, they would rot away.

A centipede does not topple over even when dead, the Elven kingdoms which had inherited the legacy of the Elves were contemptuous of the Humans as they had the background of nouveau riches. For them, a hundred years was just an instance due to their longevity. Having tremendous time and skills, had they not improved their living environment, those wild Elves in the Knight novels who lived above the trees, were merely an artistic ornament.

Just when the main forces of the Tassel were galloping amongst the snow land, their territory was as peaceful as ever. The young unicorns and flying horses were playing in the forest, the Elven civilians still had the leisure time to carry out their winter ceremonies, so what about the battle at the frontline? They were confident that the mighty alliance of the four Elven Kingdoms would never fall to the ordinary Humans, not to mention their very elites were going all out this time.

The truth was so, the hundred thousands of Elven armies were a small number, but due to their very high average combat power, just an elite troop of theirs could match the royal guards of the other countries, even their ground force was of formidable soldiers and should not be underestimated.

This was the foundation of the Elves, even today, the weakness of the Elven kingdom, which had inherited the ancient magic and arts, was none other than their population. It took an Elf two hundreds to reach adulthood, and this period was enough for Humans who married relatively earlier to come up with six or seven generations.

A war was fought with comprehensive country power, the population and resources were one of the important factors, as casualties were unavoidable, for even the mightiest sorcerer, would perish in combat or under friendly fire, and such a loss would take almost two to three hundred years to be regained.

The Achilles' heel of the Elves was none other than their inability to fight in a war of attrition.

And this time, if the main forces suffered tremendous casualties, the Elves would have to undergo a very long time of recuperation. It could be said that the northern Elves would go to any length as they had cast all their lots on the victory of this battle!

In the absence of their main forces, the role of city border patrol was transferred to the rangers who had formed a second class army, or an adventure squad.

A Wild Elf ranger, two to three Centaur archers, one to two Elven warriors, were the members of a typical Elven patrol squad. If it was a first class battle squad, one to two Elven Ancient Trees, natural priests and flying horse knights would be added, and the strength of those units was certainly on another level.

Even amongst the Elves, there weren't many Druids who prefer to live on trees, compared to the cities.

In any place, as long as there was the presence of intelligent beings, the trees would always be one of the most important resources. Not only they could achieve the basic functionalities of construction and furniture, they were also the basic ingredients of the artwork of the Elves. Furnished with precious forest regions which were unusual in Northlands, the exported exquisite wood produced by the Elves had earned a lot of foreign currency.

If the Druids who treated forest protection as the most sacred duty were easily amenable to reasoning, they would not be classified as terrorists by all the other countries. The Druids were

bigoted, the Elves were bigoted too, it was inconceivable how bigoted the combination of both, the Elven Druids was capable of. Their extreme nature protection organisation was the origin and mentor of the other Green Terrorists, all sorts of their secret acts were even graced as the epitome to take an example from.

The moniker of "Anti-Lumbering Little Bear Alliance" would sound adorable, but it had been there for more than ten thousand years. They had been referring to the Druids Terrorists which brought the Elves much headache, they had the esoteric bear transformation arcane and beast training arcane, perhaps any grey bears within the forest could be one of them spying on you, while you hummed a song, chopping wood.

In the end, the Elves were not only the source of the Druids, but also made up most of the Druids, however, most of the Druids would still have an outward occupation which was acceptable by the world.

At this time however, within the temporary campsite, Tasia the Elven ranger who was humming her little tune while preparing dinner, was actually a hidden Druid master, and was also a member of the "Little Bear Alliance", but lately, she had not been fulfilling the sacred duties of "natural protection".

The feeds that those pets Tasia had domesticated cost money, she had thus put earning money first, sacred duties second.

To be recruited by the Elven Kingdom to carry out some not so perilous military tasks and fill the spot of Kingdom armies, was indeed a bargain. At this crucial moment, the Elven kingdom

would no more be niggardly, the doubled recruitment fee during the war was alluring for countless mercenaries.

"Ha, this time we are really making money, to think that merely patrolling could make so much money, I hope the war would last longer, I still expect the cowards within the city to increase the recruitment fees. Should the war be elevated, the recruitment fee would increase threefold, or even tenfold."

Tasia spoke something uncharacteristic of the Elves, but the Centaurs amongst her troops had already gotten used to her personality, and on the contrary, they who held a lower stand in the Elven kingdom, would prefer her straightforward and amiable character, compared to the other arrogant Elven aristocracies.

"Don’t speak such a thing in the city, those self-important Elves would be displeased." Centaur Boll chucked after counting his recent soaring stipends, he was in a good mood.

"In the past few years, the army on duty was not so relaxed, they had to venture into the wild across the mountains in pursuit of the slave hunting groups, it was not an easy task, in the case of running into any sword saint or senior magic automaton instructor sent by the big Human countries, the pursuer might become the prey. Also in that time, quite a number of patrol squads have gone missing."

Tasia laughed even more happily.

"Indeed, those slave hunters will bother me no more, they

created so much trouble... Pitiful, Princess Suana. How pitiful, how could a good person not end well?"

Recollecting her figure which was as tender as water, even Tasia, who was sick of the Elves, had nursed a grievance.

"...About that matter, I heard a rumour. Erm, just a rumour."

Grover, the silent Elven warrior popped out, but his words had caught the attention of the comrades.

After a moment of hesitation, Grover finally spoke up.

"The rumor says, there a few doubtfulness about the kidnapping of Princess Suana, the Elven troops who were supposed to safeguard her was pulled over for military training, and the rangers had started to undergo a closed training, even the Moon Glaive royal guards was transferred to the border to take care of some disputes, all of these had given the chance for the slave merchants, who were not particularly strong, to capture the Princess Suana..."

Hearing this, members of the small squad had sunk into a peculiar silence, of course, they knew this rumour, for the past few weeks, this topic had been circulating around any restaurant or market.

The implication behind the rumour was quite evident, the demise of Princess Suana was but within the scheme of Elven King

and the Council. Rather than saying that Suana was dead in the hand of Humans, in fact, she was offered by the ruthless Elven King as the sacrifice of war.

"Let’s avoid words without proof, or else we would get into trouble."

To think that Tasia who had just spoken uninhibitedly, turned out to advise Grover to tread carefully, and just when her words faded, the amiable Elven warrior cracked a laughter.

"No proof? The two legendary warriors in royal guards were suddenly transferred, isn’t that proof? Anrode the "Hand of Kashmir" who had an intimate relationship the princess, even created a havoc in the army because of this, he had allegedly smashed the signboard of the army."

Grevor was obviously one who supported the Peace-pursuing faction of Princess Suana. They who went through an outrage, in the beginning, had now cooled off to think about the root cause of the death of the princess, and also discovered the few dubious points.

"According to what that was spoken by the Humans, the brains behind the political schemes are always those who would benefit the most from these events, and in this event, the Humans had derived no benefit at all, the only one who benefited from this were none other than the War-pursuing faction of the Elves. That man is incredibly ruthless, Princess Suana was his daughter..."

Alright, these words were blunt enough, when it came to rebuking the Elven king directly.

In an instant, the temperature of the campsite fell drastically, and everyone became silent, after all, it was not good for the civilians to participate in such matters, the spies and scouts were not exclusive to just the Humans. To be imprisoned due to loose tongues was quite a misfortune, and all sufferings could be spoken to no one afterwards.

Not to mention, Tasia who was actually a Druid, would not be intrigued by this matter. Despite her pity for the princess, she would not go out of her way to fight for her.

And thus, she was trying hard to stop his words.

"Ah, there is a Dark Elf!"

Alright, would Dark Elves appear within the Elven Kingdom? That was obviously a bluff but had unexpectedly amused Grevor.

He laughed while shaking his head.

"Just don’t talk about it if you don’t want, at here, where would you find dark..."

Before he could finish his words, he had fallen on his face with his eyes rolled back, a dark green dagger was stabbed in his back.

"...Though I don’t know how you discovered me, since you have, I shall not let you go back alive."

A figure wearing dark armour emerged from Grevor’s shadow, the dark skin sufficed to explain everything.

"A Dark Elf is here for real? Perhaps, I should consider being a prophet."

Just as Tasia was regretting her bad mouth, the Dark Elf scout in front of them who was about Silver rank, again flashed his dagger which was coated with paralyzing poison. In her eyes, that was possible to wipe out an ordinary patrol squad, but taking account of her hidden legendary power, the scout before her was merely a trash with a combat power of 5.

"Aha, take my rolling pin"

The truth went on like the expectation, the Dark Elf who was confidently moving was struck down by Tasia’s rod after just saying a hello. Never would he imagine that an Elven ranger with a crossbow possessed such marvellous skill with the rod, with this paralysing thundershock that came from that wood rod.

"Little lad, you dare to flaunt yourself in front of me. Guys, let’s move, the situation doesn’t look good, he might have accomplices..."

The words left were unnecessary, as a number of shadows surging out from the forest had revealed the truth, again, it had proven the prophetic talent of Tasia.

"...Tasia, please talk less."

Now, the party was running at full speed. Considering that she in the past had always spoken ill of the Elves, the centaur running in front of them all was filled with a grudge.

However, his words were not answered, turning to look back, Tasia had vanished, what remained there were some grey bears which were dozing off.

And all his comrades had fallen to the ground except the vanished Tasia.

"Law: Faint!"

Right after hearing a voice, a dark grey light flashed and he had lost his consciousness and tumbled down too.

At this moment, a Dark Elven priest riding on black-armoured War Scorpio, approached the fallen bodies. Behind her back, there were tens of Elven scouts with bewildered faces.

"Stupid males, couldn’t even take care of such a weak sacrifice, should the great plan of Spider Queen be affected, I will cut you all into pieces and feed the poisonous spiders!"

Before the eyes, it was the Dark Elven priest delivering rebukes, but in far away, there were sounds of bang-bang percussion. Apparently a ranger but having a great identity, Tasia whose adventure experience was vast, knew that it was the marching sounds of a massive horde of Sceptile Riders, which could only be afforded by powerful clans. There was only one possibility of using such an amount of Sceptile Riders.

"The superior priest of Lorci and Grey Sceptile Riders? Damn it. This is certainly not the hunting troop looking for sacrifices. This, is the entire army of the Dark Elves. To attack the Elven Kingdom at this moment, is Lorci insane?"

Obviously, it wasn't the time for any laments, just as Tasia, disguised as a grey bear, was about to leave, was spotted by the female priest.

" Humph, it's not my first day mimicking an animal, I'm a professional."

But straightaway, she realised the dark grey light was being concentrated around the Nine Head Whip of the priest, she started to be panicked as if she had discovered something.

"Forgive me, sister, I will repay you in the future."

She clenched his teeth and started biting her fallen comrade, closing her eyes.

"Humph, this is exactly how my little Hooi took its food, witness my god-like acting... They should have gone away."

When she opened her eyes, however, not only had those Dark Elves remained or turned away from her, but on the contrary, they were actually staring at her.

"Puke, Wahaha, there's even a vegetarian bear! This Druid is amusing."

The lady priest was rolling with laughter on the back of the armoured War Scorpio, and now, Tasia just realised she wasn't eating the right thing, and subsequently, she looked forward and realised that Grevor had awakened and was staring at her in astonishment.

That was a close call, when Grevor had gotten rid of the effects of the paralyzing poison, dodging the big bloody mouth, Tasia had bitten off a stack of grasses and started swallowing.

Obviously, she who tried to hide her gustation wouldn't taste anything, and so she had bit off the grass twice.

"Humph, I'm just a bear who loves eating grasses, why, is there any rule restricting bears from eating grasses, take my sky flipping bear paw!"

Alright, Tasia who always came up with disgraceful acts at the

critical moment had again proven that fact correct. She flew into a shameful rage.

Chapter 171: New Mission

"Watch your back, the poison fangs of spiders may fall upon us at any time."

The Grey Elf rangers who had defected from Lorci greeted each other like so during their farewells, to remind themselves and their comrades, that the incredibly vindictive Lorci would never let go of a single grudge, and at any time, she might send her dangerous fangs to obliterate her traitors.

Despite the formation of a strong alliance, the Underworld remained as it was, the war between each other is inevitable, but due to a certain reason, the recent power of the Dark Elves who served Lorci was getting weaker.

Due to trading under an underground contract, Aruhr, the Demon Messenger in the Underworld had disappeared abruptly, and thus, the Underworld cities of his human servants had gradually surrendered themselves to the Sulfur Mountain City. As more and more Underworld cities sought refuge or alliances, Annie’s autarchy status was gaining a firm foothold in the Underworld.

The three new autarchs, Ein Mezus the Dragon Queen, Annie the Fire Phoenix, and Centaur Anya the Underworld Beastman Sovereign had an intimate relationship, and their forces had always been banding together, and thus, the influence of Dark Elves had been significantly curbed.

This was just like in any market trade, if a few mega companies held above 70% of the market shares, they would possess the pricing power and would be capable of monopolizing the market, and the small businesses would easily go bankrupt. As the situation had progressed to this state, when all sorts of treaties for lowering tax on sales had been signed, many business entities would disregard the city of Dark Elves and play their own games, which would evidently lead to a fatal hit on the Dark Elves' economics.

In this situation, the Dark Elves would have made their move.

"You are not selling me anything? I will rob the headquarters, you dare to hinder the market trading? Believe it or not, I will kill your whole family! We are the Dark Elves. Not just charcoal heads with long ears!"

Nobody ever mocked the Dark Elves' threat. Being one of the few fanatic races that would embrace burglary and trickery as their virtues, the Dark Elves had always been easily offended. At times, they might not speak out, but one must still be aware of their deadly grudges and ambushes.

"The Underworld Oath of Alliance was established for the sake of the world peace, anyone who declares war will be the common enemy of all the ally members, with no exception even for the Underworld autarchs! In fact, the Underworld Autarch should abide by the peace accord even more strictly, or she would have to endure the hostility from the other autarchs."

If anyone would have shouted this sentence one year ago, everyone would take him as an imbecile. However, when it was

spoken by Annie who had won the support from almost seventy percent of the forces, no one dared to take the peace accord as a joke anymore.

Besides, it was self-evident that which Underworld autarch that sentence was directed at. Meanwhile, some Grey Dwarfs who were serving the Dark Elves due to military pressure, and the Underworld Dwarf City, had realised that the Dark Elves stopped resorting to violence. Without squandering this golden opportunity, they changed their allegiance and escaped the tyranny of the Dark Elves.

With its economics, politics and military comprehensively suppressed by the other forces, the influence of the Dark Elves was diminishing. Moreover, there were Dark Elves who had embraced the other Gods and started following new leaders. The authority of Lorci was facing an extreme comprehensive challenge.

To be faced with such circumstances, would Lorci not feel miserable? After the peculiar death of her divine-descendant illegitimate daughter a while ago, before the new heir could be decided, the Dark Elves power was heavily suppressed out of a sudden, and now, even her influence and followers were diminishing. All of these were beyond what she could bear.

Following the lessening of her vast followers, her divine force was weakened, out of fury, Lorci briskly executed the Mother of several big families. In the end, the silent hostility between the multiple Dark Elf cities to compete for the Underworld autarch status grew more intense. Meanwhile, in a series of turbulences, Mother Victoria from the Morsblight City turned out to be

amongst the three autarch candidates.

Aside from that, due to some historical connections, should Lorci eventually opt for coexistence with the other autarchies, Mother Victoria would become the best candidate as The High Priestess of Lorci. And now, this reason makes her a new superstar in the Dark Elf tribe.

In this situation, my letter has to be delivered to Annie through Elisa, then Annie will deliver it to Victoria by the special communication method. In this way, the letter would not be taken lightly, despite the absence of my signature and stamp.

Lorci the Spider Queen was notorious for her slyness and greed, persuading her to join other camps wouldn’t be a simple task.

"... In this sacred war, if the Gods of Order are victorious in the end, all existing Gods of Elves will fall. Hence, in preparation for the future, the Elf divine system desperately needs one skilful and experienced God of Elves to lead the crowd, you are undoubtedly the best candidate!"

"Please think twice, if you insist on remaining with Chaos, would you really want to fight alongside those people who once banished you? Do you think you can rise above them single-handed? If they become the leaders, would you be banished again? Not likely, learning from the past experience, they will definitely eradicate any root of misfortune, and seek an excuse to wipe you out."

I offered Lorci to be the Prime God of the Elves, as the outcome of

remaining with the Chaos would never be pleasant, whether they win or lose, that was my speculation.

I never told lies, and it was these "truths", which were able to touch the heart of the sceptical Lorci.

"Besides, I didn’t expect you to raise the flag of rebellion, you see, at present, the Elven Gods still side the Order faction, they expect you to attack them, not to mention the bitter grudge between you, letting go of any grudge is certainly not your style."

"The situation now is in such turmoil, without raising a flag or taking a stand, you can always make a second choice, this is free of risk and a better opportunity for vengeance. Should you miss this, even I will feel regretful for you, this is a golden chance that appears once per thousand years, should you miss this, and wait for another thousand years?"

In Dark Elf language, betrayal is a virtue, and one could easily picture the characters of Lorci. This proposal allowed her to bend with the wind, and also be the Prime God of the Elves if things succeeded, and so it definitely touched her heart.

To added more authority, at the back of the letter, I had added the mark of the Divine force of Ayer and Lord Wumianzhe.

These two marks served as the justification by two Gods of Order, not to mention one of them was Ayer the mogul, perhaps in Lorci’s eyes, the authority of this letter was significantly elevated, it had even become the official poaching of the Order camp.

Alright, this event was in fact, not known by the Gods of Order, and to ease things, Ayer had left me fully in charge of this matter.

Upon receiving the letter, Lorci gave no response, but this silence had notified me that she was touched. After some hesitation, she appointed Victoria as the highest priest, this had answered me in a different way.

As Lorci was willing to join the game, the subsequent events wouldn’t be within my control.

"Humph, everything you do will come back to you sooner or later, the Dark Elves would go even further than the sins committed by Elves in Sleuweir, I don’t believe the Elven army will continue to fight the Humans if they were hauled into a civil war. You should go back, and let the dogs bite the dogs."

Nevertheless, there were still a couple of problems in my hand.

"Being a black sheep to this extent, Fismer Caso was indeed an unparalleled genius!"

Not to mention the internal strife owing to the long-term of willful neglect of government affairs, the invasion of the Beastmen’s main force on the Maple city, had prevented Antoin from suffering irresistible tension.

Seeing the financial report of the royal financial advisor and the

military report of the army, I realised that Fismer had led Sleuweir to the verge of bankruptcy.

"Stop all the new entertainment facilities temporarily, seal the project of the imperial garden, release all slaves as the civilians, as for the concubines in the imperial harem...

"They are all mine!" I would surely like to speak such dream words of every man, but to retain a semblance of my humanity in the eyes of the world, alright, not to mention the dazzling silver ring on my finger, I could not help but to shake my head.

"Dismiss all of them, send those of wealthy families back home, appoint those of poor family as the nurses in hospitals, community service workers, tailors, etc, let them all earn their own livings. As for those who can’t do anything, appoint them as the dishwashers of restaurants. Alright, give them all a sufficient dismissal fee, but tell them, the imperial can no longer take care of them."

In fact, these financial and government problems were of little trouble, they were but the awful mess left behind by Fismer, who cared nothing but drinking and heeling around, the real problem was the feudal lords of the country.

In this feudal era in which sorcery and swords intertwined, due to the harsh living environment and the presence of demonic beasts, most civilians would prefer to stay in the safer, big cities, and the inconvenient traffic system had led to communication and transportation problems between city-states, the best example was none other than Emperor Hill Height, as it was common for the imperial authority to extend only across several city-states.

Of course, the rights and obligations were always contradictory, it was never a cinch to protect the people from all sorts of threats, natural and unnatural.

In my own territory, the authority and voices of the aristocracies could be even higher than that of royalty, as this wasn't something unusual in this era, the Royals had always been compromising, but to offend the aristocracies to the extent that a few aristocracies had utterly disregarded him, and didn't have audience with him in court for ten years. There was no one but Fismer Caso. And all of these, was not a trivial matter,

"Just for a famed beauty, to think that he could send the guards to kidnap the wife of the aristocratic feudal lord, yet leaving behind evidence all the way. So fortunate of this bastard to not yet have been overthrown by any aristocrats."

Actually, if it wasn't for the sudden north invasion of the Beastmen, perhaps not even more than two years, there would be a lot of feudal lords conspiring against him.

From the perspective of this decadent king, he was but devil who escaped from the hell and would be banished back there anytime, and since the wealth of this country would not belong to him forever, would he not seize the time for enjoyment, as for how terrible the consequence would be, he would care less as those would happen after his death, why was he even worried?

The situation of the current Sleuweir was not just so, the

imperials were supposed to stand out and gather all the feudal lords to form an alliance army to engage in this full-scale war, but the Beastmen had taken away that authority from the Humans, as they gave no chance for Fismer to fulfil his kingship.

But even if Fismer could fulfil his kingship, how many feudal lords would respond to his call of the expedition?

The main force of the imperial was divided into two, the main force at the border was stuck in the border fortress, meaninglessly, while the royal guard army and reserve army had suffered a big casualty just to confront the siege on Antoin.

As for the armies of feudal lords, they were mostly pinned down within their own territories due to Beastmen's strategy of a sudden invasion from all sides. Not only did the nonfeasance of the imperial shatter the loyalty of some loyal retainers, but it also prompted some people to be more cautious, if any feudal lord was willing to assist the imperial, that was equivalent to him seeking demise.

Fismer had gone too far, and even if I was the temporary king, this throne was still unstable.

Even in the times when sovereignty was dispersed across the feudal lords, rebellion was still technocratic, the legitimate kingship was always the last reason the civilians could use for toleration, and if it wasn't Fismer showing his devilish nature when his life was endangered, if it wasn't because I was a legitimate Mist descendant by law, I couldn't have taken over Antoin this easily.

However, this was still a taboo, which wouldn’t satisfy the feudal lords, and this situation was unpleasant for me.

"Today, taking over the kingship of Sleuweir with such an excuse, aren’t East Mist and Sharal both Mist descendants, they will probably take everything in the end. If the imperial kingship can be deprived of such, what about the rights of us feudal lords?"

Evidently, if this situation persisted, if I was accused of being an aspirant, I would definitely be categorized as taboo, if so, my blueprint would come to nothing.

Blueprint? Indeed, I had a series of proposals on the Northlands, but being a king was absolutely not part of it, as that would bring deadly harm to me and arouse caution of a lot of people against me, the losses surely outnumbered than benefits.

"A Sleuweir royal member was needed, even just as a puppet, would be more legitimate than me, to deputize the kingship."

But obviously, here came a new problem, Fismer had been very ruthless in order to climb up to the throne, amongst the three siblings, the crown prince of the old king was allegedly murdered by him, while the younger brother and his entire family had encountered "misfortune" too, they were caught in a carriage accident.

And now, I couldn’t even find a candidate for the puppet I needed.

A sudden news, however, had lifted the spirit of mine.

"The old king used to have a love child, a daughter named Glina, thirteen years ago before the enthronement of Fismer, she couldn’t be found during the extermination of his family, she might still be alive.

"The lamp of life?"

I suddenly recalled the dagger with two pearls, a Sleuweir royal should possess this arcane.

"Besides, the lamp of life which was always dim, has brightened up since three months ago, it seems that the princess has returned to the Northlands, if she’s back for revenge, most likely she has been concealed her name and identity."

The words of imperial household had lifted my spirits, hence, I immediately made an announcement, and the patrolling knights had been running across the whole city, shouting themselves hoarse, but still, no one stood up.

" If she is really in this city, she must be taking precautions against me. Forget about that, just look for her first, any other defining descriptions?"

The old man pondered with a frown for a long time, then started speaking again.

"She was still a kid that year, what traits could she have, she is just a quiet ordinary girl. Oh right, she has two moles on her chest and one more on her left butt, these could be the traits!"

I covered my face just as I heard these words, I could easily guess what would happen next.

[Ding Ding, congratulations master for unlocking the special mission - a spectacular welfare plot, mission target: Look for Princess Glina, don't hesitate, she is somewhere within your reach. Mission reward: Through her, you are able to take control of this country, serving as part of the restoration of Mist Kingdom, Roland's sword can perform the first stage of evolution for a divine weapon. Mission fail: the evolution reward is permanently forfeited, the spectacular welfare plot will be replaced with another spectacular but blood-and-slaughter plot.

"Bang!" I abruptly punched on the table, indeed what I feared, was what it came. To think of this reward and punishment!

"Does that mean we need to take off the clothes and dresses of all girls of fifteen to sixteen years old, and check their chests and butts? This is too wicked, this is too vulgar, this is too erot... cough, too immoral."

The old man shook his head with a wry smile.

"Considering that she would be pursued by the puppet king, she would disguise herself, whether it's her age or gender, she had

probably made herself as an adorable boy."

I gaped at him, should I give the order to strip all the young girls and boys, I was afraid I would again step into history - with the name of a Lewd King which even surpassed that of Fismer.

Finally, after half a day of profound thinking, I activated the communication feature on my ring, making a clean breast of the ins and outs of my matter.

"...If you decide to give the order of stripping, I will pretend that I do not know you from now onwards. Lewd Lord, why did you even tell me all of these crap, is this your new way of sexual harassment, or did you actually plan to frisk me first?"

I shook my head.

"No, I'm just asking for your help."

"Help? How could I help you do these things... Oh, I understood, you mean her?"

I nodded my head heavily, if possible, I wouldn't look for her too.

"Indeed, we need the help of expert, but this is beyond my capabilities, please help me inform that expert."

"...I understood, but suddenly think it's better to ask everyone in

the city to strip. If that guy makes his move, perhaps all of you will be hung on the pillar of humiliation in the history."

"You think likewise too? Sadly, we have no other choice, I made up my mind... help me, help me contact that man, contact Beifeng! We need the assistance of him, and his comrades! In this situation, only a true gentleman can help us!" (to be continued...)

Chapter 172: Reinforcements

"Name?"

"Albert.Lain."

"Job?"

"Freelancer knight, unaffiliated, but I've been hanging out with the Gentlemen Alliance recently. Everyone there treats me kindly, and they call me the Flower-dicing Swordsman of the Three Swordsmen."

I was a bit shocked at the rather open and free-spirited black-haired knight in front of me. I had already prepared myself for any kind of wretched "expert" that the Gentlemen alliance would send me after I contacted them, but what was with this extroverted handsome guy?

He had a squarish face that gave off a heroic spirit. His face was also clean and clear with a hook-shaped nose and bushy eyebrows. His black-colored knight attire gave him an aura of heroic coolness, while his long hair that reached his shoulders didn't seem feminine at all. I had the mysterious urge to punch in his handsome face, cough cough, I don't have any personal grievances with him though.

Wasn't he simply the classic enemy of all men – a mega handsome guy? Why was he a member of the Gentlemen Alliance?

"...Do you know what you're here for? Was there a mistake with the orders?"

Albert smiled wryly as he shook his head.

"There was no mistake with your message. The moment your message reached us, all my companions came looking for me first, as they believed I was the most suited for the job."

I was even more shocked upon hearing this. Just the maid outside the door who kept peeping in was evidence enough that this mega handsome guy wouldn't lack women. Rather than him needing to chase after women, it was far more likely that women would chase after him.

"...It's a long story, talking about the distant past."

Albert lowered his head in a manner that indicated it was humiliating for him to recall it.

"It's all due to a mistake I made when I was young, back when I was still a child, I had a younger sister, she was my angel, my everything..."

Albert's story was a common one in this day and age. Both his parents had died young, so he supported his family by himself, with his only living relative, his younger sister, being both his angel and his mental support. But when she was three years old,

she was kidnapped by human traffickers.

"And so, I singlehandedly walked the continent in search of her, and I can't remember my childhood memories anymore. The only special mark on her body is that she has a red birthmark on her waist. That's why I practiced a highly refined sword style that especially aims for people's clothing but won't harm their skin, which is why I'm also known as the Clothes-slicing Swordsman of the Three Swordsmen."

The complex expression on his face showed how pained he was by all this.

I instantly nodded while expressing my sympathy. He was clearly an ordinary person who was misunderstood as a pervert, something I empathized with completely.

"You've had it rough. Relax, after you're done with my affairs, I'll use my power to help you find your younger sister."

"Really? Thanks so much then, I really want to hurry up and carry out your mission now, please give me the specifics, and I'll begin immediately!"

Albert was so excited that he stood up immediately and bowed to me. I was also joyed, since this was much better than I expected. There was actually someone normal in the Gentlemen Alliance? It seemed like that Gentlemen Aura wasn't too difficult to deal with, so I was filled with anticipation at the upcoming magnificent future.

"Hm, she’s probably about 14 to 18 years old today, with blonde hair... no, hair color can be changed with dye, so don’t let any girls of this age group slip under your radar, and since she might be disguised as a boy, don’t let any cute boys past either!"

"My lord, rest assured, I’m an expert! Not a single female can escape my eyes or my sword!"

His rapier sliced an arc through midair with the killing intent in his eyes appearing and disappearing instantly. This moment, I discovered that the person in front of me was actually a top-level fighter halfway to a legend’s level.

I immediately became overjoyed now, was I actually getting lucky? Not only was he a normal person who had morals and common sense, he was also a top-level fighter?

"So reliable!! Too reliable! ..."

"Brother, I bought a Beast Fang sword pommel for you, you’ll definitely love it!"

A lively girl suddenly opened the door and jumped inside.

Wait, what did she call him? Brother? Since she obviously wasn’t addressing me, she could only be calling out to Albert, but wasn’t his younger sister still missing?

Right then and there, my smile froze solid. Thanks to my many years of experience in being fooled, I was already beginning to detect what would happen after.

"Lina? Why are you here? Weren't you supposed to be at the mercenary headquarters?"

Albert obviously seemed surprised to see the ponytailed girl here.

"Big brother Beifeng told me to follow you here, since he said he didn't know what you would get up to if I wasn't around. He's such a good person, he was worried that Brother wouldn't be able to finish the mission, so he had many companions come over together to help. Brother, what's this really important mission? That even you had to come here for."

Ok, why was I fooling myself, I should have guessed long ago that the Gentlemen Alliance wouldn't have a single normal person, but he actually managed to fool me by acting all sincere, which meant he was skilled in his own way.

"Brat, how brave of you..."

"No, no, Milord, listen to me explain, everything I just said was the truth! I really was searching for my sister all this time, which was why I received my nickname."

Suddenly, the black-haired girl interrupted him angrily.

"Brother! Did you slice off some girl's clothes again!? There's already so many girls waiting for you at home, yet you're still doing such things. Forget about the reason why you began doing such things; even though you found me three years ago already, you're still using the excuse about my story to pick up girls, so how am I supposed to face everyone? I'm the younger sister of the Clothes-slicing Playboy? That's so humiliating, how am I supposed to get married?"

Playboy? Many girls waiting at home? Pick up girls? Every term I heard caused my eyebrows to twitch, but as a veteran of the FFF group, I knew what I should do.

"Young lady, I'm currently having a serious discussion with your brother, so would you mind waiting outside for us? Oh right, please close the door for us as well."

That girl nodded energetically as she seemed to understand I was an important personage.

"Okay, Brother, I'll be waiting outside for you."

What a nice sister she was, so understanding. Compared to my completely lawless younger brother, as well as all those rebellious kids at home, I was almost about to cry! Thinking about how I've been single for more than three hundred years already, while he had a harem when he was only in his twenties, plus the fact that he was still hunting for more girls to add to his harem, it truly made me want to cry.

"My finger is currently burning up with power, you winner in life that deserves to die, harem-collecting man, taste my Personality Fixing Heaven Crushing Fist! Take this!"

"Milord, listen to me explain! It definitely isn't what you think it is!"

Explain? Yes, of course I'd listen to him, but only after an enjoyable beating did I finally stop hitting him and allow him to explain.

"Pfft, your greed knows no bounds, scum!"

"Wahh, it's not like that, I don't want to either, truly."

It seemed that my condescension touched a weak spot in him, and he actually started crying. Such a manly-seeming young fellow began crying like he was still a child.

Well, his painful sobs sounded real this time, so I temporarily held back my desire to rub salt into his wounds.

"I don't want to either, it's just that I got so used to shredding the clothes of women in that age group that I'll keep doing it instinctually. And, all I'm doing is looking at their waists for birthmarks, why do I have to take responsibility for all of them? Harem? Have you seen harem members with hippopotamus bodies and monkey faces? All those that want me to take responsibility have such appearances. Even the few good-looking girls that

wanted to be with me were chased away by them."

"How luxurious your worries are; are you bragging to someone who's been eternally single (and a virgin)?"

"No, no, milord, you don't know at all, the moment I leave, they'll be fighting with each other either openly or secretly, it's so chaotic, they'll use any underhanded plots or techniques. Last month, I was poisoned by my food five times in a row, I kept finding poisonous needles in my shoes, and glue all the time in my clothes, I can't take it anymore! Women are so scary! I'm already at the point where I begin shivering every time I see a woman! If I think about them, it scares me out of my mind!"

He actually did begin shivering as he said so with his teeth chattering as if he had gotten rabies. Judging by his sudden drop in body temperature and pale white face, he was actually telling the truth.

"You have gynophobia? You're a harem character with gynophobia? That sounds like a cliché manga setting."

Fine then, since Albert was currently at the extent of foaming at his mouth, I finally had some sympathy for the young brat.

"Two people come here and help to call for a priest."

But the moment I opened the door, some familiar faces came in.

"Boss, Brother Beifeng asked us to come over and help out."

Those that entered were all familiar faces from the Gentlemen Alliance: Beyar, Jinya, Casio, and... wait, why was Xueti here as well, just casually coming over here, you're supposed to be the highest-level priest.

"Lily is here."

The question I showed in my eyes received the answer I was waiting for. I understood immediately. With the Undead's announcement and as a member of the Blood Tribe, of course Lily could become more active in the East Mist Communal Country. And if Lily who was so skilled at internal logistics took over all the work, this dumb ox would indeed become rather idle and have the free time to just do things as he pleased.

"That guy Beifeng was actually being quite considerate, where is he? Did he not come?"

"No, he came."

Beyar nodded but his smile was rather vulgar as he made a gesture with his hands that any man would understand.

"He saw a huge lion's head, so he went off first by himself, and asked us to report in to you."

I instantly understood, but this wasn't exactly a good thing!

"A huge lion’s head? What the hell, that guy’s trying to kill himself!"

Simultaneously, a sky-splitting roar came from outside the window.

"Unbelievable! There’s actually such a twisted soul in this world! And it even dares to set its sights on me, take my soul-correcting kick!"

Fine, that person outside the window on the clouds happened to be the vice-captain of a certain Gentlemen Alliance. From a certain angle, he really was unbeatable, as that lion’s head was more than two thousand years old, and even I wouldn’t dare to provoke it.

"Ah, it’s big bro."

Apart from Casio’s sounds of panicking, everyone else in the room seemed calm about it all.

"Relax, the good die young while calamities can live for thousands of years, so it’s quite a simple matter for Beifeng to live for millions of years."

Everyone nodded at this remark.

"I always feel like even if the entire world was destroyed, he’d

still be fine."

The uniquely low and thick voice belonging to that man who descended from the sky right after only proved the truth of that statement.

"Ah, I almost died... Don’t be embarrassed, let’s chat a bit..."

"My sharp sword can slice through anything!"

With cool words and a shining trail through the air, the invisible wind emanating from his sword turned into a cold wind that passed by.

"Clang!"

As the handsome swordsman stood up straight with a steely face and returned his longsword to its scabbard, that’s when the swishing sounds of clothes ripping and falling to the ground finally happened.

"Ahhh, there’s a pervert!"

This was the moment with that noble daughter finally discovered that her clothes were completely shredded, while Albert merely scanned her over quickly but only chuckled coldly before

continuing onwards by herself.

"Hmph, I cut something useless again!"

Right then and there, that girl went into a crying fit at the incomprehensible act that had just occurred, and her guards hadn't even had a chance to take action yet.

Another tall figure suddenly appeared beside the girl as he covered her with his cape.

"...We're currently in the midst of pursuing the criminal who intentionally shreds girls' clothes, but we don't know where he's escaped to."

From a certain viewpoint, it could be said that Clint who was wearing heavy armor indeed seemed rather dignified, and as for him being the one who gets to act like a good individual, it's doubtlessly because he's also a human, so he wouldn't attract too much attention.

"Progress is too slow."

On the platform to the side, I was unsatisfied with our current rate of progress. This morning we've only managed to check 40-ish girls, how long would it take to finish at this rate?

"...This is already pretty quick. Fortunately for us, the Lantern of Life's reaction narrowed down our targets for us, we only need to

check those that recently returned to the Northlands in the past three or four months, otherwise this really would take forever."

The Lantern of Life's functions were limited. It discovered a reaction a bit over three months ago, which only told us that Princess Glina returned to the Northlands at that time, but as for her specific location? If it was capable of following even her specific location, how would the royalty ever have any privacy?

Its area was so wide, if only it was more exact, Kelly would have discovered me much sooner as well, at the very most it was only evidence whether or not a royalty member was authentic as well as still living.

"Milord, how about making everyone in this city naked?"

"...It's winter right now, people will freeze to death, besides, how will we possibly deal with the aftermath?"

I felt helpless about dealing with Albert who was currently wielding his sword eagerly at a distance from me. Why was this gynophobic swordsman so enchanted with clothes-slicing swordsmanship?

"It must be hard for him, since he has gynophobia."

"Heeheehee, hahaha."

Just as I stated that, everyone around me started guffawing as if I

had said something wrong.

"Is his gynophobia just an act as well? This brat's acting skills are really that amazing?"

"No, he's not acting about this, but, take a look, the way his expression changes after slicing some girl's clothes."

I focused on Albert, who sheathed his sword as he stated he sliced something useless again, but there seemed to be a sliver of joy in his mouth, and his expression was filled with delight, as if he was enjoying the process.

"He's... enjoying this?"

"Yes, he does fear women to the point of death, and any woman touching him will cause him to scream, but precisely because of this, he especially enjoys the screams of women, which is why he's unable to stop himself from acting as the 'Clothes-slicing Demon,' doubtlessly because this is the greatest joy in his life."

"Sigh, for such a young man to turn out like this, with his sword techniques, what a pity."

"That's not quite so, Adam said before that Albert's typical sword techniques are only ordinary, only when Albert's in the midst of slicing clothes will he be at the level approaching that of a Sword Saint's."

I was momentarily stunned at hearing this. Sword Saints are extremely rare, and require both incredible talent and an extended period of time to polish their skills. They definitely have the ability to take on intense challenges.

But analyzing things more closely, I found that this didn't seem right.

"After his unsheathing slice, he'll slice 100 times before returning his sword to scabbard, normally he'll emit zero killing intent, but when he unsheathes his sword, his sword energy is so imposing that it can kill people formlessly, how is this approaching that of a Sword Saint's level, he's clearly already at a Sword Saint's level, this guy is actually a Sword Saint!?"

"No, he can only reach that level when his target is a woman that he's slicing the clothes off of, which is why Adam said he's only approaching the level of a Sword Saint."

"As expected, there's not a single normal person in the Gentlemen Alliance. Are the other two members of the Three Swordsmen similar to him?"

"Three Swordsmen? That's what they call themselves, everyone calls them the Three Vulgar Swordsmen."

I shook my head while feeling rather helpless, but at this moment, someone spoke up from behind me.

"I found the Princess’s milkmaid from her younger days, there’s new information!"

Chapter 173: The Weight of a Sword

[Roland Sacred Sword: with this regal sword having to bear more and more weight, it is now closer to evolving and becoming a true God Equipment. When it awakens, you shall receive your first true God Equipment.]

[Kingdom-Class Treasure's Effect: As long as the East Mist Communal Country exists, this sword shall be indestructible. If the country perishes, this sword shall self-destruct. Feel free to exchange blows with any weapons using this sword, as even Ayer's Reaper's Scythe will fail to leave even a single scratch on this sword.]

[System Reminder: For Master who's in dire straits currently and becoming more and more unseemly every day, this Sacred Sword is crying out... it's already been crying. I said it many times already, it's a Sacred Sword, not a barbeque rack! Just try seeing what happens if you take advantage of its indestructibility to bake some sweet potatoes one more time! Also, as for cooking food, you should use a kitchen knife, don't you know how to value and respect such Sacred Equipment? No matter what, it's an artifact left behind by your grandfather's generation.]

The Legendary Quest regarding the Revival of Mist that descended upon the Roland Sacred Sword has been with me for quite a while, but ever since I entered the northlands, the Sacred Sword has entered an abnormal hibernation period.

Its original extravagant to the point of opulence characteristics had completely disappeared, and the only explanation about it

remaining was that mysterious Kingdom-Class Treasure's Effect. According to the system, the Sacred Sword seemed to currently be storing energy in order to truly transform into a God Equipment.

Perhaps when I finished the Revival of Mist quest, this Sacred Sword would truly awaken as a God Equipment. Well, as for the system's comments on how I had used the sword as a barbeque rack and to bake sweet potatoes, I was merely making the best use of its newfound trait.

Now that it was indestructible, it didn't even require maintenance anymore. Not even dust would adhere to it, for it to be so handy, of course I would try finding some extra uses for it.

Yep, it was quite normal for me to do so, I definitely respected the sword, at the very least, I didn't use it to hang clothes on.

[Additional System Reminder: You did do so, you bastard! The only problem was that any clothes you hung on it were automatically sliced in half by its keen edge.]

Okay, let us ignore this system that's getting more annoying these days, and return to the main topic.

"God Equipment? I've actually never used God Equipment before, and I don't know just how strong they are."

It seemed inaccurate, but I was telling the truth.

Just like the name, God Equipment meant equipment that was godly in power, typical with a god's soul or power within, so they would definitely be rare and precious. I came into contact with some false God Equipment before that merely had the title, but it was certain that they still couldn't match up to true God Equipment.

As for the original form of my Sacred Sword, it only began its transformation into God Equipment after I ascended to godhood and received power from the Law Gods, it still needed time in order to accumulate the divine power injected by real gods in order to truly transform, but unfortunately, I don't have any more chances to do that currently, and as for that other so-called God Equipment – the Scepter of Eternal Night, yep, everyone knows about what that is already.

In this aspect, I was quite envious of Harloys. She personally came into contact with God Equipment before, and understood just how strong they were. I also asked her in the past just how much of a difference my items were from true God Equipment.

"Below True Gods are the SemiGods, and you know the difference between them as well. Beneath God Equipment are those with partial God powers known as SemiGod Equipment, but those random assortments of abilities SemiGod Equipment possess aren't actually all that different from Legendary or Epic Equipment, apart from the number of abilities. God Equipment however is on a completely different scale; perhaps they might not have as many abilities as SemiGod Equipment, and some might even have zero attack power, but they'll definitely have various unique abilities that are the overwhelmingly best in their fields, at the top of their class."

After I came into contact with the Ancient Sea God's Bottle, I was faintly able to detect the true uniqueness of God Equipment. Even if it was an insignificant-seeming ability like returning a water source to its original form, even if the God Equipment itself was completely tattered, even against a True God's curse, it was still able to use its ability as normal.

I'll skip over the obvious ones such as how Fire Gods' Equipment would have something to do with flames, or how War Gods' Equipment would have enormous effects in battle. These days, I've been considering just how the Roland Sacred Sword would end up when it finished its evolution.

Based off of my understanding of the system, due to the limitations of karma, it never gave me any rewards that materialized out of thin air, instead, it would give me what I would have received anyways. Its biggest use was to skip over the needlessly detailed or complex parts for me, and use already twisted karma to twist karma even further, rather than creating miracles out of nothing.

The system's rewards almost always had a relation to the cause and effect as well as karma of the mission as well, for instance, that one Epic Quest rewarding me in the end with points based on my influence to "history," and when I defeated the Hydra in the Epic Challenge, I was also rewarded with something from the Hydra itself.

That's why I deduced that since this quest was for me to revive the Mist Kingdom, and the reward was the Roland Sacred Sword's

evolution to a God Equipment, and also taking into consideration that this Sacred Sword was the representation of the Royal Seal of the Mist, then the final strength of this Sacred Sword most likely depended on how well I completed the quest to revive the Mist Kingdom.

The higher-quality the end result, the stronger that the newborn Mist Kingdom was, the stronger that the Roland Sacred Sword would become.

And with many events simultaneously developing, I also constantly adjusted my plans. With our combined efforts, a brand-new Mist Kingdom was gradually beginning to form.

Perhaps it was still currently rather fresh and tender, but it was currently growing through battle. Perhaps it was currently still weak and small, and in the midst of danger, but when it finally matured as the king among wolves in the north, it would definitely shock the world.

Just as how I would have definitely regretted it if I only fulfilled the most basic requirement of the Epic Quest, I had no intention this time of merely stopping at fulfilling the basic requirement this time either.

"A country’s power will always be limited, perhaps an alliance with the same goal will be more suited for pursuing my long-cherished desire."

The East Mist Alliance was the name I secretly wanted to call it.

With the East Mist Communal Country at its heart, plus the Sleuweir Kingdom, the Shawen Free States, the Barbarian tribes, and so on, they would worship the Law Gods as their religion, and have "non-aggression" as their basic tenet, they shall come to each other's defenses and fight strong enemies while united, and gradually form into a simultaneously loose yet tight alliance through difficult holy battles.

This Alliance would perhaps become the foundational block for me to overturn everything.

In the past, I believed that I was sufficient by myself to take care of everything, and that friends and companions would only make me soft and show weaknesses, but numerous defeats woke me up to reality.

Personal strength was meaningless in front of the waves of history, which was why this time I had trustworthy companions and friends at my side, whose strengths and intelligence were more than enough to make up for what I lacked, and of course, there were also my allies in the heavens.

In the past, I believed that battle would wipe out battle, but endless amounts of death and screaming woke me up to cruel reality again – any battle without benevolence, justice, and limitations would only bring death and destruction.

Warriors without beliefs would become nothing more than butchers sooner or later, which was why this time, I decided to use the various complex teachings of the Law Gods in order to limit our actions. Even if it seemed rather inconvenient due to having to

adhere to so many rules, it was actually a path we must take in order to receive even more support down the road, as well as a yoke upon ourselves for us to not fall to limitless insanity.

In the past, I believed that a terrifying autocratic government was the sharpest sword available to me, but reality proved that this was nothing more than a shortcut to craziness.

Allies that fought for the same purpose would give you unexpected assistance, while subordinates that merely followed your orders would only think about how to replace you and take over your position. That’s why I no longer considered making an authoritarian Empire, a loose alliance would be sufficient, while the young leaders and kings could lead their own countries by themselves as the vanguard, and fight together under the same banner, with me silently and secretly making the plans behind the scenes, taking hidden actions, and doing the dirty work.

"Love and justice? Of course not, that wouldn’t fool anyone in this generation, but based on consideration and logical deduction, while something to believe in and a mutual goal to strive for seem rather empty, it’s actually quite important. The larger the gathered forces, the greater the chances to overturn the twisted fate, which was why I chose to do this."

Reality proved that my choice was correct. The Gentlemen Alliance, the Underground powers, the Church of Law, the East Mist Communal Country and all the other powers, while they definitely had many connections with my previous self, but technically speaking, they didn’t have formal subordinate connections to me, but not only did they still follow my orders,

even if I wasn’t present, they would still be able to operate on their own, and support and help each other, creating a cooperative power that wasn’t ignorable.

"In order to deal with the future, I have limitless expectations for our allies and their support, even if they only hope to be carried by us, even if they want to personally benefit, that’s acceptable as well."

By now, it was obvious that this Epic Quest recognized the New Mist Alliance that I created, and the Roland Sacred Sword’s hibernation and newfound indestructability were doubtless evidence that it received enough power from the gradual growth of the newborn Mist Kingdom.

But the system suddenly gave me a quest to find a specific person, which would give me the reward of evolving the Roland Sacred Sword even earlier. Perhaps this meant that it was almost time to use this sword, or in other words, there was a difficult obstacle ahead of me that I would be unable to surpass without using the Sacred Sword. This was definitely terrible news.

But the next piece of information I received sunk me into confusion as I faintly felt like that damned system had gotten me good yet again.

"Glina.Caso, she vanished several years ago, and she was supposedly last seen near the entrance to the Underground cities..."

[She’s right by your side...] I recalled the system’s notification for me, causing me to think of a certain person, who just happened to fulfill the requirement of having returned to the Northlands approximately three months ago.

"Clint, take off your armor! Immediately! Damn it, you dare to run!? Catch him for me!"

Nobody expected that even if the Holy Battle was to involve even the gods, that the first God Battle in this Holy Battle would come so quickly and ferociously. Not only that, it was even due to an internal conflict between what should have been the neutral Elves.

Until the black magical mist enchanted by the Spider Queen dissipated, the sun would no longer be able to act as a threat anymore to the Dark Elves.

And under the protection of various guardian gods, the Elf Forest under this black mist was now a chaotic battlefield, with Elves and Dark Elves fighting everywhere.

"Impossible, how did they possibly pass by the border guards? Wasn’t the underground tunnel being guarded?"

"They didn’t come through that tunnel, they came through the imperial mausoleum, there must be a new tunnel inside there!"

There was no way that the Elf Kingdom wouldn’t be on guard against its mortal enemy, having every entranceway heavily

fortified was already a longstanding habit of all the Elf countries. But this time, the Dark Elves' attack was too sudeen.

The Tassel Elf Kingdom's imperial mausoleum's underground tunnels weren't a natural occurrence, they were the secret escape tunnels as a last resort for the royal family, an artificially constructed passageway that could help them escape to the main portion of the Underground world.

From a certain perspective, Annie and Anya were favored by fortune, not only did they manage to reach that critical intersection when they were lost, even more luckily for them, they met Suana who had escaped into the tunnels in order to protect herself, which was how they coincidentally managed to learn about this shortcut reaching to the Tassel Elf Kingdom.

When Annie and her army learned about this passageway, they didn't think too much about it, they were merely pleased to learn that there was a shortcut available for them to take, but when her army camped nearby this passageway, the secret naturally spread through certain channels to Roshe, causing this completely unexpected ambush.

Perhaps it was the Elves' fate to meet with such a disaster. If you looked at it from a certain way, if it wasn't for the fact that certain people forced Suana to her death, the Banshee would never have met up with the Underground Lord, nor would Roshe ever have learned about this secret passageway, so this ambush wouldn't have happened. Perhaps this was all fated by karma.

The guards at the imperial mausoleum were novices that had

never experienced combat before. The guards were in the midst of yawning and complaining about how it wasn't time for the next shift to take over; they never anticipated that the shadows behind them had begun to twist in form as life-rending green daggers stabbed towards their backs.

All the imperial mausoleum guards were slaughtered in just a few minutes by the Dark Elves' elite scout forces without even a chance to raise the alarm. When the main Dark Elf forces poured out from the underground tunnel, even they didn't expect just how loose the elves' defenses were in this area, and how easy it was for them to go through this path.

Of course, Dark Elves didn't care one whit about the concept known as politeness. After a brief momentary period of shock, they obviously took advantage of the surprising situation and proactiveness to make their ambush as brutal as possible.

The Dark Elves used the highly mobile Lizard Cavalry as their vanguard. Perhaps this high-tier troop type wouldn't have been as useful in a direct confrontation on the battlefield, but the Lizard Cavalry were outstanding in chaotic battles. While the Elves were busy defending against the Dark Elf Knights' poisonous arrows and long spears, the Gray Lizards' bites and claws were actually even deadlier.

In small contained battlefields, Lizard Cavalry became a nightmare for the Elves that lacked close-combat capabilities. Even against strong mages, they were able to use extraordinarily strong leaping abilities and flexibility to pass over the mages' cannon fodder summoned creatures and tear the mages to pieces.

With these cold-blooded Dark Elf Knights' and Lizard Cavalries' arrival, the Elves that weren't prepared suffered enormous losses. Many villages and cities were instantly lost, and the cold-blooded knights that had satisfied their bloodlust hadn't even had time to dedicate their sacrifices to the Spider Queen when the anxious Priest Roshe wielded her Hydra Whip to indicate the next town for them to attack.

Due to the ambush, those small scout squads in the backlines suffered losses of over 90%. For someone like Tasia to have lived and even counterattacked was something that was less than 1%, which made the other Elves even suspect that she turned traitor.

Just like the Elf Army freely roaming around the Sleuweir Kingdom previously, the Dark Elves' army entered the Elf Kingdom and opened holes in its defenses everywhere, and the Tassel Kingdom that didn't have most of its soldiers sunk into a huge disadvantage of only being to passively react.

If this was an ordinary war, perhaps the Tassel Kingdom wouldn't even survive until its main forces returned, but this was the prelude to the Holy Battle involving the personal benefits of True Gods on both sides. While the order forbidding True Gods from directly intervening in lower species' wars still had some effect, there were still actions taken that were in the gray areas and barely touching upon the boundaries of that rule.

"My children, awaken."

When nature’s low roar of anger emerged together with High Priest Prescott’s angry shouting, ancient trees that were thousands or even tens of thousands years old transformed into tall Dendroid Warriors, the combat situation began tilting once more.

"Forest Guardian Clareladin! Do you really think that attempting to hide behind a SemiGod descendant playing at using Gods’ powers, I wouldn’t be able to detect the scent of your rotten wood God Power? Since you were the ones to break the rules first, then you won’t be able to complain about me! Descend, my children! Tear down these rotten branches, and bring me the head of that High Priest descended from SemiGods."

Just as the Elf Warriors were getting all excited over the Dendroid Warriors joining their side, the Spider Queen’s screeching threw them into the depths of despair again. Before nature’s angry roars even stopped echoing on the battlefield, a large portal leading from the lower dimension suddenly appeared.

Dozens of huge black spiders that were more than ten meters tall crawled out of the portal, and easily tore through the ancient Dendroids’ branches with their spider limbs that were thicker than steel pillars. Even the strongest warriors took deep breaths of worry at this scene.

And so, while the ordinary Elves were fighting amongst themselves, the far more powerful Gods began their conflict as well.

Chapter 174: Queen Glina

From the very start, my search had been doomed to failure. This was because I had misconceptions about my target's outer appearance and characteristics.

Glina.Caso, descendant of the Mist, and the future Queen of Sleuweir. She was currently fifteen years old, but if you went by her physical appearance, she didn't seem that old at all.

She was about 1.4 meters tall, and her short golden hair was combed into a simple bobbed haircut. Her skinny limbs weren't suitable for wielding swords or other weapons at all. From a first impression, it was easy to think that she was still only ten years old.

As for why her real age and perceived age were so different? It was due to that dark yellow demonic pupil under her right eyepatch. Thirteen years ago, when she had almost reached the point of death thanks to her enemies' pursuit, the demonic blood in her awoke. Even though it saved her, she also became no longer completely human from that point on. The most obvious result of this was the fact that her rate of growth ended up slowing down.

Unlike Fimor.Caso who was unable to resist the bloodline, Glina who lived in the Underground World saw many fallen demonic descendants, so naturally she knew that there were no free lunches in this world. Using demonic power usually cost one's soul as the price, so before such a tragedy befell her, she resolved herself to seal away her own demonic power.

"Magical Seal Armor Clint #1."

That was the name of the magical armor mechanism that "Clint" never took off. While it appeared like a shabby piece of heavy armor on the outside, it was actually an exquisitely created magical mechanism shaped like a piece of armor, and the real Glina had always been hiding inside this armor while controlling the mechanism.

Not only was the armor a weapon, it even had various anti-magic items and chains inside that chained her up quite tightly. Not only was it impossible for her demonic powers to leak outside, even moving her body was extremely difficult. She had used both physical and magical seals on herself in order to completely suppress her own demonic powers.

And since she had decided to seal away her powers, Glina who was an expert engineer gave up on her past close-combat fighting style, and chose instead to use explosives, gunpowder, and Dwarven Firearms as her main weapons, causing the rise of the famously terrifying Clint the Explosive Demon.

As for her abnormally high sense of caution, not only was it a result of living in an environment of endless battles, even more of it came from her uncle’s assassins and spies sent out to find her.

Even now she was unable to completely accept that the person she trusted the most was actually someone out to assassinate her, and after she matured, the bother of her demonic power caused her to go into self-imposed exile.

This girl used her own method to put up a barrier between her heart and the world, and hid her soft real body within a rotten metal can. She used small openings and sensors in place of her eyes and ears; she used cold steel in place of the warmth of human contact. Perhaps she was still interacting with humans, but her soul was in self-imposed exile.

"As long as I don’t have any feelings for others, I won’t be hurt. As long as I don’t trust anyone, I won’t be betrayed. I’ve had enough already."

I’m not the type to comment on other people’s way of life, but this eyepatch-wearing girl had clearly been through a lot.

Even now, looking at the girl who remained expressionless and silent despite being tied up so tightly, I didn’t even know how to deal with her.

"Since you came back here together with me, you must have had your own plans, don’t you plan on saying anything? Even though you knew that we were searching for you, why didn’t you come out and tell us?"

"I’m not Glina..."

"Hm?"

"I’m Clint, not Glina."

Her single eye was filled with self-belief as she said so. She truly believed in this.

"...You reject your royal heritage so much? Do you feel that people will treat you differently due to your identity?"

"They’re already behaving differently."

Turning around, I saw that the gentlemen behind me had their eyes popping out as they were all staring at her. The fact that Clint was actually a girl probably shocked the members of the Gentlemen Alliance she hung out with more than anyone else.

"Impossible, how could Clint be a little girl! Just yesterday we talked about so many male topics, he said he was one of the staunchest members of the blonde beautiful girls faction! How could he possibly be a flat-chested loli!"

"Yeah, we even showered together with no problems... By the way, has nobody ever stopped him from wearing armor in the shower?"

"Everyone got used to it, isn’t there a sentence saying that armor is a man’s true body!"

Upon hearing this sentence, the fact that every one of them nodded rendered me speechless... Even though I believed it as well, but it was still embarrassing to say it out loud.

"Yep, I even saw him wearing some large bear-print pajamas on top on his armor, I thought it was rather normal."

"Yeah, and I even witnessed him drinking alcohol straight out of the barrel."

Alright, Glina was beginning to chuckle proudly at the gentlemen's shock.

"Ahaha, I'm a combat expert, a master of disguise, I've undergone assassin and anti-assassin training, and I'm an expert in male psychology; I even know how to make perverted jokes in sixteen different languages. My Clint #1 armor is absolutely perfect, not only can it imitate how normal people eat and drink, it can even enter showers, absorb water, and wash my body. I can hide inside it for more than one year without ever needing to come out. As for what I shouldn't see, do you really think I want to see a bunch of stupid foolish men flashing off their muscles? I always turn off my sensors when faced with such blinding sights."

This cold-faced loli's laughs made me speechless, she was truly so proud of herself at her skills in concealing her identity, was there indeed a problem with the Mist bloondline after all? Just what was with everyone from this family?

But there was obviously no time to waste, so I went with the direct approach with her.

"Glina... Okay, I know that you don't like that name, so I'll keep

calling you Clint. You're also familiar with the current situation; I need your assistance. Your uncle should have been your mortal enemy, and now that he's dead, it sort of counts as me having helped take revenge for you. Now, I'd like to request for your aid in stabilizing the situation, is that alright?"

"No."

"...Why not, at least tell me the reason."

"That guy has nothing to do with me. If it wasn't for you guys, I wouldn't even return."

Glina had no intention of taking revenge in the first place. Having left home at two years old, and experiencing countless betrayals and impacts from her demonic blood awakening, the current her didn't have any memories of her homeland anymore, nor did she have any memories about her parents.

Perhaps the deepest part related to her homeland in Glina's memories were those of the shiny edges of assassins' daggers. If a person had nothing but negative memories of her own homeland, it was only natural that she wouldn't desire to return.

Perhaps the only person she viewed as a relative was the Lord of Iron City that raised her as his own son. After experiencing so much slaughter in battle and all those betrayals, she had no interest whatsoever in obtaining power.

But, even if Glina was the type that seemed like she had no desires, she still wasn't difficult to deal with for me. Perhaps Glina was indeed difficult to deal with, but the Clint that I was familiar with was a piece of cake.

"Cough, I have the newest explosive formulas here that I deceived the Auland Empire into revealing, are you interested? They're actually quite skilled in alchemy and engineering, it can be said that this formula doesn't follow common sense at all, they actually thought of the method of using high pressure in place of high temperatures... Darn it, this explosive formula's so complex, are there any experts that can help me research it?"

Hearing this, her ears and lips seemed to tremble slightly. She was slightly moved at this, but considering all the troubles that would come with promising to help me, she fell silent again.

"...While your Clint Armor isn't bad at all, it's still technology from several years ago. Don't you want some engineers to help you upgrade and improve it? Such a tattered piece of armor is so unseemly, girls' clothes should at the very least be clean if not pretty. Regardless of anything else, Sulfur Mountain City and Iron City are solid allies now, and your adopted father even has a seat at the alliance's conference. We've treated you kindly, don't you agree?"

This time, I definitely noticed how moved she was by the expression in her single eye.

"Every day you only need to appear for half a day, and act your part. You can do whatever you like during the rest of your time. If

you promise to work with me, you can also have first dibs on using any new equipment, and you can also have the new alchemy explosive formula that Olivy researched."

"...Does this include the Roland line of titan robots and Timlet's new toys?"

I immediately nodded as I was overjoyed inside. I wasn't afraid of any request she would make, I was worried that she wouldn't have any requests. I was afraid that she wouldn't speak up at all, but since she said something, that meant that she was definitely considering it.

"Sure, if you're willing, you can become the test pilot at any time. Since you can control such a tiny armor mecha and make it seem like such a real person, I believe that there's few out there who are above your piloting skills."

"No, there's nobody out there at all who can surpass me, I'm an expert!"

Her green eye was filled with confidence. Thanks to her countless accumulated experience, Glina would never believe that anybody out there had more experience piloting mechas than her.

"It's a deal."

When my large hand shook her small hand, there was a sudden notification from my system.

[*Ding!* Congratulations to my master for finding the final Mist descendant. The Roland Sacred Sword has now completed the first step in its evolution ahead of time. Please continue working hard for it to become stronger. System reminder: bastard, do you dare to tell Elisa that you always shower together with Clint?]

I broke out into a cold sweat upon hearing this. As one of the very few normal people (well, people I could talk to) in the Gentlemen Alliance, and also considering the professor's juniors, I definitely used to always chat with or make Clint work for me, and seeing how he was trustworthy and strong, I always had him help me wash my back. If word of this got out, it would be quite troublesome for me.

"Um, since from a certain standpoint, we're also related by blood, are you willing to become my adopted daughter? Relax, it won't have anything to deal with your father, it's just in name for political purposes."

Alright, I lied here. While it was also for political purposes, I had more personal motivations. If it was an adoptive father washing together with his adopted daughter, that wouldn't seem as bad for me.

"If you give me spending money at fixed periods, okay."

Alright, judging by how her left eye was sparkling, she wasn't talking about a small amount, but it was worth it!

"Deal."

In the public square, the young princess put on the golden-purple crown, and the new Queen of the Sleuweir Kingdom was thus born. When she received the golden staff that represented royal power, her first proclamation already shocked the world.

"I, Glina the First, declare in my name as the Queen of Sleuweir Kingdom that the Sleuweir Kingdom shall be a solid ally of the East Mist Communal Country, and rebuild the former Mist Kingdom together. We shall also worship the Law Gods as our national church, and from now on, the Sleuweir Kingdom shall obey the tenet of ‘non-aggression,’ and never start any wars ourselves, however..."

The Queen that had just taken up her position lifted her golden royal staff and slammed it back down against the ground, with the echoing metallic sound filled with her thunderous anger.

"Our lands are currently being pillaged by the fires of war, our citizens are being slaughtered; the current situation isn’t one that we chose for ourselves, if we don’t want our country and our citizens to die off, then we have to battle!"

Glina paused here as her fair complexion revealed a sign of discomfort.

"In over two thousand years of history, the Mist family had never lowered its head to anyone. But, my uncle Fimor.Caso did such a vulgar, unsightly action for his own life’s safety and for the sake of

power. How saddening. But I already investigated the cause for his rotten depravity, which all came from the demons' machinations, the Evil Gods of Chaos and the Great Demons corrupted his resolute will that used to be so noble, turning a heroic prince on the battlefield into such an evil bastard that would stoop to anything."

All the citizens in the public square were murmuring to themselves at this. The news about Fimor revealing his demonic form had already spread throughout all of Antuen, and his crimes were all being exposed in broad daylight for everyone to see, which was why I was able to take the reins of power so quickly.

"Everything was the demons' plots! My Mist family has never ever surrendered to any invaders in the past, there have never been any precedents, nor shall there ever be any precedents! In my name as the Queen of Sleuweir, I declare Fimor's surrender to be ineffective, and we are still currently at war! We are grateful to the neighboring countries' support, but we ourselves are still the main forces that will resist invasion, we must evict the invaders from our own lands!"

This proclamation seemed quite normal, but it was actually quite important. Due to Fimor's previous declaration of surrender, it basically turned the invaders into the new masters here, and the supporting armies became the new invaders. If we didn't turn around this twisted relationship, then the political messiness would cause endless new dangers for us.

"Our Mist Family has never enjoyed battle, but we won't shy from battle either! Since they chose to attack us, and perhaps we're

still currently as a disadvantage, but just like the past thousands of years, we shall be the final ones to stand victorious!"

Glina paused as she lifted her royal staff and spoke a proclamation that had been repeated endlessly throughout the ages.

"The will of the Mist shall never surrender!"

"The flag of the Mist shall never fall!"

The citizens below her in the public square all lifted up their fists, with their suppressed passion finally reigniting after a Mist descendant waved that familiar battle flag in front of them once more.

"The citizens of Mist shall never be slaves! We have not been defeated yet, our country has yet to perish! As long as that flag still hasn’t fallen, we shall rise again!"

At this moment, I was merely standing there silently on the platform. When Glina rose up her golden royal staff, I also lifted the Roland Sacred Sword, which was currently shining with a bright silver sheen.

"Wuuuu!"

With the battle horn sounding for the counterattack, the ancient Sacred Sword from epic stories transformed into a pillar of light

that reached the skies.

Under its might, all the clouds in the sky were torn apart as the light revealed what was hidden behind the clouds.

A floating castle, and floating platoon were gliding among the clouds, and what stood out the most of all, was a tremendous Tornado Wind Elemental. At this time, the Tornado Lord had finally come through on his promise, and had the members of his tribe begin their attack on his mortal enemy.

"Knights, our reinforcements have finally arrived, and it’s time to take back our land that should rightfully be ours! Open the door, and charge after me!"

The Queen proceeded right away after jumping onto the Ice Lion King, and right behind her were the knight squads that were already prepared for this beforehand. Countless battle flags were unraveled as threatening cold steely lights emanated from their sharp pikes and spears.

Today was the inauguration ceremony for Glina the First, as well as the formal declaration of battle by Sleuweir.

"It’s finally time to take back everything that belongs to us."

Chapter 175: Start of Battle

Every Holy War would reset the balance of power between the various races. Not only would the power balance be reset among mortals, it almost always included the True Gods as well.

Nobody was truly immortal. Not only humans, even beings as powerful as the True Gods had their own mortal enemies and insurmountable obstacles. They were fated to fall one day as well, although they would take many lives with them when they fell.

With the fires of the Holy War stoked, order almost completely collapsed, and the suppressed feelings of anger and revenge finally exploded. There were those that hoped to benefit from the war, or those that cursed their enemies and swore revenge. When these "divine" existences began encouraging their own forces, it was only natural that chaos would reign.

The Wind Elemental God Camdian was one of them. He was currently rather frustrated. Even if the Four Ancient Elemental Gods weren’t the main Gods of Chaos, they were the direct subordinates of the Chaos Goddess and weren’t far from being the main Gods themselves.

"Your mission is to cooperate with the Blackwing Tribe and create chaos, understand?"

He was finally released from his seal, and not even mentioning the fact that people were different from how they were, those insignificant ones that should have been below him were actually

above him! This was unacceptable for someone as prideful and arrogant as he was.

As the most ambitious of the Four Ancient Elemental Gods, he was highly unsatisfied with his current situation.

"Damn it, that damned Bodwin, even a mere Centaur guardian dares to be so disrespectful! I, Camdian, am the highest existence, how dare these insignificant existences give me orders."

Even after being unsealed, the position of the Elemental Gods was still rather precarious. As the direct subordinates of the Chaos Goddess, they should have been on the level of the Main Gods, but that was nowhere close to the truth, as even the guardian of such a weak race didn't respect them.

Unlike the other Elemental Gods that simply became allied to the mortal residents of the land, the powerful Camdian used some tricks and caused the Winged Tribes that had lost their ability to fly to completely subordinate themselves to him. With the ancient floating airship and floating castle within his possession, Camdian had his own ambitions. When he gradually discovered the lack of respect given to his own position, he began having his own ideas about the situation.

"Giving someone as divine as me the order to be the leader of some bandits? If I actually do that, I'll make enemies out of every country along our path, and as the war drags on, I'll become nothing more than cannon fodder sooner or later in this Holy War."

When the hooded stranger came to visit him and gave him an opportunity, his cautious personality made him continue to observe the situation. Roshe's message was what finally gave him his determination.

"I've already received Ayer and Wumianzhe's promises. Perhaps there will be a new system of Gods born in the Northlands, that's all I have to say, do as you see fit. But no matter what, the Northlands' elves belong to me, don't you dare touch them!"

This twisted and confusing short message still managed to help the Wind Elemental God understand the conflicting feelings in his fellow ancient God that was also experiencing dejection.

"Even if I fail, at the very most I'll just be sealed and have a nap again, which won't be any worse than currently. But if I succeed, I can have my revenge on that disgustingly big piece of dirt, and also help the Winged Tribes obtain some territory, which will also help me on the path to becoming a Guardian, gathering belief that can help me raise my rank to a True God, such a great deal... I'll gamble on it!"

And with the Thunder Lord's ferocious anger, the ancient battle between elementals restarted in the modern age. The earth elementals that had been in the midst of constructing the dimensional bridge met with their old opponents once more. The thunder and tornadoes that descended from the sky intended to rip apart the earth.

"Boom! Boom!"

The first to open fire was actually the wind elementals' subordinate Winged Tribes. Cannon fire from the black floating airship set fire to everything before it, and the floating castle in the sky became the Wind Tribe's fortress and center of command.

While the castle descended, countless black-winged "angels" flew out from within and slid down together with an armada of floating ships as they followed their hunting instincts and joyously roared as they attacked. They chucked their thunder-infused spears that transformed into countless bolts of deadly thunder.

The Wind Tribe's first attack didn't have much of a result, as the highly durable earth elemental army emerged from within the ground's cracks and fought back with their giant stone hammers.

When both sides' elemental warriors exchanged blows, the battlefield sunk into utter chaos. Countless numbers of earth and wind elementals began close-combat fighting, with tall rock giants grappling against whirlwind tornado giants, and the gigantic children of earth tossing huge stones at the children of the sky in response to the thunder that kept crashing down even though there were no clouds in the sky.

Just at the combat was reaching its apex, a horrendous scream was heard by everything living as they all instinctively looked to the northern sky where a humongous fiery meteor was slowly falling.

"A God has died! A True God has died!"

All the living creatures instinctively knew that the death of a True God had occurred. As for the northern Elf Kingdom, the Elf Warriors who were still battling with their utmost looked on in shock at the sight before them, as they couldn’t believe how the Forest Guardian Clareladin that they believed in was actually defeated by the Evil God Roshe.

There was nothing but scorched earth remaining now at the places where the battling was the fiercest. Nothing mortal could possibly withstand such a destructive battle.

But at this location, people saw gigantic black spiders that would later give them nightmares. These spiders were feeding together with their children, and they were devouring a rainbow-colored half human and half deer Semigod. Judging by the remnants of the trees being devoured by them, even the SemiGod descendant accompanied the fall of the Semigod.

And so, the Forest Guardian Clareladin became the first True God to fall in this Holy War, and Roshe used her successful battle achievement to send out a convincing blood invitation to various existences.

"Coo coo!"

One of the strongest-appearing spiders absorbed enough energy as it transformed into a dark shadow that covered the skies while laughing abnormally, before finally transforming into a human-

shaped figure that turned out to be a male Dark Elf.

"Heavens! It absorbed the Dendroid God's divine power and right to be a God!"

Right in front of the unbelieving Elves' eyes, the Dark Elves' new Poison God Felix was born, and the northern Elf Kingdom was about to face their destined nightmare.

From a certain standpoint, even though they were both Queens of their own countries in the Northlands, Glina and Reyne were complete opposites.

Reyne was supremely self-aware of her own status as a Mist descendant. She took her job and responsibilities quite seriously, and always worked her hardest. However, she was limited by her natural talent and abilities, and her growth never reached the goals she set for herself, so sometimes she worked herself way too hard and tried too much, which also gave difficulties to the people around her and made them worry.

And the fact that Glina was a master engineer at such a young age already made many things rather clear. This job was no golden combat job, a non-combat oriented job like engineer needed knowledge and wisdom instead, which doubtlessly meant that her talent and ability were both top-notch.

Also, judging by Clint's occasional shocking ideas before, Glina was even talented in combat strategy and plotting which Reyne was a complete loss at.

But the current Glina still gave me an odd feeling. Even though I didn’t have too much contact with her every day, she never said anything unless she had to, and when she didn’t have to do anything, her personality would naturally curl up into a ball. It always reminded me of hikkikomoris that were afraid to see the sunlight.

"Ah, the sun is so blinding! Ahh, there’s too many people, it’s really annoying! Ahhh, I’ll be defeated if I go to work! Let me go back into hiding, just ten minutes will be enough!"

"You’ll come back out after ten minutes?"

"Nope, I’ll fall asleep within ten minutes, and lock the door. No matter how you shout for me, I won’t be coming outside. Don’t even think about making me work."

Fine then, after hearing such a sentence in this game world, I began to suspect if she was another transmigrator from my world who happened to be a complete worthless NEET and otaku.

Even though she was talented to the point where she could memorize her lines after looking them over just one time, the fact that she put no effort into anything whatsoever still took up a large amount of my time and energy.

And currently, right after she finished her performance, it was obvious that she had no motivation or self-awareness whatsoever as a queen, with her old problematic habits acting up again.

"Hey, I already completed your request, hurry up and let me go back into hiding!"

Right after the speech and as the battle horn was being blown, Glina was already requesting to go hide back in her shell.

"Hey hey, you're going overboard. All the citizens are still watching you. Even if you're just acting, you're still the person that they trust in and swear loyalty to, so just bear with it a little."

The main forces were about to depart, and according to the original plan, Queen Glina was supposed to visit and surveil the new armies, so how could I possibly allow her to escape at this time? I'm going to drag this deadbeat NEET under the sun to work!

"I can't do it anymore! I've already been outside for too long; hurry up and allow me to return to Clint #1 already."

She seemed like she was trying to suppress something, and her pale-white face was beginning to turn suspiciously red.

"Are you really that uncomfortable? Will you die if you're in the sunlight? Are you a member of the Blood Tribe? Just what are you supposed to be?"

Just as I was hesitating, she kneeled down while clutching onto her right eye. There was a dark yellow glow leaking out from her eyepatch.

I noticed that something was wrong, and tore off her eyepatch. That familiar dark yellow glow instantly helped me to understand what was going on, so I immediately put the eyepatch back on her.

"Call for some priests and doctors... no, don't call for priests, go find some alchemists and apothecaries, and might as well call for the guy who doesn't want his soul anymore as well. Yep, I'm talking about that idiot Beifeng."

Before long, people would be here to help treat Glina. Even though there was no final report ready yet, I already had an inkling of what had happened.

"Karwenz, you bastard! Making more trouble for me at such a time."

While holding on to Glina's petite body, I could detect that her demon's blood was boiling, which obviously wasn't a normal situation. There was only one explanation – the Demon Prince Karwenz was summoning his descendants!

However, the struggling girl stopped me from calling for any medical personnel to come treat her. While pulling on my hand, she requested me with a begging look in her eyes.

"Just put me in my armor; there's mechanisms inside that can help suppress my demonic blood from acting up."

"What a mess... sigh."

Well, there weren't any better ideas. There was no way that the public could be allowed to find out that Glina was a demonic descendant, so while feeling helpless about it, I opened up her Clint armor. Inside its finely crafted interior was a space that was just right for placing a petite child within.

Apart from the half-finished instant noodles and cookies inside it, what caught my attention the most were all the anti-magic chains and magic-sealing talismans on the driver's seat.

Just as I placed Glina inside, the armor's metallic shell automatically closed. This was followed by various clinks and clangs as she was locked up tightly, while the black heavy armor's eyes showed a steady late accompanied by a large amount of steam coming out of the armor's back. Finally, the metallic giant that was over two meters tall stood back up again.

"You even have a steam exhaust valve, which is such an obvious sign that Clint is actually a mecha. Why didn't anyone ever discover the truth?"

"I witnessed it once before, but I thought it was just brought on by bad digestion... It's something that most people would be embarrassed to ask about."

"What about the light for the eyes? It's clearly unnatural, they're red light bulbs, right?"

"There’s more than one person with scary eyes in our team. Who knew what bloodline he came from? Since Clint always met people directly, it seemed normal that he was a halfblood. Sigh, not being a Blood Tribe or a Werewolf though caused me to lose so much money."

"Oh, you also placed a bet? I bet on Half-Dwarf, and also lost all my money. Damn it, just who is this GL001, that actually bet on a blonde-haired loli and won all our money last night when the gamble concluded, my poor money."

"GL001? Isn’t that Clint himself? Damn it, that guy cheated all of us by betting on himself!"

Fine then, let us ignore these unimportant mysterious ramblings. No matter what the fact that Clint had now revived before us was a good thing... probably.

"Clint #1, revived! Ahhhhh, I’m finally comfortable now, let’s have a blast to celebrate!"

The revived Clint instantly pulled out several Dwarven guns and shot an array of bullets into the sky as the Gentlemen Alliance members behind us commented.

"Ahaha, how could one round of blasts be enough, go for several thousand."

The armor began transforming quickly as a swiveling gatling gun

was assembled. In some regards, a human identity had always been a limiter on Clint's true abilities.

"Pop pop pop!"

Together with the joyous sounds that Clint made while shooting everywhere, he began dancing a dance that nobody understood. And after he finished using up his bullets, he began cackling maniacally while using spare parts to assemble a new weapon.

"So scary, his entire personality has changed."

"The armor must be the true body after all. Something like a quiet little girl? Just a hallucination."

Unlike those guys who were merely enjoying the show, I knew that Glina was still resisting the summoning of her demonic blood. Thinking about how the inwardly resolute girl was currently tossing and turning in her pilot's seat caused me to have a mysterious pain in my heart.

'Had she always been tying herself up like that? At the same time as controlling that mecha, she even locked herself up with chains and injected herself with various magic-sealing needles. This isn't even at the level of painful anymore, it's basically torture.'

Not to mention, I knew that this wasn't a good plan for the long-term. A crack in her defenses would appear someday no matter how much she denied her own demon blood, as human willpower

was limited, while the demon's summoning would never cease. Forcefully blocking it out would cause a problem sooner or later.

"...The only method is probably that one then."

Beifeng who hurried over here as well, probably to check the situation, exchanged knowing glances with me that we must have arrived at the same conclusion.

"Is that really the only method left to us? Its success rate is quite low. But with how strong Glina's willpower is, she should be able to endure it."

Just as we were concerning ourselves with how to cure her, a familiar and nostalgic abnormally stimulating scent entered our nostrils.

"...Gunpowder?"

"Adopted father, what do you think of my new fireworks! I created this using the new formula you gave me, and I call it the 'High-pressure Goblin Mine."

The clinging and clanging sounds finally ended as a large High-pressure Goblin Mine with a lead wire coming from it appeared. Feeling the fearsome amount of energy emanating from underneath that iron shell, I started breaking out into a cold sweat.

"Hey there, are you planning on killing your own father already?

I already said that it didn’t need to be for real, don’t take it so seriously."

I thought that she was going to use it on me, but after witnessing her rubbing Clint’s iron face against that explosive’s outer shell, I knew that I had been mistaken. Rather than wanting to explode it on me, she was clearly bragging about her new invention.

"You’ve barely recovered slightly and you’re already so eager to make a new explosive? As expected of the Explosive Demon Clint."

"Guru guru."

A small black rolled over and crashed against my feet. I was no longer able to remain calm after I picked it up and saw what it was.

"...This seems like a safety pin."

"That’s right! Ah, without this, it’ll explode immediately..."

"Boom."

No need for any more details. I could only sigh as I watched Clint spiraling away through the air while also secretly being amazed at how strong the Clint armor’s anti-explosive properties were.

"As expected, this is just like Clint."

Just as I finished my statement, everyone was already nodding in agreement.

"The armor is the true body, and the sound of explosives is only the accompaniment. A true man never turns around to watch his explosion. The legendary man that leaves together with the sound of his explosives is simply that cool and confident."

Alright then, a certain idiot's wistful comment received everyone's praise once again, but I was rather astonished.

"Weren't you occupied with battling that lion's head? You gave up? That's really not like you."

"Sigh, don't mention that, I truly lost this time, I give up, I admit defeat!"

There was actually an existence in this world that Beifeng was unable to conquer? I was no longer the only one shocked now, as everyone was looking at him with surprise written all over their faces. They were all unable to imagine that he would actually give up, since he was always using "true love would never be defeated" as his trademark phrase.

"It doesn't matter how strong they are, or the age difference, since true love doesn't have too much to do with outer appearances, but, but, he actually..."

Beifeng with tears in his eyes? This was my first time seeing such

a sight; was a failure in love that depressing for him?

"...He actually turned into a Snow Girl, and even a humanoid, a humanoid. How are you supposed to have love with humanoids! This is the greatest failure and regret in Beifeng.Herault's life! I actually fell in love with a humanoid! My love isn't pure anymore!"

I clutched my head as I deeply regretted wasting my time on this bastard for the umpteenth time. If he could feel sadness at a normal type of failure in love, then he wouldn't be the extraordinary gentleman known as Beifeng, with the sin known as "Sad Wind."

"Well, we should have made him into the experimental test subject for that Goblin Mine. It's not too late yet, let's have a cannoneer, we have a brave warrior who's volunteering to go out and scout the enemy's situation."

Chapter 176: New Era

With the fires of battle stoked in Antuen again, there was not a single place in the Northlands that was able to remain peaceful and quiet anymore.

As the Elves hurriedly escaped to their ancestral home as they received the nightmarish news, the Beastmen were the ones who blew the horns for a final battle to determine the outcome. Their free-roaming Wolfrider soldiers gathered together again, as the Beastmen needed all their strength to attack humanity's final castle – the Maple defense line.

Maple Castle – this originally isolated and quiet town in the north had transformed itself into the hotspot where the entire continent gathered.

By the time news of huge changes in the Sleuweir Kingdom's capital of Antuen arrived through the special communication channels between the churches, the Beastmen were already unable to change the target of their prepared attack. They had gambled every option and available resource they had on the Maple defense line.

Even without being expert strategists, the Beastmen tribe leaders still knew that unless they were able to get rid of this annoying thorn in their sides and completely wipe out any hope of resisting that the humans had, there would only be unending rebellions in the territory that they had already conquered.

They summoned their free-roaming Wolfriders back together, one of their mighty Beast Behemoth squads had already perished in battle, their disorganized Mammoth combat squads that trampled all over the lands had already lost more than half their numbers, their precious aerial knights had been decreasing in number as if they were perishable food. The Beastmen sacrificed so much of their own flesh and blood, transforming the defense line into nothing more than a meat grinder.

The humans weren't having it easy, either. In front of the strong Beastmen alliance's armies, every life became nothing more than combat statistic casualties. Thanks to differences in overall strength, each Beastman that managed to pass the defense line required at least three human lives to take down.

With defenses stretched thin across the entire defense line, the fact that the commander in charge of defending the western castle door still had the ability to help support other areas was something eye-catching.

"Princess Knight" Reyne, this laughable nickname that was originally nothing more than a made-up name for the sake of popularity, started becoming recognized by all as the battle progressed.

But, this female leader who was recently increasing in popularity had her own frustrations, and as for the reason? Due to those Auland folks that kept overreacting to everything and pestering her.

"Your Highness, why do these warriors' equipment look so

familiar, it seems so similar with our White Wolf squad's equipment, no, it's exactly the same! That's a special alloy from our country."

From a certain standpoint, the fact that Darsos sent Hemet, one of his most trusted advisors here to the Northlands, was evidence of how important he viewed this place. But currently, this long-time acquaintance was being a bit of a pest.

"Oh, that was information we obtained while exchanging technologies. We created it for our warriors according to the model used for your squad. As for the materials, they're actually quite different. It's just that they've been painted with similar colors. You can inspect it more closely if you want, there's actually plenty of differences in the details."

"You can create actual products right after obtaining the technological information so quickly? That doesn't seem right! And this armor still has the mark of the White Wolves!"

"Oh, that must be a misunderstanding, these are our new 'Winter Wolf' emblems, which are quite different. See, there's three additional hairs standing up on this white wolf's head, yep, these are our Winter Wolf emblems, which you can also call three-hair emblems; that's what Brother Roland calls them."

'Just adding three hairs to the old emblem counts as a new emblem? Do you have any shame? Even if there's no copyright or suing in this world, people still have embarrassment, don't they? If you want to plagiarize, at the very least you should give the wolf three whiskers on each cheek!'

Hemet opened and closed his mouth without speaking up about those doubts that flashed through his mind.

Reyne finally somehow managed to unconvincingly make Hemet accept this, when a new problem arose.

"What we used on that day? Are you talking about our floating battleship?"

The newest arrival that stood out the most in the midst of battle was the floating battleship Borealis. Its existence perfectly patched up the few weaknesses that the western castle's defending army had.

Heavy cannon fire as support, transporting the injured, and the ability to give the finishing blow at the critical moment. The enemy Beast Behemoth that died was first injured then surrounded and killed with the Borealis' assistance, so just this accomplishment alone ensured that it would become known to everyone.

"No no, we borrowed that ancient floating battleship from our Winged Tribe allies, you see, it's already a semi-biological existence, completely different from your one hundred percent mechanical battleships."

'How do you know that our battleships are one hundred percent mechanical?'

Those words were right on Hemet's lips, but in the end he didn't counter with this question either.

He already knew what was up just by seeing the situation. It was ridiculous to believe anything that Reyne said, but since there was no evidence for this type of thing, nor did he intend to ruin the relationship between the two countries, there was no use in saying it out loud.

Reyne secretly wiped her cold sweat. Even if she knew that Hemet wouldn't bring everything out to the surface, the action of plagiarizing right in front of the original owner was something that only Roland could pull off as if it was only natural with such self-assurance.

"...Our Auland Empire is deeply interested in this research area, and hope that we can exchange information. Of course, we can pay the additional price necessary."

Kagersi wouldn't be able to recover the information for quite a while, and the battleship was currently locked away in the underground base, so the next best thing would be to at least obtain some information and restart Auland's research.

'No wonder Brother Roland asked me to use these in front of them, everything happened exactly as he expected.'

There was probably also only one person that could so openly steal someone else's work and then sell it back to the original

owner like this.

Of course, since the Eastern Mist Communal Country already expected this response, Reyne was naturally prepared.

"Of course, please discuss the specific details with Big Sister Elisa. She opened up a merchants' guild in Maple Castle called the Cindler Merchants' Guild, and deals a great amount of business in military arms."

Hemet felt a stomachache coming upon him at thinking about that sharp-fanged, sharp-tongued woman. He'd already been to the Cindler Merchants' Guild before, and knew just how difficult it was to haggle there. He would probably have to pay a painfully large price for the information he wanted.

But, it wasn't a bad deal for him, since the Auland Empire was ridiculously wealthy and could afford it. Restarting research on the floating battleship was the most important task at hand, since the Holy War had restarted and there wasn't much time left. It was vitally important to begin training personnel for this technology as well people to operate it.

And just as the upper ranks were discussing the exchange of military arms information, there was a new change in the combat situation.

The Beastmen began a new wave of attacks, catapulting countless burning boulders at the castle walls that arced downward from the sky like a meteor shower.

The burning boulders had such great force that each and every one of them not only damaged the castle walls, they would each kill several humans with their impacts. However, these boulders were only the preludes to each new Beastman attack on Maple Castle.

With the support of heavy boulder fire raining down from the skies, the various tribes of Beastmen equipped themselves with heavy shields as they began attacking Maple Castle again. The air cavalry that descended from the skies together with the Beastmen attack proved that this was no mere testing of Maple Castle's defenses.

Air cavalry that weren't limited by terrain and siege weapons that could possibly break through a fort's defenses would always be the main actors in a siege battle. With Wyvern Knights, Thunder Roc Knights, and Harpies as their main aerial forces, the quality was quite high, but their numbers had decreased noticeably after so many days of harsh battling.

"Dragon knight! That dragon knight's here again!"

The young green dragon named Osmenya and his Wolf Tribe rider Kakaji had become infamous through this battle. Even when facing off against overwhelming odds, he had already defeated more than one hundred, which was plenty for him to become the aerial ace of the battle.

Everything was now utter chaos atop the castle walls. The

wyverns were furiously spitting poison from their poison sacs, the Thunder Rocs were killing off groups at once with Chain Lightning spells, while the Harpies' spears aimed specifically for the archers and commanders. The Beastmen air cavalries' strategic targets were quite clear: they were attempting to clear the way for their infantry to climb over the castle walls, while the dragon knight acting as the aerial commander was currently roaming at high speeds and destroying the castle's defenses.

In the past, the ordinary human defenders' only tactic had been to use human walls to block the elite Beastmen air cavalry, and sacrifice many lives in order to force the Beastmen's retreat.

But this time, the situation was different.

"Inform the Silver Cross squadron that it's time for them to begin."

With the Princess Knight's command, the Borealis (Envy)'s belly suddenly opened up while it was covering the humans with supporting fire, with countless figures jumping out of its belly from midair.

"What a joke, they're jumping down from that high? They're suicidal!"

This general's shouts doubtlessly said out loud what everyone had been thinking. For any ordinary warriors, that height would be suicidal unless they knew how to fly. And if all several hundred of these warriors had the ability to fly, that would be even more

unbelievable.

Sometimes, the previous generation’s experience was a type of limitation. As eras changed and technology improved, the common sense of battle was bound to be swept aside. These warriors truly did know how to fly!

"Awaken, Azure Dragon!"

"Azure Dragon Sword Seal!"

Together with the fierce roars of the Four Elemental Swordcasters, each of their magic swords shone brilliantly, and the Azure Dragon Sword Seal that was activated in this emergency situation began rotating around the Four Elemental Swordcasters. The Wind Elves were summoned here by the seal, and they in turn summoned whirlwinds to give these warriors the ability to fly and fight in midair.

Of course, the Azure Dragon Sword Seal’s whirlwinds were limited in power, and they were merely now falling down slowly rather than truly being able to fly, but this was more than enough to prove that they had the ability to fight in midair.

"Several hundred magic swordsmen? How is this possible?"

Metal had the ability to cancel out magic, so for warriors wearing heavy armor to actually be able to utilize magic was already far beyond common sense. But, the indisputable fact before

everyone’s eyes was a testament to this fact.

After a short period of shock, the Beastmen air cavalry hurried to this area, since of course they wouldn’t allow these obvious enemy reinforcements to land.

"Odd numbered-warriors, Sword Seals overload!"

The warriors hovering in midair weren’t defenseless however, so with their commander’s order, all the warriors lifted the magic swords in their hands and all the Azure Dragon Sword Seals were overloaded with magical energy this time as pale white streaks of lightning crawled around their magic swords.

"Odd numbered-warriors, target: the enemy air cavalry before us, Sword Seals explode! Prepare, three, two... one! Wield your swords!"

All the warriors slashed their swords forward in unison, causing hundreds of lightning bolts to erupt from their swords.

It had been a clear sky just a moment ago, and now the sky became filled with lightning and thunder. The hundreds of lightning bolts lit up the entire sky, blinding the eyes of everyone who lifted their heads to see the spectacle.

Thud! Thud!

When the viewers regained their senses of sight again, all they

saw were the Beastmen air cavalry falling from the sky like dumplings, with a minimum of two air cavalry squads having been eliminated.

"What type of forbidden spell is this? It's so terrifying because those magic swordsmen didn't have a single sign of magical waves on them."

The other countries' residents could only watch it unbelievably, but it wasn't difficult to understand for those in the know. At that instant, the countless Wind Elementals within the Azure Dragon Sword Seals transformed into thunder that wasn't individually strong, but the thunderbolts attracted and fed off of each other before finally becoming an inescapable electric net.

Its actual force wasn't nearly as formidable as what the viewers perceived, thanks to the lack of ability in the spell's users and the thunderbolts draining energy from each other. The spell's attack power was already incredibly low.

But for aerial battles, attack power was never the important part, just having the stun effect from thunder was enough.

The air cavalry that had fallen from the sky weren't actually electrocuted to death as the viewers believed. They were merely paralyzed to the point where they couldn't move anymore by repeated electrical shocks, but looking at it from another angle, falling out of the sky from such a height didn't really have much of a difference compared to being electrocuted to death.

As the Swordcasters expected, apart from the very few incredibly strong individuals that were able to regain control of themselves and fly upwards again, most of the enemy air cavalry didn’t even have time to shout in surprise before crashing to the ground and becoming nothing more than crushed meat.

The Swordcasters that just used their Sword Seals’ explosions lost the protection of their whirlwinds, but their even-numbered companions that were prepared beforehand caught on to them. These odd-numbered warriors only fell a slight distance before summoning new Azure Dragon Sword Seals for their next tactical move.

"Even-numbered warriors, Sword Seal overload!"

The commander gave the exact same order on the midair battlefield again, with many of the smarter air cavalry members hurriedly escaping for their lives. Meanwhile, those "courageous" ones that had decided to rush the magic swordsmen in the downtime between spells were destined to crash into a new electrical net.

"Sword Seals explode! No countdown! Pick your targets freely, wield your swords!"

The blinding electrical net appeared once more in the sky. Apart from all the thud sounds of the Beastmen air cavalry falling against the ground, the sky had now been completely cleared. There were no survivors left by the electrical net created by several hundred magical swords.

Now it was the odd-numbered warriors' turn to catch their companions. Pound! Boom! When the armored swordcasters finally landed safely on the ground, everyone on the battlefield shouted out joyously in celebration.

It had been a short exchange that lasted less than three minutes, which was more than enough to completely wipe out the Beastmen's strongest air cavalry troops from the previous generation. This was seemingly no more than a small battle in the overall campaign, but it actually represented that apart from high-level mages and high-tier aerial troops, there was now a third method to deal with air cavalry – organized magical swordsmen.

No small human kingdom would be able to raise griffins. Only human kingdoms that were medium level and above could afford to raise an organized platoon of air cavalry, while in the poor Northlands, the Northerners could only use bows in place of the expensive air cavalry.

For so many years on the battlefield, the air had always belonged to the enemy, with air cavalry ambushes being the enemies' ace tactic usable in every situation, but the warriors' cheers were clear evidence that the situation had now changed.

"Tell those sons of bitches that the northern skies belong to us as well!" One man shouted out what every northerner had been thinking. Even the newly-minted Swordcasters were hardly able to believe that they had just achieved such a shocking victory.

This was just the beginning. With organized magical troops appearing on the battlefield for the first time, the entire world's strategies and tactics would become revamped. Having brought out this new type of troop doubtlessly proved that the East Mist Communal Country was already at the forefront of the current era. And from today onwards, nobody would ever treat the East Mist Communal Country as an easily bullied small northern country ever again.

"...What." This time, Hemet was unable to say that it belonged to the Auland Empire. Magical ability required talent, and even the very concept of an organized magical swordsman squadron was difficult to imagine based on the theories of magic. The obviously well-practiced tactics and command system were evidently the result of long practice. In Hemet's eyes, this was probably the ace trump card up that person's sleeve out of what he brought back from history.

Reyne smiled in delight at Hemet's reaction. From her first meeting with him, this emperor's special envoy had always remained high and mighty with his attitude, as if he was facing a subordinate that he could command at will. At this moment, in front of brand-new tactics and jobs, in front of this astonishing battle achievement, the haughty Auland people finally began lowering their proud heads.

"Would you like it?"

Even if Hemet didn't say it out loud, just from his expectation-filled eyes, it could easily be seen that this emperor's trusted envoy had a desire for this information that was raging like a wildfire.

This wasn’t even at the extent of wanting it anymore, he wanted to swallow it down whole.

"It’s quite expensive!"

Even on the battlefield, the Princess Knight’s exquisitely beautiful smile attracted countless passionate gazes. Only, nobody could guess that her delighted smile was due to a base desire to take revenge by viciously jacking up the price.

"I’ll buy, buy, buy! No matter how expensive it is!"

Hemet was overjoyed at hearing this news. For such an ace weapon, as long as Reyne was willing to sell, Hemet was willing to sell even his family treasures for it. There wouldn’t be another opportunity like this, he would only regret it if she wasn’t willing to sell.

However, Reyne flashed a rather mysterious smile upon hearing Hemet’s response.

"As long as you’re willing to pay, there’s something even better and more expensive, you know. Timlet, it’s time for your little toy to appear."

Chapter 177: Crazed Stones

From the very start, I wasn't worried about the Maple defense line's battlefield, as I had made plenty of preparations there.

An organized squadron for the Four Elemental Swordcasters, the Borealis and its supporting new era battleships, and the various new inventions by our engineers for defending the castle. Imperceptibly, I had already acquired so much strength, and I left them all at Maple Castle. With them there, I believed that it would be quite difficult to break past the Maple defense line.

Okay, apart from the above, I also prepared plenty of other things, as the more trump cards one had, the better. The side that was able to keep his trump cards until the final moment would always have a much greater chance of victory.

'The Maple Castle defense line isn't allowed to fail.' That was something I absolutely wouldn't allow.

After all, that was the most critical location of this entire battle. If they failed, that meant that order and balance of power itself would collapse in the north, which could only result in the humans retreating towards the south and giving up the Northlands. In that case, even if we won here, it would still be an overall defeat where we could only struggle to survive and wait for the enemy to encircle us and defeat us at their leisure.

Of course, if there was some sort of unexpected sudden situation, such as some Evil God of Chaos risking his own demise to

personally descend upon the mortal realm (the current Elemental Tide wouldn't allow True Gods to descend, so any that dared to personally descend basically wouldn't be able to return,) which would make it impossible to defend the Maple defense line.

If that type of situation occurred, I also gave them instructions to simply board the Borealis and escape as quickly as possible. If a veteran God of Chaos personally came out, then it would take another veteran God of Order to deal with him. If the Chaos side was willing to make such a sacrifice, the True Gods of Order would surely send out one or two cannon fodders to play the game of dying together in unison.

At the current moment, with the combat situation still unclear, the most difficult part was left up to us.

The Antuen defense army's elimination of the remaining Beastmen squads was rather successful, as we easily recovered the enemy's temporary battle camps outside the castle with our advantage in numbers and the Winged Tribes' ambushes as protection. But right after that, we met with an obstacle – the Earth Elemental God Emordilorcan.

As the most ancient of the Four Elemental Gods, I knew that the Earth Elemental God Emordilorcan would be a ridiculous one, but I never expected how truly ridiculous he was.

As the lord of all earth elementals, his body wasn't as large as I expected, nor did he have their strange features. He merely resembled an enormous stone giant, and he even appeared slightly smaller than the Wind Elemental God. But when he truly began

fighting, he proved the old adage about how "fighting isn’t about how big you are, but how hard your fists are."

As the Earth Elemental God roared, just one light swing of his fist would be able to crush a huge wind elemental. When a thundering Wind Elemental Lord came over to assist, he easily smashed it between his fingers, and when a floating battleship attacked him with its cannons while being covered by support fire from the floating castle, he jumped up and turned the floating castle into nothing but dust with a triple kick.

Anything below the power of an Elemental Lord, he could deal with using a single kick. As for the annoying Winged Tribes and tiny battleships, just the blast from his roar’s soundwaves were enough to crush them to pieces.

"Monk? This bastard’s actually a top-level Monk! How outrageous."

Yep, Emordilorcan was doubtlessly an expert barehanded combat Master Monk. There were no rules saying that elementals weren’t able to practice martial arts, but rather the opposite, for the Earth Elemental God whose body was far harder than steel, his physical characteristics only vastly improved the explosiveness of those martial techniques. Just one shoulder press would easily crush many mountains, and if he tried to transmit his force through a mountain to a cow, I don’t know how the cow will end up, but the mountain would surely be eradicated.

Emordilorcan’s steps were steady and agile, and it was quite easy for him to make Camdian dizzy before suddenly ambushing the

Wind Elemental God Camdian with a heavy blow.

Compared to the dexterous Emordilorcan, the gigantic Camdian actually seemed like a slow fatty that could only take blows without even a chance to get in any of his own. Camdian was a typical mage-type Elemental Lord, but the thunder he gathered was unable to lock on to any target, since he wasn't even able to see his enemy Emordilorcan clearly, so how could he possibly hit him?

The ancient battle between elementals repeated itself in the modern day, but unfortunately, Camdian learned to his despair that while his own strength had indeed increased greatly, Emordilorcan had already changed his entire battling style, and Camdian was not even able to get a single hit in. This strange style caused the gap between Camdian and Emordilorcan to widen even further.

"Hurry, we don't have much time left."

Just by seeing the situation, I knew that it was impossible for Camdian to win, and even how long he could last was a problem. For such an old fox like Camdian, it was all too normal for him to run away if he couldn't win, there was zero possibility at all of Camdian fighting to his death.

After hesitating for a moment, I still decided to send him a message.

"Hang in there, we're currently closing the Earth Elemental Door, after it's closed, Emordilorcan's power will be reduced

greatly, so that you can grab your chance to take your revenge. If you miss this opportunity, you'll never defeat Emordilorcan for the rest of your life."

In order for him to not retreat when he hadn't been truly defeated yet, I could only give Camdian a strong motivation, and just as I expected, Camdian who had begun to cower worked up his courage again at hearing there was still a chance.

At this moment, under the cover of the chaotic battle, our knights were riding in the snow. Now, we had already entered the Earth Elementals' Labyrinth, and our target was of course the currently opening dimensional door.

Our combat strategy had been clear from the start. The Wind Elementals and Winged Tribes and even the brave warriors (cannon fodder) that were rushing as the vanguard were merely a smokescreen to disguise our true motive.

Antuen's defense army had been through too many long bitter battles, so it was heavily fatigued and injured with severe losses to their elite troops. Having them participate in this high-level battle between elementals would basically be akin to having them suicide, which was why I gave them the task of cleaning up the remaining roaming Beastmen squads, while I took the elites and rushed for the Earth Elemental dimensional door under cover of the battle between elementals to destroy the most critical strategic target.

If the Earth Elemental dimensional door was allowed to completely open, no matter what happened next in the combat

situation, the side of Chaos would most likely have obtained enough strength to win overwhelmingly, and everything else that we did would be nothing more than mending the fence after losing the sheep, with irreversible damage having been done already.

"Hah!"

I shouted in a low voice and defeated the enemy in front of me with a single blow. This small earth elemental was barely worth mentioning, and didn't even require my sword.

But the deeper we went into the Earth Elemental Labyrinth, the more tiny earth elementals that appeared. They were nothing more than token creatures generated by the Earth Elemental dimensional door, and they didn't even have self-awareness, so spending time on them was pointless.

"Just how long are we going to have to kill these for?"

There were so many walls before us, and we kept hitting dead ends. Doubtlessly, the earth elementals had constructed this into an intricate maze during the interval between fighting with nothing else to do. Our target was naturally located in the deepest part of the labyrinth, and all the guardians that we passed on our way was evidence that my inference was correct.

"Underhanded mortals, my master has long since anticipated your plot. I'm the guardian of this door, the Earth Elemental Lord Alidos, don't... Ahh!"

With Adam as the vanguard, everything was easy. This Alidos fellow didn’t even finish giving his speech before he instantly bit the dust. Alidos was the twelfth guardian that we met already; this was just like a dungeon-exploring game, with the mini-bosses coming at us one at a time. It was a pity that we received no experience from this, though.

Since Emordilorcan could return here at any moment, time was of the essence. That’s why I looked questioningly over towards Margaret. If my memory served me correctly, this Great Saint was the most skilled in time and space magic, so perhaps she would have some method to help us.

"Teleporting everyone to the central location of the labyrinth? Impossible, there’s not a single mage that can teleport people to an unknown location, and this type of irregular structure is the worst for teleportation. If there’s even the smallest miscalculation with the distance, we’d be teleported into the walls..."

Then could we only continue onwards one level at a time? We still had to listen to those large rocks and stone giants give their boring speeches? This was evidently not a good idea.

"Hah, I’m the Worm King Kasolai, don’t even imagine that you can pass the door that I guard..."

Okay, fine, I actually did want to hear this guy’s speech, since a large worm that was over a dozen meters long was quite a rare sight. But the SemiGod mage who seemed quite anxious evidently didn’t have the patience for that, since right after the self-styled Worm King crawled out of the dirt, he was sliced into seventeen

pieces.

The Earth Elemental Door still hadn’t opened fully, so the only earth elementals and other earth attribute creatures that were able to come to this dimension were limited in power, but this definitely wasn’t their upper limits. We could take care of these guys easily, but just recalling back to that megaton rock who was currently beating up the Wind Elemental God while playing at triple kicks in midair, I knew that I definitely had zero chance of victory against the Earth Elemental God.

This was a race against time. If the Wind Elemental God decided to run off on his own, I didn’t have the ability to fool such a useful cannon fodder anymore.

"Glina..."

"It’s Clint!"

"Okay, Clint, it’s up to you now, we’re the demolition crew! You understand, right?"

From long ago, when I was stuck in an irritating maze in some video game, I had always imagined that if I met an underground labyrinth in real life, I would definitely use a different method to go through the maze.

"Goblin Engineers have an old saying: ‘Explosions are an art form,’ so allow me to witness your artistry. Come, give me a good

explosion! Everyone get back, Clint, explode everything for me! We're not going to take the door, we're taking the window!"

Yep, I should have done this much earlier, the exit was right before us with only a thin wall in between, why did I need to circle around all over again instead of using a hammer to crash through the wall?

"I'm tired of these damned mazes, as well as all those maze designers with nothing better to do, why do I have to play such a slow pathfinding game with you? If there's no path, just open one up through the wall, if there's no staircase, I'll just go right through the floor. Just watch, even if this maze has 999 floors, I'll pierce through all of them with this one explosion!"

Clint's comments just now as he gave me a huge thumbs-up and viciously pressed down on his explosives button were indicative that he agreed with my attitude, as expected of my relative.

"Boom!"

The rest was simple, as the Elemental Tide would show us the way. The closer we got to the Dimensional Door, the thicker the elements became, all we had to do was follow the trail.

"Boom!"

Yet another hole appeared in the wall before us. Using such a high-speed tactic to conquer the maze, all we had to do was

continuously sweep away the broken stones, then jump down to the next floor. We were rapidly approaching the center of the maze. Judging by Margaret's crystal ball that was aiding our pathfinding, we were close to our target.

"Tsk, let me do it, I promise we can go through three or four floors at once, it'll be much quicker."

The Goblin Engineer Jinya.Beyar saw how cool Clint was acting, and seemed to get jealous. He wanted to help out as well, but we prevented him from doing so.

"So you want all of us to be buried alive?"

At this, Jinya fell speechless.

After all, having Clint using explosives in the first place rather than Jinya who had even more powerful bombs at his disposal was doubtlessly because Clint was far more adept at precision. Clint wouldn't bury us while opening up the path to the next floor.

Clint became more and more practiced with each explosion, causing less unnecessary broken rocks to be exploded with each one, so our progress kept increasing in pace.

"I've never thought you were so reliable before, good job!"

Just as I gave Clint a big thumbs-up as well, the entire ground began shaking violently.

"Boom!" "Boom!"

Continuous exploding sounds came from all around us as the ceiling began to drop dirt pieces, with one large piece almost hitting my face.

"I really can’t praise you… oh, it wasn’t you? Then who was it?"

"Roland, I’ll refrain from asking what these strange hand gestures mean, there’s a reaction of Godly energy right above us, let’s prepare."

Margaret’s words immediately solved the puzzle for us. For a SemiGod mage like her, the Elemental Gods’ energy waves were just like bright lights in the darkness that were impossible to ignore.

At this moment, Camdian’s message suddenly arrived.

"Flesh allies of mine, my apologies… I hope that we still have a chance to work together again in the future."

Should I say that guy was supposed to be nice after all? At the very least, he still passed along a message, but even though Emordilorcan and Camdian were both Ancient Elemental Gods that had just awakened from being sealed, Camdian wasn’t even able to last twenty minutes, how incredibly weak.

"It’s not that I’m weak, Emordilorcan’s just too strong."

Okay then, this guy even remembered to add one more sentence to give himself an excuse."

"Pound!"

The current booming sounds and trembles coming from above us told us that this was no time to be blaming Camdian, as the Earth Elemental God Emordilorcan was probably right above us already. Just recalling that figure who was brutally beating up the Wind Elemental God from earlier gave me a headache.

But we were already in the enemy’s home territory, and it was quite possible that Emordilorcan had abilities like "move through the earth" or "walk through walls," so attempting to escape now would be impossible.

"Damn it, Adam!"

"Margaret, take everyone with you, your knowledge is needed there."

It was great to be working with old partners. Margaret knew that this wasn’t the time for words, so she merely waved her staff and cast a few buffs on us as she nodded and took everyone on to the next floor beneath us.

Meanwhile, Adam and I drew our swords and prepared for that

guy to come find us.

"Hey, how's your strength these days, don't be a dead weight here."

"Hmph, do you see this sword in my hands? The Roland Sacred Sword, forged 14 times, enhanced to +7, with power that almost matches the 13 Godly Artifacts. Heh heh heh, take a good look at that rusty metal in your hands, it looks like it's only Superior quality, with no enhancements. I'm your granddaddy, and the difference between us is like that of a pay-to-win player and a starving refugee player, who cares if your level is high, can you one-hit-KO everything in sight, if you can't take it then come PK with me, your granddaddy will instantly defeat you."

Adam didn't even know how to respond to this. Every time they met a similar situation, Roland would always enter his crazed state and say all these incomprehensible things.

But since Adam also knew long beforehand that they would meet such a strong enemy, of course he would be prepared. So, he silently put away his cheap Superior quality sword, and shook out a shortsword from his sleeve, then suddenly infused it with the power of thunder and caused a one-meter long Lightsword to appear.

"A rechargeable Lightsword? That's at least a legendary weapon, it must be famous in history, this Elven-style carving on it, is it Xiler's Banshee's Sword? So you were a pay-to-win player as well, why didn't you bring this out earlier? Were you planning on using the trope of 'I am not left-handed'?"

Adam lightly touched his sword's tip, causing that clear crystal sword to seemingly become far more intimidating after it was infused with the fury of the wind. He felt quite fortunate that he was able to find a weapon which matched his characteristics.

"I gave the Sentiment of the Wind sword to Annie, but since I still needed to be on the battlefield, of course I would go find another sword. I don't know this sword's name, but it seems to fit me quite well. However, I 'borrowed' it from the Cloud Tower, which was an unseemly action, so it would be best to not let Margaret see this sword."

Not only was it unseemly, in a certain personal mage tower in the Cloud Tower, the original owner was already howling in despair. And far before Adam even left, complaints about him had already filled the Truth Research Society's desk. If it wasn't for his connection to Margaret, Adam would have been blacklisted forever by the mages long ago.

"Oh, you as well, actually I profited quite a lot from Auland last time. That strong human kingdom truly accumulated so much after so many prosperous years, it would have been a waste to not take something from them."

"Yep, yep, it's just that even though they're so rich, they're really stingy, the last time I placed my sword on someone's neck..."

Okay then, just as the two of them began focusing on exchanging stories about how they stole from others, the tardy guest of honor

finally arrived.

"Boom!"

What came first was the violent shaking of the ground, followed by countless sharp stone spears that suddenly pierced through the earth.

"It’s here!"

The gigantic stone spears pierced through the floors with such force that the entire labyrinth shook from the impact, as that stone giant finally reached where we were.

And when the stone pillars from above were retracted, huge eyes filled with killing intent blocked the holes that the pillars made. That’s when we discovered that those "stone spears" had actually been part of his finger.

"Hmph, you’re actually using such a cliché scene from a horror movie? You think your granddaddy is afraid? No matter how strong the boss, aren’t they all just to drop equipment for the players? Come, have fun fighting with your granddaddy!"

At the same time, the silver Sacred Sword was currently letting off an abnormal silvery glow. With the silvery glow becoming tangible, the God Equipment Roland Sacred Sword was about to face its first enemy since its birth.

Chapter 178: Royal Protection

Elemental life is typically formed by the gathering of basic elements that lack consciousness. While they appear to be the same as other living creatures, there's actually a big difference, as low-level elementals don't have any feelings or consciousness. However, top-level elementals are the same as other living beings, as not only do they have emotions and wisdom, they even have humanoid forms and the ability to reproduce.

But due to the differing structures of their bodies, their deaths will simply scatter their basic element. These elementals are typically able to return to the elemental plane and reform themselves, which was why it was so difficult to truly kill them outside of the elemental plane. Still, losing their elemental power that they could use at will also made them unable to use their true strength.

It was both a talent and an attempt to mitigate this weakness that the higher-level elemental lifeforms were always skilled at modifying their surrounding environments. Huge whirlpools deep in the ocean, maelstroms high in the sky, magma hells in the midst of volcanos, and stone labyrinths deep underground were their favorite environments. They had the ability to change these locations into a different artificial world entirely without anyone knowing, so that they could wield a power similar to what they had in the elemental plane.

Currently, this underground labyrinth was far above the level of a simple artificially constructed microcosm. Thanks to its successful connection to the Earth Elemental Plane, this labyrinth was gradually becoming part of the elemental plane itself. Those

minor earth elementals that suddenly awakened their own senses of self were the best evidence that this location was gradually turning into the earth elementals' home turf.

"Never battle with the Undead in the Death Plane, never battle with demons in the Hell Plane, never battle with elementals in the Elemental Plane, they'll be ten times more difficult to deal with!"

But, I had a different opinion.

"Home territory? Foolish earth clods, this was never your home territory! Right? Roland Sacred Sword."

With my soft words, the silver Sacred Sword began glimmering even brighter than before. I could detect that it was currently the same as me: feeling rage at all the scum that had come over to our land without being invited.

"You unwelcome guests that just do whatever you want, you really believe this to be your dusty, filthy world? Dust to dust, earth to earth, go back to where you came from!"

The Sacred Sword's brilliance was at the point where entire the pitch-dark floor was being lit up. With a mighty shout, I viciously stuck the silver longsword into the ground as the silver king answered my summons and his soul began materializing.

The Roland Sacred Sword was a royal sword that's existed for eons. At first, it was the personal sword of the first King of Mist.

It’s already experienced more history than can be recounted, and in this kingdom that’s experienced many disasters and wars, numerous kings throughout the generations have cut down various obstacles as they led their knights to fight for their country’s land.

Royal sword, guardian sword, hereditary sword, were all new names that this sword acquired over the years with the sacrifices of various past Kings of Mist and their loyal knights, despite the fact that it didn’t have any traits apart from being sturdy. This Sacred Sword was gradually bearing more and more responsibilities.

As it evolved from a normal weapon into a guardian Sacred Sword, it accumulated the power of a soul – the ancestral kings’ understanding of what royalty was. Royalty was the guardian, guardian of the people, the country, the home, the family.

The Mist clan that would never surrender forged this unbreakable Sacred Sword of Mist, and now that it’s finally accumulated enough power within my hands, it finally began its next stage of transformation.

In the past, I wondered about what characteristics it would have after evolving into a God Equipment. But truthfully, this didn’t require any consideration at all, as its power was only one from the very start – protecting.

"The royalty are the guardians. We’re born here, and never leave this place, and will be buried here. And even if we transform into decayed bones or nothing but a spirit, we will still protect this land. Isn’t that right? My inflexible, archaic ancestors."

"You actually need this old fellow to come out, what a useless and unfilial descendant."

The hazy figure materialized in a silver flash. The summoned king returned to the physical world from being a soul while complaining about how useless his descendant was, but answered the call of his bloodline without hesitation while riding a bull as his steed and holding his war spear at the ready for charging into battle.

Atwood.Saint.Mist, nicknamed the Eagle of Glaso, lived from AD 234 to AD 298, dying in the prime of his life. Almost his entire life was peaceful. He was viewed as mediocre in his early years, and derided as senile when he passed fifty years of age. He was always smiling and never seemed to anger, but when he was sixty-four, the northern barbarians happened to invade. Atwood fought a bloody battle with them for seventeen consecutive days at the Glaso Plains, slaying several hundred enemy leaders.

"If only I was born thirty years earlier. This old warrior wasn’t did yet, but my hair turned white already, and my body was so weak and tired, even though the enemy leaders were still alive with tens of thousands of enemies invading, and my people being affronted by them, if I can’t return home with a coffin filled with enemy heads, I won’t be able to reconcile myself with the idea of dying like this!"

The ancient king Atwood was riding his heavily armored bull, and behind him were several shadowy figures of old soldiers carrying a coffin that had a big "Death" written on it that stood out

and drew attention.

In that year, this "senile" king that people looked down upon went to battle exactly in this fashion. He even had a coffin prepared for himself and brought out in front of his relatives that tried to convince him against personally entering battle. In the end, this old eagle that hadn’t shown his mettle in more than ten years filled this coffin with the enemy leaders’ heads, winning the glorious title of the Eagle of Glaso.

He narrowed his eyes and seemed to be waiting for something when he suddenly lifted his dark black spear and chucked it forcefully.

Boom!

At that exact moment, the gigantic Earth Elemental God had reached his head down here, with his round gem eyes filled with vicious killing intent. But before he was able to take any actions, a dark black spear silently flew and embedded itself in his jeweled eye.

Boom!

This unpredictable attack was completely impossible to defend against. Only after the sharp spear stuck itself in his eye did Emordilorcan discover that he was under attack. Immediately following after, the spear’s sudden explosion turned his gem eye into nothing but broken shards. Only a single attack caused the powerful Emordilorcan to go blind!

"Ahhh! It hurts! Stupid insect that deserves to die! Who, who dares to harm the mighty Emordilorcan!"

"Oh my. Hey big guy, this isn't a place for bastards like you to be building a nest, take another spear from this old fellow!"

The squinting elderly warrior finally opened his ferocious eyes as his killing intent spilled out everywhere together with his charge.

Giant bulls were a rare species to begin with. Its dragonskin, thick armoring, and weight were all astonishing. It was about four meters tall, and its charge resembled that of a wingless SemiDragon, with a terrifying momentum.

Its horns were already reaching the roof of this floor in the labyrinth, and the ground shook with every step it took. Borrowing his steed's momentum, its elderly rider didn't hesitate to rush Emordilorcan as his long dragonspear pierced through the Earth Elemental God's freshly injured eye once more.

The dark black dragonhorn battlespear pierced deep into Emordilorcan's head, causing him to panic as he had never experienced such pain before.

"Ahhhh!"

The Earth Elemental God's shouting of agony reverberated through the entire floor we were battling on. This entire area

above us began quaking mightily, also causing all living creatures aboveground to panic at the anger of the earth.

The narrowness of this labyrinth limited his highly agile body, and his ridiculously high defense that he was so proud of wasn’t worth a thing in front of this ancient king. He had never experienced such humiliation in thousands of years.

The older a creature was, the more it valued its own life. After finding out that this location wasn’t the best for him to fight at his full abilities, Emordilorcan escaped in a manner unbefitting that of an Elemental God.

"Phew, what a ferocious old guy."

Adam whistled in amazement. He never expected that this elderly warrior would be so strong, without even giving him a chance to go out and do battle.

"Hmph, such a glib-tongued junior."

The Eagle of Glaso disappeared into a shadow once more after completing his role that the Roland Sacred Sword had summoned him for, returning to his slumber.

As for me, I was sweating all over and half-kneeling on the ground. Just summoning this ancient king for that one attack had drained much of my energy.

"Hey hey hey, it couldn't be that you're already about to collapse? Just looking at the way that huge rock was glaring at us, he'll definitely be returning."

"What garbage, I'm afraid that he won't come back."

Adam was surprised for a moment, but his intelligence was quite high when it regarded a battle. He quickly realized what I meant.

"You're saying he's going to go around us, and chase after Margaret?"

"That's what I would do in his place. Is there any point in wasting time with the warriors like us behind the main objective? The obvious thing to do is go straight for the Dimensional Door, and once that place is secured, all he has to do is trap us here and capture us at his leisure. I think that rockhead's intelligence is much higher than yours."

There was a rare sign of worry that flashed on Adam's face upon hearing my words. Master Monks were already reputed to be the perfect counter to Mages, so even Margaret would likely find it difficult to deal with this monster's explosive ambush.

Earth Elementals were thick-skinned and had astonishing endurance to begin with, and any injured wild animal would go berserk. Emordilorcan was certain to be far more dangerous than earlier.

"Then what should we do? I can detect his presence, but I don’t have Clint’s control. If I break through the walls to chase after him, there’s a ninety-nine percent chance that the walls will collapse on us. Oh, by the way, I noticed that you’re insulting me by saying I’m worse than a rockhead."

"Tsk, only being perceptive at such a time. Relax, I have a method, just go in the general direction. Glina, I leave breaking through the walls up to you."

"Isn’t Glina together with Margaret? Are you finally going senile in your old age..."

"It’s Clint, not Glina!"

His insult was only half finished when it was interrupted. There was no mistaking that familiar voice, but when he looked over to see where it was coming from, there was only an immaterial floating silver armor in midair.

"...Even this awkwardness was completely copied. Okay, Glina, hurry up and blast through the walls."

"It’s not Glina, it’s Clint!"

"I know you’re called Clint, hurry up and begin, Glina."

"It’s not Glina!"

"Okay, Glina."

"Glina!"

"Yep, Clint... damn it, I'm losing track of what I'm saying. So you weren't naturally a ditz, you were naturally black-bellied."

Adam standing beside me was already stunned in amazement, but Glina was already filled with self-satisfaction as she began blasting through the walls. I also gave Adam an explanation as we rushed on our way.

[God Equipment: Roland Sacred Sword]

[Type: Two-handed longsword, attack power: 100-100, indestructible, usable only by descendants of the Mist.]

[Unique characteristic: Eternal royal protection. The royal ancient spirits have never left this land. While you are in the northlands, as their successor and descendant, you can summon them to battle for your cause.]

[There are two types of summons. The first is to summon a king from the past to give a single full-strength attack, and the second is to summon a cloned spirit of someone currently living. Both types of summons are limited to Mist royalty members only.]

"In the past two thousand years of history, even the Gods have come and gone so frequently, and the newly born Mist Kingdom is already an ancient country, with countless epic battle campaigns. There were so many powerful kings in the past, that no matter which one you randomly summoned, none of them would be too weak. The only part is that the ten minute cooldown and limited usage of three times a day is really annoying. I hope that the next step of the Sacred Sword's evolution can upgrade this. As for the second type of summons, if the royalty is abundant and powerful it should be quite the ability, but there are too few options right now, so it's only an ordinary skill. However, it just happens to be useful right now."

The Clint in front of us was basically exactly the same, and his speed in setting up explosives was quick, decisive, and precise. Our overall speed was quite fast. According to Adam's senses, we were almost about to pass in front of Emordilorcan.

We stopped in a spacious cave. This was a wide enough place that it was perfect for battle.

I nodded at Glina and her clone spirit immediately disappeared and returned to the Sacred Sword.

"As for me, I also discovered an incredibly cheat method of summoning."

I purposefully sounded as mysterious as possible with my raucous laughter. This type of rule-breaking summoning definitely surpassed my expectations for the God Equipment's main ability.

"Take a good look, and don’t blink... Fight for me, twin stars, awaken, Roland, Karwenz!"

Chapter 179: Chaotic Situation

"A True God has died; the Forest Guardian Clareladin has died. The SemiGod Prescott has also died in battle!"

The Guardian God of the northern Elf Kingdom was the Forest God. This True God's death made all the elves feel as if the sky was falling down on them.

"This is impossible! Gods are indestructible, how could they possibly die! How could the victim be the mighty Forest Guardian Clareladin!"

This was the feeling that all the northern elves had right after the news spread to everyone. For the past thousand years, the True God of Elves had been protecting them, causing them to become distant from the main events of the Northlands – the cruel competition for survival.

The warm environment and peace that was the stark opposite of the battlefield caused them to get accustomed to life under the protection of a God. They viewed it as a maxim similar to how the sun rose from the east. Now that the sun was no longer rising, it was only natural that they would panic to the extreme.

"We're finished, the northern Elf Kingdoms are all finished."

Those that lost all sense of reason and spread rumors out of fear were directly suppressed by the Elf Warriors, but fear and unrest were already spreading throughout the entire Elf population in the

north. While rumors could be denied, some things were indisputable.

Due to the Forest Guardian God's death, the utopia-like Elf Kingdom was now re-entering reality after no longer having its God's protection. After returning to the circle of life, nature started showing off its cruelty that treated everyone equally!

Currently, the streams in the forest were beginning to freeze over, and large amounts of trees began wilting. The forests that didn't belong in the Northlands were heading for death, and the outermost protective forest transformed in just a few minutes in a process that would normally take decades, losing all their leaves almost instantly. The anti-decaying protection from the True God had expired, leaving nothing but wilting death for the trees.

Without the Forest Guardian's forest barrier to protect them, the Elf Kingdom's average temperature was now a stark contrast with the Northlands' average temperature, causing nature's natural balancing to forcefully recoil against it.

According to the Elves' poetic description of what happened, the explosive northern words transformed itself into a brutal Seasonal God, and crushed the isolated Elven paradise into a place resembling the rest of the cruel Northlands with just a single turn of its body.

When frigid winds injected themselves into the Elven lands that used to be spring in all four seasons, the shivering Elves finally learned that it was finally winter. The brutal winter especially made for the Elves by the ferocious forces of nature was

particularly unpleasant.

Just as the Elves were sinking deeper into panic, their "relatives" were in the midst of a mysterious frenzy. Becoming fiercer after each battle wasn't an adequate description of their fervor anymore. In the midst of their major blood festival, the newly born Dark Elf Poison God had added a green poisonous snake emblem next to the Spider Goddess's spider emblem. The Dark Elf Gods were no longer Lorci all by herself, and the ambitious Lorci was already considering the ranking of newly born Dark Elf Gods in the future.

The Dark Elf armies were gathering under the flag of the black eight-clawed spider. The Elven armies defending their homeland had lost most of their main forces and were no match for the Dark Elves at all. All the Elves could do was watch as the invaders constructed endless bases and siege weapons in the Elven territory. The Dark Elves weren't even trying to conceal the fact that they intended to be here for a long time.

The Tassel Kingdom's mausoleum had been completely dug up, with all the passages leading to the Underground Kingdoms completely opened. Every day, countless eager Dark Elves would arrive from the Underground world, as if they were bloodthirsty sharks that had detected the delicious scent of fresh blood from their tasty prey.

The Dark Elves that had generations of grudges against their Elven cousins didn't begin a racial slaughter as quickly as people expected, but their casually apparent preparations for all-out war and that arrogant attitude that treated the Elves as lambs for the

slaughter caused even the Elves that still believed in the possibility of victory to begin despairing.

"They're waiting, they're waiting for our campaigning armies to return. They have the assurance of definite victory, they have the protection of Lorci, and our armies have zero chance of victory without another Elf God's protection. Just what is the venerable Anslo thinking? Why did he allow the Forest Guardian to be killed off by the vicious and evil Spider Goddess! Why aren't our prayers being answered?"

The Elf Gods had no time to respond to the northern Elves' prayers, as the Human Gods had already detected their betrayal, making things difficult for them to even survive as it was.

From a certain viewpoint, it could be said that the Elves lacked someone with leadership abilities who could organize them and take charge. Compared to the major Human Kingdoms that were treating their Guardian Gods more and more like lucky mascots, the Elves relied far too much on their Gods and even viewed the Gods' protection as the most important factor in battle.

"No, they're also waiting for their own reinforcements. The Dark Elves are increasing in number every day, damn it! Just how many of those Dark Elf bitches are there?"

Just how many Dark Elves were there in total in the dark Underground world? Lorci herself likely didn't know either. She used her own power to help the Dark Elves possess fertility far beyond that of regular Elves, but Lorci was called depraved for this action and exiled to the Underground world.

"Damned Anslo! You're calling me depraved? Fine, I'll show you what depravity is, I shall allow you to witness true evil!"

It could be said that Lorci's self-destructive actions caused the entire Dark Elf tribe to fall into true depravity and darkness. Killing each other, betrayals, and scams became the entire lifestyle of this whole tribe, and even the Underground demons wouldn't dare say that they were better at scamming others in comparison with the Dark Elves. But at the very least, it was indisputable that these fallen Dark Elves were incredibly strong. After they broke free from the curse of low fertility, their true potential was far stronger than what everyone expected.

There was no race in existence that was evil from birth, as each individual's sense of good or evil was determined by his or her own experiences. Lorci's tainted dark waters didn't stain the entire tribe. The Gray Elves protected by the Moon God and the Dark Elf Rangers that lived in isolation publicly disobeyed the Underground lords summoned by Lorci. Even the Dark Elves had countless different beliefs and ways of thinking within themselves; Lorci had long lost control over the entire Dark Elf tribe.

But take a look at the current Dark Elf battle camps, the largest continuous campground indeed belonged to Lorci's flag. Symbols of the moonlight, the blood sword, the icy twin swords, and various others were scattered among as well, with all these numerous scattered camps representing the countless number of traitors to Dark Elf society. Adding them all together, they far outnumbered Lorci's forces, which was one type of evidence that this tribe contained a huge number of inner factions.

However, all of these Dark Elves that resented and killed each other while Underground had gathered here for the sake of a unified purpose.

"There's no justice in this judgement against our ancestors! Even if our ancestors were in the wrong, us descendants have the right to live under the blue sky, under the sun, together with the living! We have the freedom to roam in the comfortable open lands! We will prove that us Dark Elves are the strongest among all Elf tribes, that we're the upper-class Elves that deserve to rule!"

Under Lorci's flag, the Dark Elves that had severe differences temporarily banded together. With Lorci spending great amounts of Godly power to summon a magical dark mist, they were able to avoid being burned by the sun. The Dark Elves patiently sharpened their knives in the darkness, waiting for the fated brutal slaughter that was about to occur with their close cousins.

Since the Dark Elves had invaded earlier than the others, it was only natural that they began separating out from the other Underground forces. Their only target now was to carve out a piece of the blue sky for themselves.

"This part of the Northlands is enough for now, there's the Elven Spring here, and forests, we can rebuild a kingdom that belongs to us here; there's everything we want!"

Looking at it another way, as long as the wardrums of the Holy War sounded again, the Dark Elves and Lorci who were grinding

their poisonous teeth were certain to return to the surface. Roland and Ayer's invitation letter was what ended up giving Lorci the best excuse and time to take action.

Currently, countless tents had been erected outside the Elven cities, and the Dark Elves were anticipating the joy of revenge and bloody victory. The Dark Elves whose greatest characteristic was betrayal actually managed to come together for this one goal.

As for the northern Elves that had lived here for so long, this was naturally a nightmare to them.

The Elf King Adrian that just returned to his capital city stared blankly at the scenery of despair in front of him. Was this what he had sacrificed his own daughter for? Was this the Elven strength to rule the ages that the Elven Gods had promised?

'I should have expected that the first to stand up in the Holy War would definitely become nothing but cannon fodder.'

At this time, he couldn't help but remember that person's assessment of him in his regret.

"You care too much about gains and losses, and calculate too much. You're actually only seeing small benefits, but you miss the big picture. Always calculating gains and losses every day, you'll eventually lose yourself in it as well."

"I'm not wrong! I'm definitely not wrong!"

But the current combat situation didn’t permit for his wallowing in self-regret. The other three allied countries’ armies had already complained so much to him, and there were plenty that wanted to dissolve the allied armies and take their own troops back to guard their home countries.

"Foolish, you’re even more shortsighted than the useless humans. You think that those Dark Elf bitches will be satisfied with conquering only the Tassel Kingdom, that they won’t go to the other countries? My Tassel Kingdom will hardly satisfy them, they want the entire Northlands Elf Kingdom!"

After returning, the devastation wrought upon the Tassel Kingdom had the opposite effect of making the other Elf armies want to separate from the allied armies even more. If they continued being unable to come together in unison, the Elves were quickly about to lose the war without even fighting.

"Invite two generals and Prince Kazlo to a meeting, just tell them that I have something private to tell them... Have Alwin take the Moonblade Elites and get ready for my orders."

The king clenched his teeth and made a gesture of slicing his hand across his throat to his shocked trusted retainer. The king had resolved himself to sacrifice everything in order to protect his own kingdom.

Nobody could have expected that this winter would involve so many factions at war. The Elves’ battle, the Maple defense line,

and the Elemental battle formed the most eye-catching opening acts of this Holy War.

All three battles affected and tangled with each other. At this point, any tilting towards one side or the other for any battle could cause a snowball effect, eventually ending in an avalanche.

The "Traitors' Battle" was the name later given to this war by history, but for those involved in the current era, the future generations' evaluations were unimportant. This frustrating situation where it was difficult to tell enemy from ally was the biggest headache for everyone.

There was so much betrayal between the two major sides of this conflict, to the point where even fooling your own tribe became a daily occurrence. Enemy today, friend tomorrow. Yesterday an ally, tomorrow a mortal enemy.

This type of fluctuation didn't even spare the venerated True Gods. When the Holy War restarted, those who tried remaining ambiguous were forced to stop sitting on the fence by the respective elder Gods of each faction and had to make their choices clearly for which side to stand on.

In a way, this was the critical time and point that allowed Ayer's letter, coming from one of the foremost Order Gods, to have such convincing power to Lorci for her to reselect the side she stood on.

Also, as one of the biggest losers in the previous Holy War, the Beastmen that didn't have any Gods to protect them were aiming

to recover all their previous losses in this war. Their earlier ambushes were indeed outstanding, but they had now met with some small problems.

"Our spies have been completely eliminated? How is this possible, I remember there were 2376 different groups, with seventy percent of them being human mixed bloods that are impossible to determine from physical appearance, nor do they even know each other, how is it possible for all of them to be discovered? Some of our deeply embedded spies have been planted within the enemy for one or two hundred years over several generations, that we never activated, why were they discovered?

As the side with the advantage of being proactive on the attack, the current Beastman Chieftain Amon.Bloodaxe was currently dealing with a huge headache. From the start of war to now, the lack of a complete information network had always been one of the biggest obstacles for the Beastmen.

The most important thing in war was information. Thanks to Sleuweir Kingdom’s policy of "peaceful trading," the past one hundred-plus years of interaction were more than enough for the ambitious Beastmen tribes to fill this kingdom with spies like a worm-infested apple.

But when the war truly began, not a single one of their planted "seeds" ended up sprouting.

The Tortoise Tribe Beastman making the report was sweating all over. He was the main leader of the information network, as well as a tribe leader himself, but he was currently fearing for his life

instead of this group of major Beastmen leaders.

It couldn't be helped that all the leaders were so angry, as they had raised these soldiers so long to be used when the day came, with war being the most active time period for spies to be used. This was the time for spies to show their stuff, but the Tortoise Tribe Beastman basically handed in nothing but a blank test paper.

"There should be thirteen groups in Red Maple Castle, but... they were all discovered, they're the ones hanging on the eastern castle door. And, I..."

"You told us that the western castle door's female commander was nothing more than a flower vase, so we concentrated our battle power to attack the western door, and we ended up taking heavy losses. The aerial cavalry that we lost were accumulated over so many years, and you're actually telling us that you didn't know about those magic swordsmen and war machines? You're telling us that you didn't see anything as huge as a floating battleship? You're all so useless, why are we even paying for your upkeep!"

The raging Beastman King lifted up his battle axe while shouting angrily at hearing the information network's mistaken and inaccurate information yet again at this critical juncture. He intended to personally cut off these useless Beastmen's heads.

"Wait a moment, how did our spies get discovered? Setting aside those that were obviously Beastmen, as they were just decoys, how did the human spies we bribed and the mixed bloods get exposed, that's illogical, unless..."

Compared to the raging Eagle King, the Bearman Londe seemed far more composed. But judging from the jade he accidentally crushed in his hands, he wasn’t as composed as he appeared on the surface. The loss of a behemoth was something irreplaceable that had already given him many sleepless nights of sorrow.

At this moment, when he spoke his final word "unless," he looked around him suspiciously at each tribe leader.

It was quite obvious what he meant between the lines. For such a deeply hidden information network to be completely discovered, the only possibility was that there was a spy, an incredibly high level one.

"...No, it’s not a spy."

Even though the axe was already on top of his head and he was scared witless, the information network leader still needed to say what he should say.

"It’s nothing to do with a spy, it’s actually due to a problem with our logistics that caused all our spies to get revealed."

"Hm?"

What logistical problem could possibly expose all the spies at once? The tribe leaders present all had looks of disbelief.

"If we look at the root cause, I have to talk about thirty years ago. Since we have simple lifestyles, us Beastmen have difficulty making livings in the human world. For the spies that weren't adept at business to be suddenly sent to a foreign country, many spies were cheated out of their money in a short three months, and were forced back to the highlands by starvation."

Everyone nodded at this. It was public knowledge that Beastmen weren't adept at business. Not only these spies that didn't know a single written word, there were quite a few "wise" witch doctors and shaman that had the experience of losing everything through being cheated by human society.

For the Beastmen that still had the traditional bartering system in place, the human world was far too complex. Even if they didn't meet a scammer, most Beastmen would quickly use up all their traveling funds and helplessly return to their homes.

"We never knew when the day to counterattack would come. If we kept continuously sending out new spies, this would become a bottomless investment. Our tribe isn't wealthy, so we can't afford it. Finally, a coincidence helped us to obtain a legendary treasure."

"Treasure?"

"Yep, it came about out of a lucky witch doctor experiment. A witch doctor from my tribe accidentally mixed his cooking spices with his prophecy herbs, which was how he managed to coincidentally create the famous legend – Orion fried demon meat!"

All the tribe leaders swallowed their saliva in unison upon hearing this. They'd all tasted this red and delicious fried meat before as well. It was indeed savory to the point of tantalizing.

"Everyone here surely knows about it already. With that as the foundation, we opened up a series of fried meat shops using the Orion brand selling fried meat and hamburgers, causing the Orion name to become famous. Hmph, those damned humans that deserve to die actually stole our formula, and created some McD hamburger restaurant chain, competing with us everywhere, shameless to the extreme!"

"What does this have to do with our spies being discovered?" Amon was rather shocked at this sudden change of topic. Wasn't this supposed to be about the information network? How did competition between fast food restaurants have anything to do with this?

"As you know, our spies aren't skilled at business, while the Orion fast food restaurant is one of our only profitable businesses, resulting in... the result was that all the spies opened up Orion fast food restaurants! After one spy was discovered, every single spy was revealed!"

Ok, fine, since the Orion fast food restaurant was too profitable, there were even Beastmen that voluntarily became spies in order to open up restaurants in the humans' fancy world to enjoy their lives.

"Fuck! Isn’t that just looking for death!"

"Foolish to such an extent! Who gave such an order! Which idiot did such a moronic thing? I’m going to hang him to death on the flagpole!"

The Beastman King Amon’s angry roar reverberated through the tent, and his sharp voice caused the guards outside to shiver in fear.

The information network leader sweated even more profusely at seeing how angry Amon was.

"It was you..."

His reply was in a soft voice, but there were no ordinary people present that could not hear him. The tribe leaders were momentarily stunned at this, then the tent fell eerily silent, with Amon being the only person to clumsily continue speaking.

"What?"

"It was you. My Blackrock tribe was originally a subordinate tribe to your Bloodaxe tribe. Since information and scouting had always been the realm of the Eagle tribe that excelled in flying, and you’re the master of all Eaglemen, and I’ve always been your loyal retainer. When you first succeeded your position, you said ‘who knows when those useless spies will finally be useful, it’s impossible for it to be my generation, so we might as well take the

chance to earn some more money, and let our tribesmen participate in the most profitable business! We're going to fill the entire world with Orion fast food restaurants! We're going to become the fast food kings!"

Amon did his best to remember. He seemed to vaguely recall that thirty or forty years ago, when he first inherited his position, he had indeed said something similar, and even had it recorded in the tribe records as a wise saying.

As the Bloodaxe tribe chieftain, what he was most proud of wasn't his martial arts ability or prowess in combat strategy, but rather his ability to help his tribe get rich. It was precisely because of the flourishment of the Bloodaxe tribe that they were chosen as the representatives to cooperate with the Earth Elemental God.

"This can't be blamed on you, humans are just too devious. You see, we just found out that those McD hamburger restaurants were actually spies sent out by San Antonio. Our captured spies were all reported by those clowns wearing red wigs!"

That Tortoise tribe Beastman was all teary-faced as he talked about this painful memory.

"Those, those mascots that were singing blue blue road! They even hit us with their ingredients, and tossed those disgusting red wigs at us. They were underhanded to the point of putting rocks in their hamburgers, our fellow Beastmen were so pitiful. Our mascot the white-bearded old Beastman was completely unable to defeat them with the demon bone staff. The scene was unbearable to witness."

"White-bearded old Beastman? Mascot? Isn’t this just looking to die?"

Some tribe leader finally pointed out another obvious flaw. This time, it was a certain Bearman tribe leader’s turn to sweat profusely, as he also recalled the foolish decision he made twenty years ago when he inherited his position.

The information network leader saw this out of the corner of his eyes, but he figured that if he didn’t say anything, he was certain to die. Saying it out loud might still give him a chance at living, so he ground his teeth and continued speaking.

"A certain person wanted to have a remembrance of his grandfather that passed away, and made this extra request... The white beard would represent wisdom, and the staff represented the willingness to never give up, and the white clothes and white apron represented the progress of shamanic culture. He said that it was necessary to make humans understand the beauty of the rough Beastman culture!"

Okay then. The information network leader kept staring at a certain Bearman while saying all this. His intention was obvious: let’s not blame anyone here.

"Cough, I recommend, something else. We can actually fight on even without information." The Bearman tribe leader Londe pretended to remain composed as he spoke.

"Yep, I agree. We Beastmen are number one in the world at combat ability; there's no need for us to imitate the weakling humans and use spies or whatever." The Beastman King Amon relaxed slightly as he said so.

With the two strongest leaders agreeing with each other, what else could the other tribe leaders say, they could only nod.

"Notify all Beastmen, from today on, McD Hamburgers are our mortal enemies! Orion fast food is our pride! From today on, you're no longer our information network leader, we shall give you the new job of fried meat business consultant, and manage the economy of fried meat for all Beastmen!"

The information network leader was overjoyed beyond his wildest dreams at hearing this.

"Wonderful, this is my dream job! I'm the Chairman of the Board for the Orion Fried Meat Association, as well as an executive-ranked chef, this will be no problem for me. It's so much better than this annoying information network job. You're the best at picking the right person for the job!"

Apart from Chief Amon who was smiling delightedly from being sucked up to, all the other tribal leaders had strange looks on their faces.

'Something seems wrong here from the very start, this job was given to the wrong person to begin with! You're making a chef into the spymaster, so of course there would be problems! We're

currently at war, is there any necessity to make some chain fast food restaurants? Didn’t you make a mistake from the very beginning? Forget about using a spy as a chef, don’t use chefs anymore as spies!"

Chapter 180: Cooperative Battle

In the current generation, there were only four descendants of the Mist—Karwenz, Glina, Reyne, and myself. What I originally expected was that I would be able to summon only Glina and Reyne.

However, when I decided to try my luck, I got an incredible result.

In a way, the summoned spirits of the Roland Sacred Sword could be said to be the exact copies of the person from when they were living, but Karwenz and I were obviously special cases. You could say that we technically weren't descendants of the Mist anymore. At the very least, I've reincarnated several times, and Karwenz wasn't even a human.

But the Roland Sacred Sword still managed to summon them, and the sight of those nostalgic figures caused me to catch my breath.

The blonde-haired, young Holy Knight bowed to me with a brilliant smile on his face, but I knew that deep inside he was secretly plotting in his heart. Karwenz had an expression filled with displeasure and his eyebrows were furrowed as if he was thinking about something important, but he most likely wasn't thinking about anything more important than what to eat for lunch. Even though the two of them appeared identical, they radiated completely different auras.

It was quite obvious that the summoning of these twins must have been some type of bug caused by our special circumstances. Even though I had died in battle at fourteen years old that year, I’m still alive and kicking, which was why this Sacred Sword summoned the legendary Holy Knight Roland from the generation who had entered Armageddon together with Diffindor.

As for Karwenz, this land recorded his final moment when he had discarded his Mist Bloodline and turned into a demon. The current Karwenz in front of me was the youth from before he had abandoned his humanity.

"Roland, don’t be a burden for me. Just go ahead and hide behind my back and shiver." The arrogant and strong younger brother had sharp words as usual, but this was his way of caring for his older brother who wasn’t similarly skilled at fighting.

"Brat, I’m your older brother, so remember to be polite. Otherwise, the next time we have a group date, I’ll tell that bearlike girl from the Dino Family that you like her. You know how persistent she can be." The brilliantly smiling Holy Knight used a malicious threat, and as expected, his younger brother revealed a shred of fear underneath his icy gaze. That was Karwenz’s typical expression of surrender.

I felt like I was having a nostalgic dream as I watched the twins in front of me.

After passing through the long river of time, the twins have met once more. Their conversation made me feel as if I returned to those final days more than three hundred years ago; a difficult yet

joyous period of both fortune and bitterness.

"Oh my, this guy seems quite difficult to deal with. Karwenz, it's all up to you."

"Hmph, I knew you would say that. You always run away the moment you face a direct battle—I have no idea how you became a Sword Saint."

Back in the day, we also bantered in a similar manner as we confidently walked off to our own battles. It was regretful, however, that even though we always knew of each other's existence and trusted that the other could change everything, we never met again until the final moment.

At this moment, though, the Northlands' skies were just as blue as always, while the frigid, bitter winds pierced the bones. However, some things would never return to how they were. At the very least, it was impossible for the twins to have such a peaceful meeting for their next reunion.

The next time we meet, we'll probably draw our swords upon each other...

"Roland, what are you daydreaming about? It's coming!"

Adam's angry roar snapped me back to my senses.

How foolish was I now? Becoming nostalgic on the battlefield

was one of the best ways to a quick death.

Without any hesitation, Emordilorcan had begun to attack us with a furious barrage of rocks, while my two summoned spirits had already begun blocking the attack.

Clang!

Adam’s sword of light was knocked away and he kept spinning around from the impact, while the twins blocked off Emordilorcan.

Roland from that year had barely managed to reach the realm of Legends right before dying, while the Karwenz from before who had abandoned everything had also become a Legend. In human society, this was, perhaps, an astonishing achievement as their accomplishments for their ages meant that they were super geniuses. However, for the Earth Elemental God who had experienced countless eons and even participated in ancient battles where the Gods were no better than lapdogs, ordinary Legend-rank strength was nothing more than slightly stronger cannon fodder.

Yet some people were destined to be extraordinary...Roland and Karwenz were never ordinary Legends to begin with!

"Sacred Sword Blessing! Angel’s Descent!"

Holy Knight Roland casually tossed out several Divine Art support spells and pushed his younger brother to the front, while

he unhesitatingly hid far behind the scene of the battle. It was obvious that he was refusing to engage in close combat.

"Haha! This is you from way back then? What a beautiful scene."

"Hmph, just how old do you think I was back then? For me, who was such a slacker with an unhealthy body, my title as a Sword Saint was partially nominal. Besides, I'm a commander, which means that hiding in the rear is the right thing to do. Physical fights are work for the barbaric."

"...You're still supposed to be a Sword Saint; how shameless can you be?"

However, the following scene managed to shut Adam up.

Holy Knight Roland lifted his longsword as a blinding light gathered on its blade. The next moment, a miniature sun that was too bright to look at appeared in midair.

"Bullet of Light!"

Just as the teenager's youthful voice sounded out, that sun-like ball of light finished its magical compression and crashed into Emordilorcan like a falling meteor. When the ball of light exploded, everyone was temporarily blinded, while the pitiful Earth Elemental God was forced to take several steps backward from the impact.

"This is Bullet of Light? The most basic spell that every single knight knows? Are you kidding me? Even Light's Judgement isn't this ridiculous."

"Heh heh, this is talent for you. How could I otherwise have become the Son of Light? My Light Magic has at least five times the power of normal Holy Knights, and with the Soul Imprint of Light further increasing my power, it's at least ten times stronger than normal!"

"Then why don't you just use a higher-rank magic? Bullet of Light's basic power is too low, and even if you multiply it by ten times, it's probably quite limited."

"...I didn't know any other spells. Back then, I only knew the most basic divine spells, and Bullet of Light was the only one I could insta-cast."

"What? What are you talking about? Weren't you a Legend-rank Holy Knight?"

"For someone who slacked off so much on practicing divine magic, how far do you think I could get? Relax, even though I only knew Bullet of Light back then, it'll be enough!"

As I expected, the battle was now in utter chaos and the blinding light of miniature suns kept materializing in midair and rushing towards Emordilorcan.

"One, two, three... fifty! Hey, hey, isn’t this too much of an exaggeration?"

"Hmph, now you know about my power."

"...Indeed, but does this have any difference to your later ‘gather magic, compress, and shoot’ strategy? So, you were already acting as an artillery from way back then. You actually made zero progress in the past two, three hundred years."

"Nobody will think that you’re mute if you don’t talk." Fine, this was an eternal pain buried deep within my chest. After so many years, my only progress was probably that I was now throwing ice balls instead of bullets of light.

But currently, bullets of light were more useful than ice balls.

The original property of Holy Light was to "cleanse," and in that sense, Holy Light could be said to be the natural enemy of unnatural existences. It would deal additional damage to anything that twisted the natural order of things. Even if elemental creatures weren’t as countered completely by it compared to the undead or demons, Holy Light also had the ability to reverse the unnaturalness of those elements that came alive and return them to their natural state.

"Get the hell out, evil from a different dimension!"

The furiously roaring Holy Knight Roland tossed out stronger—

fine, even more Bullets of Light, causing Emordilorcan to actually be temporarily suppressed.

Emordilorcan would surely be able to ignore an ordinary Holy Knight's Bullets of Light, but this time, his enemy was incredibly difficult to deal with as the Holy Light was far too dense, and he now felt as if he was in an entirely different dimension filled with nothing but light!

"Impossible, this is almost at the level of the Light God's purest light! Son of Light? An existence favored by the Holy Light? Damn it, how could there be a descendant of the Gods here! It's not possible for you to be a descendant of the Gods!"

The earth clod's angry shouting caused everyone to pause in surprise for a moment, but now wasn't the time to be standing around—the large piece of dirt immediately came rushing at us while withstanding the endless number of light explosions.

And then it suddenly went flying sideways...

Karwenz proudly showed off to Holy Knight Roland after retracting his leg that had just performed a swift kick, only to see little Roland preparing his crystal sunglasses to prevent his own eyes from going blind. Fine, I understand him pretty well, and there was an eighty percent chance that he pretended not to see it.

"Did I see that correctly? He kicked away the Earth Elemental God with a single kick? Just how strong is that brat?"

Adam was the most shocked instead.

"At the very least, it’s more than thirty? If you can’t understand it in numbers, it’s probably one and a half times your strength, since he’s never lost in strength—not even to dragons. I’ve heard that he managed to defeat a behemoth as well as an Efreet Lord with one punch before."

"Is he really a human? Why are both of you so ridiculous?"

"...it should be like that, at least at that time. Oh right, since the me from that time was playing with such things, be careful... looks like I’m too late."

"Take this!"

Holy Knight Roland shouted fiercely as he lifted his longsword, and Holy Light that was dense to the point of materialization began gathering upon it—it was as if he was about to launch some sort of ultimate attack. After everyone’s attention was drawn to it...

Flash

An eye-blinding brilliance turned everything snow-white, and everyone watching it lost their sense of vision.

"Ahhh!" This actually wasn’t Emordilorcan shouting, although he probably wasn’t feeling too good right now either.

The most pitiful scream came from Adam, who was completely blinded since he had been watching the combat situation. He, too, had believed that Holy Knight Roland was about to begin some ultimate attack due to his fierce shout, but he was completely blindsided.

"Relax, the Sunlight Fist doesn't last that long, nor was it a direct hit. It'll probably be a maximum of thirty seconds before it wears off."

Yep, this was the combat technique that the me from so long ago invented based on the rather blinding quality of Holy Light. If there were servants present, I would have had them hold up some mirrors, making it even easier to blind all my enemies.

Well, when I noticed little Roland preparing his crystal sunglasses, I had already guessed that he was about to use this technique.

"Ultimate technique! Your dog's eyes shall be blinded!" Little Roland finally said the technique's name so casually, but judging by how slowly he said it, he was trying to torture everyone on purpose.

Karwenz's shouting proved that this definitely wasn't the first time.

"How many times have I said it! Before you use your ultimate attack, shout the name out first! Is it fun for you to accidentally

injure your allies every time? If you're a real man, then shout out your ultimate attack's name, fair and square! Aren't you just dragging everyone else down like this?"

The furious Karwenz suddenly punched out with his accumulated dark demonic energy and brute strength. The rock wall that he hit shattered into tiny pieces, and even the space behind the rock wall distorted. After witnessing the fearsome power of Karwenz's punch, even the martial arts expert Emordilorcan resolved to himself that he definitely wouldn't let this brat's fists touch him.

"Demonic descendant? Are you two truly brothers?"

Emordilorcan who recovered first was wondering in doubt, but he was destined to never receive an answer. Since he exposed his location by asking that question, the raging Karwenz found a target to vent upon and gave a vicious sword slice in Emordilorcan's direction.

Adam, who was also a victim of the flash to the extent where tears were pouring out of his eyes, nodded silently in agreement with Karwenz's reaction. In my opinion, since they were both the hot-blooded idiotic type, they would definitely find many common topics to talk about—especially the part where both of them had suffered under a black-bellied older brother repeatedly.

"Oh, sorry, it wasn't on purpose. It was all to give the enemy a sudden surprise."

It wasn’t on purpose? It was definitely on purpose. I inwardly thought the truth to myself.

Even if that Roland was smiling so humbly and sincerely, and he seemed like he was honestly apologizing from the bottom of his heart about accidentally injuring his allies, I knew that he was probably laughing inside, thinking to himself, "Wonderful, I pranked those hot-blooded idiots yet again."

"Sigh, it doesn’t seem like now’s the time to be watching a show."

I shook my head as I took my sword and prepared for battle. Even if it was rather confusing that the twins counted as a single summoning, I had already used the maximum number of summons for today. If we weren’t even able to at least make it an even match, this battle would be next to impossible.

But, before I personally took the field, there were some things I needed to try. If I were to be successful, our chances of victory would be greatly increased.

"Wind Elemental God Camdian, stop pretending that you’re dead! I know you’re right here! Do you really think that simply watching the show will give you an advantage? Foolish, still trying to play both sides at this time will only turn you into cannon fodder for both sides!"

My fierce shouting reverberated in the underground passageway, causing everyone to stop in stunned surprise. Emordilorcan reacted by breaking out into a fit of laughter.

"That cowardly worm, do you really believe that moron would still dare to appear before me? He has already escaped with his tail between his legs; that coward doesn't deserve to have status equaling ours!"

Emordilorcan's laughter echoed throughout the hollow labyrinth. His continuously reverberating laughter seemed to both prove the veracity of his words as well as mock the weakness and cowardice of the Wind Elemental God.

Even so, I didn't stop my own mocking words.

"Camdian, as long as we manage to hold this guy here, our people will be able to destroy the Earth Elemental Door, and Emordilorcan will be greatly weakened. Perhaps you alone won't be his match, but what if we're included? If you miss this chance that only comes once in a thousand years, no, once in ten thousand years, do you still think you'll ever truly be able to become the top of all elementals? If you still want to be a cowardly tortoise hiding inside its shell, we can just cancel our agreement right now. You know that I have this power. Are you certain that you want to face Ayer's rage by yourself?"

"Are you losing your sanity? As I expected, mortal lives are so weak, in both body and mind—"

Emordilorcan's taunts suddenly paused halfway through because a raspy voice suddenly spoke up from not far away.

"...How did you know I was here?"

I laughed aloud in delight at hearing that familiar sound.

"Perhaps wind elementals don’t have the attack power of fire elementals, nor do they have the astonishing defense power of earth elementals, but wind elementals are the quickest of them all. Their innate nature to go in every crack makes them the best spies, and as long as they change their form slightly, even becoming completely invisible shouldn’t be too difficult. As long as you weren’t willing to accept defeat, you’d definitely follow Emordilorcan."

"That’s not enough of a reason..."

"What’s more, I believe that the wise Wind Elemental God isn’t stupid enough to waste this excellent opportunity. Is that enough?"

A humanoid life form walked out from the shadow of a nearby corner. He didn’t appear physically strong, but the glowing thunder runes on his skin, the silver hair that was flowing even in the absence of any wind, and those eyes that seemed to emit lightning all made it impossible for anyone to ignore his presence.

"Yep. I love having intelligent allies. Then, let us forget about any past small grievances we may have had, and let’s work hard together to keep this foolish piece of rock here."

"Camdian!"

"Oh my, isn’t this our esteemed Earth Elemental God? Why are you blind in one eye? Would you like for me, as your junior, to send you on your way?"

Emordilorcan shouted out his old acquaintance’s name in surprise. Yep, this person right here was the Wind Elemental God that had tucked his tail and run away. But the current him seemed to be in top condition in both mental and physical states.

Judging by how Camdian currently seemed completely uninjured, it was quite obvious that Camdian didn’t use his full abilities earlier. It was even possible that it wasn’t Camdian himself that was battling earlier, but now wasn’t the time to care about that.

"Of course, some people always focus on the process, but isn’t a difficult process for the sake of allowing people to be satisfied with the results? In that case, only a satisfactory result is the most important thing, is it not?"

I smiled as I joyfully watched the person in front of me transform into the essence of wind itself once more. Camdian unhesitatingly faced straight off against his mortal enemy, giving us the best cannon fodder again.

I still pretended to act mysterious and composed on the surface, but I secretly heaved a sigh of relief inside.

Ha, how lucky. This guy really was around after all.

Yep, I was bluffing from the very start. I didn't have the ability to detect the presence of the Wind Elemental God who would be the best at hiding his presence, nor did I have the ability to perceive if he had truly lost or had only faked losing. However, just a single bluff had brought him out again, so of course I was quite fortunate.

What? I bluffed more than once? Well, in order to fool such a sly old fox, one had to pull out all the stops or it would all be for naught.

"Foolish one, you could have lived a few more years if you escaped. But now, even if you're added to the mix, none of you weaklings are even worth mentioning!"

The crazed rock unhesitatingly faced off against the Wind Elemental God's sudden appearance. Under his thick stone plating, Emordilorcan's single remaining eye was still filled with viciousness, and even though the numbers were overwhelmingly disadvantageous for him, he didn't even hesitate to attack first.

Boom!

But when the two Elemental Gods began fighting, the chain explosions coming from beneath us caused Emordilorcan's expression to change significantly, as he was no longer able to remain composed.

"Emordilorcan, today shall be the day of your death!"

Chapter 181: The People of the Mist

It had already been almost two months since the first ambush that began the battle of this ongoing northern war. The frozen earth of the Northlands was drenched in blood that belonged to not only the human hosts but also the uninvited beastmen and elves.

"Conquer all of Sleuweir within ten days, conquer the Northlands within a month, and slaughter all the way to San Antonio within three months!"

The arrogant words that the beastmen had said after the success of their first ambush were now never to be brought up again. The tribe leaders had never expected the human resistance to be stubborn to this degree.

The abnormal success of their first ambush had pulled the wool over their eyes. The dullness of the Sleuweir Kingdom’s higher-ups had given them the mistaken impression that the battle would end quickly.

To nullify the humans’ resistance, the beastmen chose to completely slaughter every resident of any city that fiercely fought back against them. They had used the Wolfriders to massacre all the villages and had adopted a scorched-earth tactic, but this decision had now proven to be the most foolish tactic of all.

The massacre hadn’t wiped away the humans’ will to resist. On the contrary, the cries of their relatives and the vicious manner in

which they were slaughtered had helped heat the Mist People’s blood and rage to the boiling point.

"Can you watch your newlywed wife be tortured to death right in front of you? Your elderly father being hanged to death because the invaders wanted to save on food? Your baby being impaled on a spear by those beasts just because of crying? All of this is happening right now! Are you all still men? If you are, then take up your weapons and fight to the bitter end. What’s there to be scared of? It’s just death! Will that really be worse than living like this in such suffering?"

After the awful news about the slaughters in the conquered areas spread, the fires of rage hidden deep within the Mist People’s hearts were finally stoked. Even without their lord and king’s summons, the Mist Tribe would have gladly sacrificed their lives to protect their families and friends.

"The Mist shall never surrender" may only be a saying, but it was an indisputable fact that the People of the Mist had never been conquered by foreigners in the past thousands of years. Even in front of butcher knives dripping with blood, the Mist People were just like their ancestors who had never bowed to invaders, with their thousand-year-old bloodlines awakening instead.

The young husband Aima kissed his newlywed wife goodbye as he joined a citizens’ brigade without actual combat ability or guarantee. Armed with only a dull woodcutting knife, his only reason for fighting was so that his future children wouldn’t have to grow up filled with the worry and fear that they would become the enemy’s "glorious" sacrifices, impaled on their spears.

The elderly soldiers held their spears as they marched towards the frontlines. Perhaps it was true that their bodies had already weakened and that they had retired for many years, but their wisdom and experience helped the newer soldiers to avoid the most dangerous traps, helping them quickly increase their skills amid the constant battling. They weren't as ridiculous as that legendary old king who took his own coffin to battle, but they had already resolved themselves that there was a chance for death on the battlefield.

"...I'll be satisfied if my experience can help a few young fellows stay alive and return. If I'm slowing everyone down, please don't hesitate to abandon me. I'll let those beast bastards know what the will of an old soldier really is!"

If the Red Maple defense line and Antuen could be considered the two lighthouses of hope, then the countless number of resistance organizations and citizen militias were the wildfires burning brightly on the plains. And when all these fires were lit, it would be next to impossible to extinguish them.

"Who's afraid? It's just death; it's f**king worse to live under such suffering." Perhaps this sentence was rather vulgar, but it was a testament to the hardiness of the northern people who were used to living in a meat grinder.

"Damnit, there's resistance organizations and guerrilla troops everywhere! Those guys are insane!"

In the cities that the beastmen had taken over, any beastmen soldiers that went out by themselves would never return. Even the strong Wolfrider teams were gradually beginning to vanish.

Those citizens who didn't have any armor or sharp weapons learned how to ambush their enemies using the terrain and lure the vicious beasts with bait through the continuous battles. Not only did the vicious slaughtering not scare the People of the Mist, but it did the opposite instead, adding fuel to the flames of the desire for revenge.

"They're literally insane! Have you ever seen a head that would still keep staring at you after you cut it off? Have you ever seen a legless beggar suddenly cling on to your leg and tell his comrades to pierce through you together with him? They're basically a bunch of crazy bastards!"

The beastmen that were so fond of battle had now become afraid. After witnessing the humans' maniacal and suicidal attacks just so that they could perish together with the beastmen, the beastmen that had viewed dying in battle as the greatest honor had now become afraid. The humans' blood-red eyes and stares even after death caused the beastmen to become frightened!

The beastmen finally realized why those weakling humans had successfully blocked their invasions for thousands of years and even forced their strong ancestors back to the northernmost plains countless of times.

"...We can't keep going on like this! We have to destroy any hope they have for resisting and hit their most critical spots with one

attack."

The beastmen abandoned their original combat strategy of steadily conquering all the areas, and quickly gave up on the outer cities. Instead, they focused all their energy on destroying the two "lighthouses of hope."

And so, the Sleuweir Kingdom's capital, Antuen, met with an emergency situation, and the human's allied forces' main headquarters, the Red Maple defense line, brought up the rear. The beastmen tribe leaders knew that unless they were able to take out these two annoyances, this battle might never end.

"Antuen has surrendered; King Fismer has surrendered!"

After this astonishing news began to spread, there was disbelief at first, which was soon followed by painful howls of crying throughout the entire country.

An old soldier in the last years of his life had lost his son, grandson, and son-in-law in this battle but didn't shed a single tear. He would always feel his mustache and smile in pride when talking about his family members that died in battle.

"They're all very fine people; they didn't shame Old Philly's name. Since they're now dead, this old fellow shall continue fighting in their place, and when I'm dead, my granddaughter and daughter will continue fighting! I refuse to believe that we can't get rid of those goddamned beasts!"

But when he heard this piece of news, he ended up crying like a little child, collapsing on the floor as he pointed with a trembling finger towards the north and began spewing insults.

"My sons, what did you all die for? Such a bastard country is not worth us sacrificing our lives for. Your deaths were worthless."

This was also why Roland had been in such a rage. Even when the country's citizens hadn't given up, why was the king, who was supposed to be their protector, giving up?

At the very least, the Roland from that year long ago would have performed his duty of royal protection—even from the grave, like a skeleton or a ghost carrying a grudge from hell.

Along with their unyielding battle spirit, the story of the twin brothers helped the People of the Mist remember that their people would never give up! They only recognized kings who also never surrendered!

"False King Fismer! He doesn't deserve to be king!"

Although there were angry denunciations and doubts among the people when the news of the surrender had started to spread, the beastmen had indeed achieved their goal of landing a vicious blow to the Mist People's morale.

Right after that, there were much fewer resistance movements than before. Fismer's surrender represented the first time in

history that the Mist Royalty had ever submitted, and it was as if the people's backbone had received a massive blow.

Snap! The backbone that represented the unyielding nature of the citizens was cracking pitifully, and it was almost to the point where it seemed to be broken. The people's spirit of bravery and resistance was almost at the breaking point as well, but luckily...

"The previous King Roland appeared and executed Fismer Caso right there on the spot, as he declared the surrender to be invalid. He then passed the kingship on to the only daughter of the previous generation's king, Princess Glina Caso! The Mist Royalty hasn't surrendered after all, nor has our flag fallen! Antuen's battle still continues, and our king is still battling!"

Fortunately, Roland's appearance re-ignited the sparks of resistance into flames that were even stronger than before. His oath also brought a new era upon the People of the Mist.

"...Our Mist Tribe never enjoys war, so we swear that we shall never start a war of our own volition!"

Old Philly also shouted that very oath as he jumped off a cliff together with an enemy. He had already learned of his daughter's and granddaughter's deaths, but this time, he did not shed a tear, and instead nodded while smacking his chest proudly.

"They did in two beasts before they died? Excellent job, as expected of Old Philly's family! Go ahead first, I'm coming soon. We promised to meet each other again in heaven!"

"...But if war comes to us, we're going to teach the invaders how sharp our swords are!"

Aima was now at only the combat level of an ordinary soldier, and he had written that sentence in a letter to his wife. After Aima's death, a fellow soldier would pack up his belongings and mail out this final letter to his wife. Aima had already carried out his promise.

"We don't like war, nor do we enjoy war, and we now declare our national church to be that of the Law God! We swear that we shall never start any war of our own volition, but if war is truly unavoidable, then we shall spend every last breath to protect our home! We swear that our tribe shall forever exist in the Northlands!"

Such a short oath carved a brand-new path for the entire People of the Mist. Not only in the Sleuweir Kingdom, but even those in the nearby East Mist Communal Country who were also descendants of the Mist Tribe were repeating this oath over and over again.

"...We shall spend every last breath to protect our home! We swear that our tribe shall forever exist in the Northlands!"

One hundred and seventy-four knights were riding on young Frigid Nightmares. Under the guidance of the senior Lion King, those young Nightmares, which had hatched prematurely, had already signed new contracts with the young knights, and the new

generation of Aurora Knights had completed their final training under the flowing battle flag of the Mist. Today was the day for these young knights to head to the battlefield to assist their fellow Mist People.

Under the watchful eyes of their family members and with the guidance of the undead veterans of the Aurora Knights Order, each silver-colored battle horse had begun their long flights. Although there were still traces of naivety in the expressions of the young knights, their arms were as solid as rocks as they wielded their spears and looked towards the distant sky. In the distance, they could see their fellow Mist People bleeding fresh blood, and they all wanted to rush there as quickly as possible to end this war.

"Let them witness the strongest aerial cavalry unit on the continent! Allow them to see the pride of the Mist People!"

When they finally entered the northern battlefield, they were destined to become the new center of attention. Without a doubt, the Aurora Knights, who were the pride of the Mist, would stoke the fires even further.

And when all these oaths connected together and the oath to "never start a war of their own volition" awakened the Sacred Sword that carried the will of the Gods, the Mist People’s oath finally received a response.

"I, the Law God Wumianzhe, declare that I shall protect the People of the Mist."

When holy, silver light descended from the clouds, the Mist People finally received the protection of their own True God. And with the increasing number of believers, Wumianzhe also underwent an evolution, and he received a new divine job title—the Guardian God of the Northlands.

"As long as the masters of this land obey the principle of ‘never starting any wars,’ I shall protect them. I bless them that they shall never be conquered, and I bless them that they shall..."

With the descent of a guiding path of light, the souls of the People of the Mist Tribe now belonged to Wumianzhe’s domain. The brave warriors who had sacrificed themselves for the Mist would become heroic spirits, and not a single True God would be able to steal the Mist Tribe’s souls away from Wumianzhe—not a single one!

Why was I so certain? That was because...

"Roland, that big rock’s too difficult to deal with!"

"Just do the best you can; I have something more important over here! Ah, where was I? Right... I bless them that they shall walk towards the peak together with victory; I bless them that they shall enter the Hall of Valhalla after death! May a fair sky forever stand above the Northlands!"

My voice synchronized with the voice in the sky as we finally took this step after oh so many sacrifices!

"I, the Law God and Guardian God of the Northlands, Wumianzhe, swear to remove all invaders! You don’t accept it? Then, let’s battle!"

Chapter 182: Willpower

The protection of a True God? Mortal battles didn't need it thanks to the fundamental laws of the world; it was impossible for True Gods to directly intervene in mundane matters.

That Forest Guardian True God of the elves? The fact that he was now dead was plenty of evidence of what would happen if one broke the rules.

But it was enough for the brave warriors who fought to protect their tribe.

The mortal Mist King Roland announced their glory while Wumianzhe from the heavens above announced that their heroic deeds would be recognized by everyone. Even if they died and their souls slept forever, it would be fine—it was fine as long as their glory existed in the hearts of the true warriors of the north.

For the beastmen, however, it was devastating. Perhaps a True God's protection seemed rather ephemeral, but it was actually supremely dangerous when they witnessed it for themselves.

"What will Wumianzhe do? Will he make the Church of Law participate in battle? Or will he personally give out divine punishment?"

This was especially so because the beastmen's original True God had already perished in the previous holy war. Due to this unbalance in power, they were now even more afraid of the

intervention of a True God.

"We can’t afford to hide our full power any longer. Londe, send out your best forces; Kagra, let’s combine your Blue-Feathered Harpy Division with my Bloodaxe Tribe as our warriors lack the protection of air cavalry and casters. Hamar, Sostilo, stop your brave warriors from wallowing in regret. Even when they’re off their steeds, they’re still our most elite warriors, and our castle-scaling warriors lack the command and leadership of the elite."

All the tribal leaders who were mentioned nodded in silence. As the highest ranks of the allied forces that constituted the beastmen armies, they each had strong tribes but had been avoiding sending out the best of their troops to prevent their own tribes from becoming frontline cannon fodder. However, when it truly came down to it, they would send in everything they had.

"We must conquer Red Maple Castle within two days! Sound the battle drums; I’m going to fight personally!"

The Bloodaxe Tribe Leader viciously pounded the conference table with his fist. The crushed sandbox that represented Red Maple Castle seemed as if it was indicating its eventual fate. At this moment, this Beastman King, who previously seemed to be more like a merchant than royalty, was finally showing off his own pride as a beastman.

The snow was falling intermittently, but the temperature never once rose above zero degrees. The damned weather would freeze any skin directly exposed to the elements.

The sun had already set, but the number of beastmen surrounding the walls of Red Maple Castle didn't decrease in the least. It was the opposite; with the return of the Wolf King's troops, the beastmen army had increased once again and now included countless of hordes of the famously dexterous Wolfriders.

Several hundred large torches acted as temporary lighting and heating. After the beastmen discovered that there wasn't enough wood to burn, they tossed all the valuable books and artwork that they had pillaged into the fires as if they were worthless lumber. The humans could even hear the beastmen's unique roughshod singing and the beat of battle drums in the distant beastmen camps.

"Damned beastmen! They're looking down on us!"

To be honest, it was actually the opposite of what the furious humans were thinking. The beastmen were now treating the humans before them as warriors on an equal level to themselves. They were venerating their ancestors on the glorious battlefield to console the souls that had died in battle, and they were also conducting this ritual for the sake of prematurely honoring those of their tribe members that would die in battle.

For the beastmen who believed in the War God Holadis, dying on the glorious battlefield was easy to accept. If they could meet their deaths in an epic-level campaign, it would be considered as the blessing of the War God. This was why they kept chanting the War God's name as they bravely fought to their deaths, only hoping for a major battle that would please their ancestors' spirits.

Of course, since Holadis had already died in the previous Holy War and the current War God Kalonpis was a Human God, there was nothing that would answer the beastmen's prayers. Their prayers were more like gratitude and idolization towards their ancestors as they thanked fate for giving them a glorious battlefield where they could challenge their own fates.

"If we win, we can finally return to the Great Bianluya Plains, the place of origin of all beastmen! It's supposed to be inconceivably beautiful! After this battle, I can finally return to my ancestral home and get married!"

In their eyes, the battle was already nearing its end. As long as they got rid of those pesky humans, they would only be one step away from completing the grand mission of their ancestors.

Those beastmen that belonged to the first wave, which was acting as the vanguard, made preparations for the possibility of their deaths as they charged onto the battlefield. Since their ritual was now over, they believed that their souls would forever accompany their own tribe. They weren't afraid of any sacrifices on the battlefield.

"We admit that these northern humans are brave warriors as well. Only cowards are afraid of death! This is a grand battle where only one side will live in the end! We fight to the death!"

Battle drums and bleak horns sounded from everywhere around Red Maple Castle's walls. War songs were continuously sung as the

beastmen kept up their current attack for more than ten hours.

Due to the castle walls acting as an obstacle, the siege battle became a bloody and cruel meat grinder. The warriors of both sides were only going to the frontline in limited numbers and could only become a part of the endless amount of sacrificial cannon fodder for the attacks of the mages and mage towers.

As midnight arrived, the number of combined beastmen troops totaled more than 120,000. The beastmen had Red Maple Castle surrounded so tightly that even a fly could not escape. But even though the beastmen had the advantage in numbers, as well as a higher individual combat strength for each unit, the humans made use of the castle walls for protection, and nobody could change the fact that this was a desolate meat grinder.

The castle protectors weren't having an easy time either. With the protection of the beastmen's air cavalry combined with the charge of various colossal creatures, the beastmen were succeeding in scaling the castle walls every minute. Even though they would be tossed down quickly, the sacrifices of the human armies were always several times that of the beastmen.

The outermost castle wall's defenders were already in utter chaos when faced with the unstoppable flood of beastmen who were superior in both numbers and quality. Platoons were being devastated in the blink of an eye.

The vast attacking forces of the beastmen had an inconceivably high morale. The innumerable beastmen forces swarmed the castle walls like ants, and with the major tribal leaders' elite forces that

had been saved for last exploding with astonishing power, this battle quickly turned into a living nightmare for the humans.

Finally, the first layer's low-quality castle wall, created by the Earth Mages using Transform Stone to Mud and Sculpting Magic, was finally on the verge of collapse, despite the fact that the beastmen army had also lost many troops to the defending army and their defensive mechanisms.

"Die! You butchers!"

Reyne sliced through a beastman general's defenses with her silver longsword, piercing through his body and stealing away his life. She unhesitatingly kicked him down the castle wall as the beastman general's pitiful wails echoed out as he met his end.

"Your Highness Reyne!"

"Knights, clear this area and toss down all the beastmen corpses! Watch out for archers. The next attack wave will be here soon; hurry, hurry, hurry!"

Her youthful voice now contained an unmistakable regal bearing. The magical ability of battles in helping people mature was always astonishing, and after experiencing the bitter struggles of battle as well as the endless amounts of blood and sacrifice, the cruel burden and responsibilities helped the new soldier Reyne to quickly mature. The current Reyne was already an experienced battlefield leader who could take charge by herself.

"Your Highness Reyne, all the beastmen's mammoths are on the attack now. The command center's order is to abandon the first castle wall and retreat to the inner layer!"

"Retreat? You're telling me to retreat? Just look at this battle and all those brave warriors who have sacrificed themselves already! We haven't even been able to retrieve their corpses yet, and you dare to tell me to retreat?"

The messenger was also very familiar with Reyne. Even though Reyne was angrily shouting at him, he was the sub-commander of Antuen; he knew that now wasn't the time to cower to her.

"You think I want to retreat? I f**king want to fight those beastmen bastards to the end as well! Our main forces have suffered and lost so much. The Earth Mages have depleted their mana and can't keep up with the speed of repairing the walls compared the beastmen in destroying them. If this keeps up and the beastmen break through our defenses, it'll be nothing but a meaningless slaughter. There's no other way but to retreat and guard the inner castle."

"Fine, you guys retreat. I shall show you once more the pride of the People of the Mist. Dimlet, is the Train King ready yet? If it takes any longer and isn't ready for combat, I'm going to cut off your head!"

"...It's currently undergoing a full self-checkup, and it'll be ready in five minutes. But it can't be used for any longer than ten minutes, or it'll self-destruct!"

"Ok, Borealis, toss down the Titan Warriors from a long distance! Help our allies stand firm."

When the beastmen's mammoths began their next attack, the castle walls were nearly knocked over by their heavy impacts as dense amounts of beastmen scaled the castle walls. Just as all the walls were entering their largest emergency situation yet, the Princess Knight finally gave the order for the Eastern Mist Communal Country to reveal its ace secret weapon.

The gigantic battleship began operating once more as its cargo hold opened up. What flew out along with its rockets were prototype Roland Titans. As experimental subjects, these Roland Titans had already completed their tasks for history and would end the final moments of their lives explosively on the battlefield.

Boom!

Five titans landed directly on top of the beastmen that were in the process of scaling the castle walls. The beastmen stared in amazement at the gigantic beings before them. Even the tallest and strongest Elephantmen reached only the shins of these titans, and they were completely unable to be of any threat to the steel titans at all since they were unable to carry any heavy weaponry.

The crazed steel titans stomped with their feet and slapped with their hands. These accidental products of the Underground World finally revealed their true natures as heartless war machines!

"You beasts! This is for my son who wasn’t even ten years old!"

A furious mecha smashed the beastmen in front of him to pieces.

Inside the cockpit was a furious volunteer pilot who was doing his best with the complicated controls of the mecha. Inside a pendant around his neck was his family’s portrait, but he was the only one alive now. Even he himself had lost his left foot, so this was the only method by which he could take revenge for his hometown.

A red warning light within the cockpit began flashing. From the very beginning, this titan mecha was at the end of its time, and overloading it had given it astonishing battle power, but it also turned it into a super explosive that was in danger of exploding at any moment.

"Camut, hurry up and get out! It’s about to explode; activate your rocket chair already!"

He ignored the Borealis’ command center. He had just discovered a large centaur wielding a massive war pike while killing human soldiers. This centaur was a monster who was more than three meters tall, and each swing of his war pike would kill many human soldiers.

"Hamar! Hamar the Butcher! I finally found you!"

These easily spotted characteristics just happened to belong to

the butcher who had slaughtered his entire hometown.

The furious mecha pilot smashed every beastman in his way to pieces. Even when the beastmen climbed all over the mecha in swarms and the battle axes smashed onto the cockpit's door, he didn't slow down even a little bit.

However...

"Foolish hunk of metal! The weak humans can only rely on such useless things."

Every beastman tribe leader was at least of Legend-rank strength or higher. Hamar was famed even among the tribe leaders for his combat strength, so there was no way he would be easily dealt with. When he jumped, Hamar's height was even taller than the titan.

Slice!

With one swing of his war pike, the gigantic golden arc brought death along with the explosion of the cockpit and half the mecha.

Hamar didn't even intend on watching the explosion behind him and was only focusing on continuing his slaughter, but he didn't expect the already fallen mecha to reach out with its only remaining hand and clutch onto him.

The prideful centaur tribe leader began roaring in anger. His

frightfully powerful strength caused even the steel arm to start shaking.

"Only weaklings need to rely on these foolish objects, while we beastmen can stand on top of the world with only our bodies! We are the high-class species that deserves to be at the center of the world!"

In the demolished cockpit, the blood-covered Camut was still biting on to the control lever with his only remaining tooth. He was also smiling while the gigantic centaur made fun of him condescendingly because he could see the red warning light that indicated that the Roland Titan's engine was right at the limit of exploding.

"Really? Heh, heh, then see the weak human race's willpower for yourself... See you soon in heaven, Elsa, Nini! Your papa's taking revenge for you!"

Camut opened his mouth, which was filled with blood and broken teeth, and viciously pressed his chin against a red button. Finally, a red explosion covered everything as a mushroom cloud rose up by the castle wall.

"Impossible..."

That was the last word that the haughty centaur warrior had said. The weak human had used his own life to prove his bravery. At the very least, they both died together.

"The tribe leader Hamar has died in battle! The Centaur Tribe is beginning to flee!"

"The tribe leader Barthlo has died in battle!" The beastmen's attack on the northern castle door failed, and their siege weapons were destroyed. Their reinforcements were no longer able to press the attack.

"The tribe leader Elosion has died in battle! Both the northern and southern attacks on the castle have failed!"

"The strategist Wen has died in battle at the southern castle door!"

For the tribe leaders, who were still in the midst of patching up their own injuries, every single news of a tribe leader's death was like a lightning strike on a clear day. But what could they say? Could they blame their fellow tribe leaders and point fingers by saying they were nothing but words? Honestly, it was difficult enough for the remaining tribe leaders to survive the field of battle against the maniacally resisting humans. If one of those terrifying red mushroom clouds exploded near them... heh, wasn't the mighty Hamar a perfect example?

"Hamar, what a pity. Treat his family well."

After a long silence, Amon could only give his condolences as he shook his head and continued cleaning his weapons. Now wasn't the time for needless sympathy; who knew if he would be the next one?

"Camut, what a pity. Treat his family well... Oh, he has no more family left? Then let’s put his hometown’s reconstruction at the top of the list for cities to be reconstructed."

At the same time as Amon, Reyne could only sigh and give her own condolences when she learned that only two out of the five titan pilots had returned alive. Camut didn’t even attempt to activate his rocket chair for an escape.

"Dimlet! Are you still not f**king ready yet? I’m going to shoot you out of a Gnome Cannon if you aren’t ready!"

"It’s ready! You definitely can’t let the Train King overheat! Otherwise, we’re the ones that will explode! Its energy source has thirty times the power of the Roland Titans! The entire castle wall will collapse from the explosion!"

The floating battleship finally landed and opened up its cargo door to allow an even more terrifying war machine to walk out. Just its appearance caused every beastman warrior to tremble in fear.

"What kind of monster is this? Those East Mist humans are insane!"

Chapter 183: Princess Knight

The maxims of battle dictated that practical functions were the most important on the battlefield. Something like a beautiful outer appearance wasn’t even worth considering.

While a humanoid mecha may seem awesome, its attack methods were actually rather simple. Since it imitated the attack patterns of a human, it was easy to predict and defend against, and since it needed to maintain its balance while walking, a great amount of development resources and parts would be spent on balancing the mecha.

This was doubtlessly a critical amount of waste, especially when the technology was still immature.

But then what type of combat mecha was the most efficient?

"It needs plenty of space for firearms, so the best way is to have many individual sections that can contain more weapons and parts!"

"Let’s abandon the walking mechanism that’s just a waste of resources. As long as it can kill, it’s fine even if it crawls on the ground."

"I feel that it needs as many individual parts as possible so that it can even let go of broken parts, reorganize itself, and still be able to do battle. This way, our logistical ability will go up an entire other level."

"If the enemy consists of mages, then the larger the combat mechanism, the bigger the target. This absolutely can’t be too big, yep, the most important part is to not be too tall."

After gathering each other’s opinions, the maniacal engineers abandoned all common sense and created this fearsome combat beast—Train King, prototype zero!

The name undoubtedly came from Roland. The shape of the connections between its parts reminded Roland of a train.

And now, what currently appeared in front of everyone was such a metallic monster. This metallic monster had many parts connected to each other just like train carriages, and its metallic legs, which imitated that of insects, firmly pierced into the ground. This giant centipede-like metallic monster attracted everyone’s attention the moment it appeared.

"Train? Isn’t it just a centipede?" Hemet’s astonishment was virtually identical to Roland’s the first time he saw it. Yep, when this combat mecha was constructed in reality based on its blueprint, its original train-shaped outer appearance became more like that of a metallic insect. It was basically a metallic centipede prancing about on the battlefield!

And so, taking into consideration the possibilities on the battlefield, its designers, who had already abandoned all common sense and aesthetics, were also inspired from this. They directly abandoned the inconvenient method of using wheels and instead

gave it metallic blades as feet, which would be more suitable for a wider variety of terrain types. Each "foot" was a blade that could attack by itself as the Train King’s entire body was filled with weapons from head to toe.

Hemet’s astonishment was soon received by a display of combat effectiveness. The centipede monster climbed past the castle wall at high speed while spraying flammable oil from pipes on both of its sides, and with a spark, all the castle walls it passed by turned into seas of fire.

Those seas of fire along its path caused the beastmen to begin shrieking in agony, but only when it reached its destination, stuck its metallic feet into the ground, and transformed into a steel barrier, did it show its true form.

All its train-carriage-resembling parts opened up to reveal the newest Gnome Cannons in each of them. As a divine artifact that belonged to the cult that believed in "as many cannons as possible," the Train King used its actions to show off what the phrase "more cannons equal more power" truly meant.

"Odd-numbered engineers! Fire your cannons!"

Boom! Boom!

The entire battlefield outside the western castle door transformed into a sea of fire. Countless beastmen were gifted explosions as each cannon shell landed.

But at the same time, the beastmen vanguard that was already on the castle wall was approaching the Train King. They wore vicious grins and let out angry roars as they intended to use their own fresh blood to battle with this hunk of steel. They wanted to let those weak humans know just what true and reliable strength was supposed to be.

They had the self-confidence that as long as they were able to get into close-combat range, the engineers controlling the cannons wouldn’t be an adversary at all. They only needed an instant to break this expensive toy into pieces.

But since Dimlet had a reputation for demonic intelligence, how could he possibly leave in such a glaring weakness?

"Close-combat mode, activate! Blades extend!"

In an instant, all the metallic feet of the centipede rose up again, as its sharp ends transformed into sharp blades for the purpose of slaying the enemy! The sharp blades then began spinning crazily at a high speed!

That wasn’t all...

"Even-numbered engineers, ignite your flamethrowers!"

This time, the train carriages opened up to reveal shocking amounts of high-powered flamethrowers operated by sweaty engineers who had been waiting for this precise moment.

"Fire! Maintain the flamethrowers for twenty seconds!"

"Ahhh!"

The flames that could shoot to a distance of several dozen meters created a corridor of despair. Although there were a few incredibly strong individual beastmen who made it past the flames, the rotating blades would unhesitatingly deliver a killing blow.

"Ahhh! Those damned humans..."

Now, the beastmen attackers were stuck between a rock and a hard place. Either they could be impaled on the blades or be turned into barbequed meat.

And killing was only one of the Train King's purposes. Its mega-long mechanical body itself was one of the best barriers and makeshift castle walls, so the incredibly fatigued defending army could finally find some time to breathe and rest.

After this movable steel wall started acting as a battlefield barrier and cleaned up everything before it, it took the opportunity to send out large amounts of scalding-hot steam through its ventilation pipes.

The Train King's energy consumption was far too heavy. Just a few short minutes caused all its parts and engines to overload and overheat, with engineers tossing cold water at the overheating

engines as an emergency cooling method.

The beastmen noticed this short cooling-off period. Just as they were hesitating about whether or not to charge forward again, an even scarier scene was awaiting them.

"Gun squads, fireball squads, prepare!"

The most despairing scene was now in front of them. The engineers lifted up their guns, and the magic swordsmen actually jumped on top of the Train King’s carriages and started preparing their magic. The brilliantly flashing fire birds started gathering numerous fireballs that perhaps weren’t all that high in level, but who would be able to dodge several hundred fireballs being fired at once?

Pew! Pew! Boom!

Every fireball and deadly gunshot added onto the beastmen’s despair as they faced this new generation’s firepower and technology. The short, approximately twenty-meter distance between them and the humans were akin to the difference between life and death, and the regret of "just one more step" accompanied them to their deaths.

The continuous explosion of each fireball drew all the attention on the battlefield as more and more areas were cleared of beastmen. As the rulers of the battlefield and with the mages gathering together, the deadly force was drastically improved.

Finally, the beastmen tribe leaders were unable to stand for this any longer.

Under the tribe leader Kagra’s lead, a large number of harpies covered the castle walls, resembling the clouds. Along with them was the dragon knight who had luckily escaped last time; the green dragon Osmanya and his Wolf Tribe Dragon Knight Rider Kakaji had returned. The beastmen army had gambled everything on this battle and sent out their few remaining aerial troops.

"Shoot down that dragon knight!"

If this combat beast had any other weaknesses apart from its unresolvable lack of ability to fight for an extended period of time, they would be that it was far too focused on ground units and that it lacked anti-air capabilities.

Reyne instantly figured out the weakness of the harpies. They lacked physical strength since most of their throwing spears were made of wood. Even though they could kill humans easily enough with wood spears, they lacked the ability to threaten the steel-bodied Train King. As for aerial spells? Did they really have the focus necessary for casting spells while flapping their wings and not falling out of the sky? If they actually had such skills, they might as well be archmages to begin with.

"That dragon knight’s the only threat; kill him!"

The current Princess Knight was no longer simply the commanding officer at the western castle door. Although she

hadn’t been promoted yet for her numerous accomplishments, battlefield achievements were far more effective than any rank or title on the battlefield. In truth, she was already the leading commander in charge of the entire Red Maple Castle defense line.

But currently, nobody was able to carry out her orders. That green dragon knight was far too cautious and flew so high in the air that no arrows or magic could reach him.

According to that dragon knight’s past tactics, whenever a combat situation got tense, he would attack in an aerial ambush, with his dragon’s poison mist being abnormally fatal. Perhaps his single efforts weren’t critical in affecting the overall combat situation, but he would definitely give serious blows to the defending army’s morale. This time, it was obvious that his target was the Train King.

It was also obvious that he intended to use the harpies as a smokescreen to create another opportunity for an ambush in the chaos.

All these days of battle had also inflicted heavy casualties upon the humans’ griffin knights. Those that could still fly were already participating in battle, as after so many days of warfare, both the sides were fighting based on mostly willpower and stamina.

"Argh!"

But this time, the green dragon knight’s ambush was blocked.

"Timier!"

That’s right, a gigantic bone dragon suddenly flew up from the castle and shot like a cannonball right at the green dragon, causing the green dragon to lose its balance in midair.

But immediately afterwards, the bone dragon that was riddled with injuries fell right back down again. As the overall aerial commander, Timier had always fought at the front of his soldiers and both he and his bone dragon were now in bad condition. Just making such an attack had taken all their effort.

But while that beastman dragon knight was still catching his balance, death came looking for him, as the Princess Knight was now behind him.

Although she was one of the few who had an aerial steed, Reyne wasn’t self-confident enough to believe that she could win a direct battle against such a strong dragon knight, but finding the right opportunity during battle for an ambush was one of her strongest skills.

"Die!"

There was no such thing as luck on the battlefield. The chaotic situation would always prove who was truly stronger or weaker. The dragon knight Kakaji didn’t even have time to turn around and see who it was before Reyne’s longsword came slashing down.

The head that went flying was dripping blood in midair and an expression of disbelief was frozen on its face. The powerful Kakaji died just like that with his eyes, which were glaring angrily, still filled with shock.

"Rargh!"

The young green dragon Osmanya started howling painfully as it discovered through the contract that its master had died and received its master's pain. But it didn't suffer for long, as Reyne's bloody hands pulled out the spear on her back and gathered a cyan colored aura. The Dragonslayer Spear from the Dragon Slayer Bastlar was then suddenly struck into the green dragon's head!

"Awoo!"

The green dragon howled pitifully as it helplessly flapped its wings, but its counter, the Dragonslayer Spear, kept piercing deeper into its brain, and it could only meet its unavoidable demise. With the dragon blood spraying everywhere, Reyne completed her own achievement of slaying a dragon!

"Dragon Slayer Reyne!"

"Princess Knight!"

In everyone's eyes, whenever the Northlands met with danger—just like countless times in history past—a young ruler stood up for their sakes.

The joyous cries of the human soldiers helped the young female knight completely shake off the impression of a delicate flower. Now, the Princess Knight's name was known to all as a true knight.

Reyne jumped back from the green dragon in midair and her Frozen Nightmare steed caught her. She herself could barely believe what was happening as she watched the green dragon fall out of the sky.

"Father, I did it! I'm no longer a useless flower princess; I can protect my own tribe and the Mist Country as well now."

For some inexplicable reason, Reyne suddenly thought of the man who wasn't on this battlefield at this moment.

"If he knew about this, would he praise me or lecture me on my recklessness?"

"I think that His Highness Roland would probably lecture you first, then nonchalantly find some reason to reward you. But, I doubt it's the type of reward that you want."

Her Frigid Nightmare's words caused Reyne to blush. She suddenly found how inconvenient it was for her mind to be connected to her Frigid Nightmare.

"Danger's coming! Be careful!"

There would always be inconveniences attached to being famous. Another dragon knight was attempting to ambush her, and even across all this distance, Reyne could feel the bone-piercing hatred.

But even Reyne didn't expect that her mouth would arc upwards in a smile with the danger right in front of her. She was licking her lips in anticipation and enjoying the stimulation from being on the verge of death in battle. She was enjoying this war.

But she was also filled with doubts in her heart at how she felt excited and more clearheaded for no apparent reason as the battle progressed. The beastmen's death cries would honestly make her feel pleasure in her heart, as if she was born for battle and this slaughter was helping her awaken her sleeping talent.

She enjoyed this place, she enjoyed hearing her enemies' cries, she enjoyed seeing fresh blood flow. That mysterious excitement made her feel like she was burning.

Even if all of that could be explained as the excitement of a newcomer to the battlefield, the fact that her own strength was obviously increasing could not.

"Forget it, let's stop thinking about it; it's a good thing anyways... That idiot over there—is the burning-hot oil still not ready? Toss it down to me and burn those beastmen to death!"

During the intermittent breaks between battle, the knights excitedly gossiped with each other about what they saw, admiring the fact that their princess was indeed a descendant of the Mist as

she changed so much in battle. But in the eyes of a few who showed concern, there were obvious changes in Reyne that weren't so apparent on the surface.

A blood-red light kept flickering in Reyne's eyes. The souls of the dead weren't able to enter the cycle of reincarnation, and were instead sucked into Reyne's body as they wailed before death. With Reyne's continuous "feeding," huge black wings that mortal eyes couldn't perceive grew larger and larger on her back.

In this darkness, there was one pair of worried eyes that looked at her. This person's expression was filled with an obvious hesitation. Perhaps it may be unnoticeable to other people, but those black wings were more obvious than anything else in Elisa's vision.

"She's also a demonic descendant? Damn it. Roland, it's just as you expected; Reyne is a demonic descendant as well. This is the worst possible outcome. Looking at her fierceness and natural talent in consuming souls, she has to be at the very least the descendant of a Demon Overlord. It's quite obvious now; both living descendants of the Mist are the descendants of Abyssal Prince Karwenz."

"Karwenz! What have you done?"

In a distant labyrinth, I roared out in anger as I was filled with rage from hearing this news, but my summoned spirit version of Karwenz only shook his head in innocence.

"What? I didn’t do anything! I’m just helping you attack people!"

Chapter 184: The Seal of the Four Elements

The harsh climate of the Northlands was overtaking the elves' territory. The originally warm temperature that was abnormal for the season clashed with the cold front and caused a natural reaction of thunderstorms, the like of which had never been witnessed in elven territory.

The rain fell in torrents, making it impossible for people to even see themselves. It was only natural that there would be many troubles in such an area, especially in one that was used to dry and comfortable weather. It suddenly experienced such a rainstorm, but this was actually just the beginning.

When the chilly grasp of winter staked its claim on this land, the torrential downpour transformed itself into life-threatening hailstorms and blizzards. After its natural climate had been twisted for thousands of years, the entire Elf Kingdom received the cruelest retribution from nature.

Unlike the other Northland countries, the elves had no ability or experience in withstanding the cold weather. They didn't have the necessary thick clothing and firewood supplies for defending against the cold, and solely relying on magical flames would make the mages quickly run out of their already short supply of mana.

The hail and snow made this winter a hundred times more difficult for the elves and their light clothing. They were now facing the cruelest test of their abilities; if the Elf Kingdom remained chaotic and didn't change in time, it was entirely possible that less than ten percent would survive nature's test.

And currently, the leaders of the elves didn’t have any time to pay attention to the preparations for the disastrous weather. On the increasingly cruel and frigid battlefield, an incredibly vicious internal battle was raging among the elves.

After imprisoning a prince and killing two generals, the king of Tassel Kingdom succeeded in grasping the commanding leadership position of the combined armies of four countries. Of course, it was impossible for him to deal with every detail of the chaotic situation, and there were still plenty who continued to plot his downfall.

"...It’s meaningless to think too much. If we don’t win this next battle, there won’t even be anything to think about."

Resolution was fine, but reality was brutal, and this battle was most definitely not going to be easy. Bad news arrived like snowflakes in succession right at the beginning itself.

"The Moonblade Squad was ambushed by the dark elves’ Bloodsword Squad and lost over half its members. It can no longer function."

"Our Pegasus Knights and Hippogryph Knights aren’t a match for the enemy’s black dragons at all! We need support from higher-tier aerial cavalry."

"Those accursed dark elves should have been exiled for ten thousand years! All their members are elites, damn it. We need

high-ranked mages! They can just ignore our acolyte mages' spells!"

"Archmage Maladis and all his disciples died to those damned dark elf assassins, and the other three countries' royal mages all refuse to participate in battle. We're being suppressed in magic by the enemy's priests and mages. We encountered a complete one-sided loss in terms of mage strength."

"Tell those mages to stop using low-level spells; did they forget about the dark elves' magic-resistant skin?"

Morale, numbers, battle preparation, battle equipment, and high-tier combat strength. The elves couldn't match up to the dark elves in any of these aspects, and compared to the dark elf armies that were well rested, the elven allied armies were fatigued from their long travels in the field. The elves were crushed right from the beginning of the battle.

Yet greater trouble still lay ahead of them.

"The second St. Lawrence army refuses to carry out your orders. They request to see their prince."

"The SemiGod Priest Samana wishes to meet with you. It's probably about the assassination of their general. Your Majesty Adrian, would you like to meet with him or refuse?"

Adrian hadn't even finished taking care of securing his own

position of power. Rumors were already spreading everywhere. If it weren't for the fact that this was an emergency situation, and that the elves were facing their mortal enemy on the battlefield, the other three countries' armies would likely have turned against his.

"Why can't you all understand? Do you think that I enjoy using these dirty methods, or that I wouldn't be heartbroken at Suana's sacrifice? She was my only precious baby daughter! Why did I sacrifice so much? I was doing it for the sake of all elves; why don't you idiots understand! Why?"

The furious Tassel Kingdom Elf King Adrian was shouting in his royal tent. He had already broken the various decorations and ornaments around the tent, but even after venting his anger, he could only watch blankly as the situation continued to worsen in front of him.

There were endless internal conflicts, a vast enemy army outside, and he was forced to the brink by both internal and external problems, but...

"I wasn't wrong; I definitely wasn't wrong! It's all those idiots' fault!"

Even now, he still believed that he hadn't made any mistakes. Suddenly, however, one of his closest retainers brought him a short message that caused his expression to change greatly. After a brief pause, he began laughing.

"If you all won’t fight with honor, then I’ll do the same. I’m doing everything for the sake of the elves; it’s all your fault for not understanding me. Don’t blame me even if we meet at the River Styx!"

…

"By the way, Roland, I recently fell in love with playing chess. That’s why I’m giving you a small present that I hope you’ll enjoy. — Karwenz"

I was shocked when Elisa suddenly sent me this message.

Apart from being shocked at its contents, I was more shocked at the source of the message. It was evident that Karwenz understood quite a lot about me through certain channels.

"Karwenz directly contacted your main body? He knows that you’re on my side? Are you still safe over there?"

"The side of Chaos is rather disorderly. More accurately speaking, apart from a few at the top, the others don’t have much interest in this Holy War. Of course, they’d be more than happy to have a go at slaughtering the upper dimension, but having them concentrate on plotting and separating allies from enemies is much too difficult for those demons with muscles for brains."

"Most of the demons are still currently preoccupied with fighting their own kin. Relax, I’m fine. Rather, since I just completed the

Will of the Abyss's direct task for me, I even have the possibility of raising my rank."

As they were of Chaos to begin with, it was only natural for the side of Chaos to not have any order or organization among themselves. The norm was for each Chaos leader to have their own faction, while demons ranked Baron and above had their own territories. This was just as expected, since this was the only reason for the strange balance between the sides of Chaos and Order, despite the fact that the number of Chaos Gods outnumbered the Order Gods two to one with the Chaos side's battle power far surpassing that of the Order side.

The strong would be the leaders. This was a maxim, but since they were strong already, why should they have to obediently listen and fight a war? To the Chaos side, internal struggles for personal benefits constituted the real prize.

Since that side still hadn't come looking for Elisa yet, that meant that she was still safe—at least for the time being. Even a demon prince like Karwenz wouldn't be able to declare battle against a female demon Earl without making any preparations. Elisa's words helped reassure me, but closer consideration of the message contents made it seem all the more difficult to comprehend.

"A small present? What could it be? Since the demon prince is personally involved and is bragging with such swaggering delight, it definitely won't be small. It's probably something that will turn the tide of the battle in the enemy's favor. There is some sort of problem..."

"The elves? Red Maple Castle? Antuen? Diffindor? Somewhere inland in the human territory?"

There were too many choices and possibilities for me to think about, but someone was unable to tolerate me any longer...

"Roland! Stop dazing off; we can’t hold on any longer!"

Alright, I suppose that’s true. Adam finally got tired of my antics and barked at me to remind me of the fact that we were in the midst of a difficult battle.

Currently, the gigantic black stone hulk in front of us had transformed himself into a heavily armored black battle scorpion, and he had buried his massive body directly into the earth. His single, viciously glaring eye was flickering with a dark green light, and those menacing stone spears of his were still searching for victims on the ground.

"...This guy is too ridiculous. Just how many times can he transform?"

Battling with Emordilorcan was an endless nightmare. Each time we became slightly accustomed to his combat style, just as we were about to gain a slight advantage, he would immediately transform again and attack anew.

A stone giant wielding a shield and sword, a high-speed flying stone eagle, a stone Sword Saint who brandished a dozen

lightning-fast weapons simultaneously, a stone guardian that was slow and strong—Emordilorcan used various different forms in succession against us. He could be said to be at the ultimate pinnacle of physical attacks.

"You tiny, short-lived creatures, I have experienced countless eras and battles, and have witnessed endless amounts of ferocious battle techniques. My special structure can imitate any combat technique imaginable, and my body will never fatigue! No matter how hard you try, you all shall still be defeated by me!"

Emordilorcan's heavy roar contained an indescribable emotion that sounded like frustration, as he was unable to defeat us even after such a long time in combat.

"Relax, my lovely mortal heroes, I can sense that the Dimensional Door is in the midst of closing and that his elemental power is beginning to weaken. He won't be able to resist for much longer! My powerful mortal allies, victory is right before us."

"At the very least, if I die, you all are coming with me!"

The two raging Elemental Gods gave me two completely contrasting depictions of their furious battle, but I knew that the truth wasn't how either of them described it. It wasn't true that Emordilorcan was about to be defeated like Camdian claimed, nor was it that Emordilorcan was truly undefeatable like he claimed.

The closing of the Elemental Door meant that Emordilorcan's investment in it had been entirely wasted, and he was indeed

currently weakening, but as the strongest and oldest existence among the four Elemental Gods, he was far from being pushed to his limit. This was definitely going to be a long, drawn-out battle, where any small mistake on our part might result in our deaths.

But some things were impossible to conceal. Every time Emordilorcan changed his form or took a blow, he would lose part of the earth element that made up his body. The current him was no longer able to take elemental power from the Dimensional Door, so he was destined to only become weaker and weaker.

We had suffered significantly on our side as well. As the main tank, Adam was battered all over, and the spirit versions of Karwenz and Roland had long since disappeared. It wasn't because the time limit was up—it was because they had been defeated.

The ironic part was that the spirit Karwenz had been attempting to protect the spirit Roland when he was crushed by a gigantic boulder, which had also caused the spirit Roland to automatically be recalled, while at the current moment Roland was currently frustrated about what to do about Karwenz.

"If I'm frustrated, let me make the others get in a bad mood as well. Maybe seeing others in a bad mood will help make me feel better."

I suddenly recalled a random sentence I had heard in my past life, causing me to suddenly speak up.

"Emordilorcan, are you truly proud of the fact that you can use so

many forms? The truly strong all have their own distinct style, but what's your style—just transforming all the time? Perhaps you should be called the Slime God instead of the Earth Elemental God."

"You coward that only knows how to talk a good fight! I shall definitely rip you apart!"

"Oh my, according to this reaction, I must be on the mark. Do you only know how to say these empty words? That's right, your Master Monk form was quite powerful, just which master did you imitate? I wonder if you have the confidence to defeat the real one? Could it be that you perhaps chose to imitate him because you couldn't defeat him?"

Emordilorcan's single remaining eye was emanating a bone-piercing killing intent, but judging from the fact that he didn't reply, it was apparent that I had touched a sore spot. The attacks of his stone scorpion form increased in ferocity.

"Hey, hey, stop adding oil to the fire; I'm the tank here!"

Adam was too good a tank—even Camdian was using Adam to block attacks. My "idling," though, was finally at an end as all my preparations were now in place.

"Activate, Seal of the Four Elements!"

The elements all countered each other—this was one of the

fundamental maxims of this world. The most powerful seal in this world was a spell array which imitated the bodies of the elementals themselves. As long as this seal activated, and the four elements within it began circulating, it would emulate a sealed world with no exit.

Since we were already aware that we were dealing with the Elemental Gods, we would, of course, be prepared. However, when Margaret had discovered this ancient seal in an archaic, old book, we had met with some small problems.

"To seal a powerful elemental or magical creature, we need to find three Elemental Power Sources that are equal level to it? Emordilorcan’s an Elemental God, so where are we supposed to find the other three Elemental Gods?"

Honestly, though, perhaps it was Emordilorcan’s unfortunate fate to be doomed. Coincidentally, we had quickly discovered the three keys we lacked.

"The Flame Seal of the Flame Sea Earl!"

Elisa, who had obtained the power of the Fire Elemental God, gave the source of her power to me. While it was the only source of God-rank fire elemental power we had, it was definitely a fire elemental power source on the same level as Emordilorcan’s.

"Sidunwar’s Ocean Bottle!"

The power of the Ancient Sea God Sidunwar was unimaginable, as even the Water Elemental God was only his wife and follower God. Even though the divine power residing within it wasn't much anymore, it was actually even more powerful than Emordilorcan's.

But the final key was rather troublesome. The Wind Elemental's power was quite challenging to obtain, and I had initially intended to make do with Adam's Titan Thunder. Now, however, we had a better option.

"Camdian, it's all up to you now. Help us complete the Seal of the Four Elements and send Emordilorcan to his grave!"

Chapter 185: The Earth Elemental God's Death

The numerous magical markings on the floor lit up, and the fixed tracks, which had been etched into the stone walls by the sword energy, were for its preparation. With the two elemental magical items prepared in their respective places, the entire stone cavern became flooded with light.

After hearing my proposal, Camdian's first reaction wasn't of praise or happiness. His eyes, which were flickering with streaks of lightning, stared at me with such an obvious panic that I instantly understood.

"Relax, we're allies. How could I possibly seal you? Besides, I would need God-rank Earth Elemental power in order to seal you; where would I get that from?"

Camdian turned to look at his mortal enemy. His meaning was obvious; wasn't Emordilorcan right before us a perfect source? He definitely had God-rank Earth Elemental power in him.

"Sealing two Elemental Gods at the same time? You overestimate me. If we had that level of power, we wouldn't have asked for your help. Do you think that we'd be foolish enough to ask you to seal yourself? How illogical!"

Okay, I tried everything I could and swore on every oath I could think of. After considered the fact that this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for him, Camdian managed to nod and agree

in the end. And while I was convincing him, poor Adam was being beaten up by the furious Emordilorcan.

No, it should be said that Emordilorcan was trying to escape, but our primary tank was sticking too close to him—it was as if Adam was a ghost haunting Emordilorcan and annoying him at every step. Since we'd already reached this point, though, how could we possibly let him escape?

And, to be honest, when all the magical markings in this location lit up, he had already lost the ability to escape.

When Camdian, prepared the final key for me and gave me a transformed Thunder Tear with apparent hesitation, a clear sound rang out that was rather uncomfortable to our senses. And as it rang out, the entire space began to transform into a forceful dimension.

After the three God-rank elemental items synchronized with each other, Emordilorcan was trapped in the middle of the triangle formation they formed. His Elemental Heart was currently synchronizing with the other three elemental items, creating a self-circulating elemental pocket dimension within.

According to the explanation in the ancient scroll, this seal merely borrowed the basic structure of the elemental world. For the lives of elementals, their structures were their foundations; it constituted a basic instinct just like breathing. It was completely unavoidable, unstoppable, and even irresistible for them!

That was also why Camdian had been so terrified. If we wanted to take this chance and seal him, it would definitely be possible. Needless to say, extra preparations were never wrong, and I was indeed prepared with a backup plan to seal him as well.

But, of course, there was no need to make him into our enemy now. If it weren't for his help, we wouldn’t have been able to stall Emordilorcan for such an extended period of time, but scaring the Wind Elemental God would be beneficial for our future cooperation. If he wanted to betray us in the future for some personal benefits, he would, at the very least, consider the potential consequences.

Okay, I digress. All the magical markings were lighting up, and the naturally synchronizing elemental forces were creating a self-contained new world of its own. Now that it’s come to this, I felt somewhat sad to lose two God-rank elemental items, and I was even more depressed at not having finished my system’s missions—but it was all definitely worth it. At the very least, I was unable to think that Emordilorcan would be able to do anything else anymore.

As for any losses to Camdian? Who cared; he deserved it. It was his own fault for following us.

"Emordilorcan! Such a day has come to you as well; I’ve finally witnessed this day! Allow me to watch you be sealed."

However, judging from Camdian’s jeers, I knew that I had overthought. As long as he could defeat Emordilorcan, no matter what price he paid, it was obvious that Camdian was willing.

It was then, however, that Emordilorcan broke out laughing.

"...You all want to seal me? Dream on! Even if I die, I won't let you off easily!"

That familiar, furious laughter caused me to recall certain existences, such as those gnomes that were forced to the limit by city officials, or those gnomes who were forced by their debts into not even caring for their lives, or those gnomes who liked to gamble money on explosive barrels.

That was why, in the very next instant, I pulled Adam in front of me and proceeded to hide behind Camdian's back.

"You intend to push me into the fire again?"

Okay, should I say that he's already gotten to me doing this to him? Even though he was complaining aloud, he didn't move at all, perfectly fulfilling his duty as a tank.

Boom!

Right as Emordilorcan finished speaking, a tremendous explosion occurred, caused the entire labyrinth to begin collapsing. The duststorm from the explosion made it difficult to see anything, and the massive wind and stone shards caused Adam to wail in pain!

"I knew you didn’t have any good intentions; always using me as your shield!"

Cough, I ignored that guy who always habitually complained as I turned my attention to the Wind Elemental God before me.

"Is Emordilorcan dead?"

"According to how you mortals would say, his body and soul have both been destroyed, so you could say he is dead. For us Elemental Gods, he probably just returned to the Earth Elemental Plane. However, for him to have committed suicide by exploding his own physical body would take him at least one or two hundred years to return to his original power. It won’t mean anything by then when he finally returns."

The cackling Camdian transformed into humanoid form, with absolute delight plastered on his face at having killed his mortal enemy. It was worth any price since he was now one step closer to being the top of all elementals.

I nodded without saying much else, while I carefully recovered the four God-rank elemental items.

Four? Yep, four; apart from the Ocean’s Bottle and the Emblem of Fire, Camdian’s Thunder Tear and Emordilorcan’s gray-colored Earth Elemental Heart were also recovered by me.

After seeing these God-rank elemental items, Camdian seemed to

want to say something, but I shook them at him and pointed to the magical markings on the ground that were beginning to dim. It was obvious what I meant.

‘It’ll be quite easy to use this magical seal again; would you like to try it? Or, do you intend to explode yourself just like Emordilorcan?’

Okay, I could only think that to myself, but judging by how icy Camdian’s expression had turned, it was obvious that he understood my threat.

Traitors could never be trustworthy. If he could betray someone for personal benefits one time, he could betray another for even greater personal benefits a second time. From the very start, I had been prepared against Camdian.

"Alright, my lord Camdian, could you please take us out of here?"

Yet sometimes, even if you knew, in your heart, that you had a grudge against someone, it was better not to have the relationship sour out in the open. That way, you could still act as allies on the surface. In my past world, didn’t the leaders of each major country, who each had legendary weapons called nukes, still smile and greet each other politely whenever they met each other in person?

"Of course, I’m never stingy towards my allies. Come ride on me, my friends."

And so, Camdian transformed into a whirlwind and effortlessly took us out of the labyrinth. Above ground, near the entrance of the labyrinth, we met with Margaret, who had been waiting for us for a long while. She breathed an obvious sigh of relief upon noticing our arrival.

"Milord, Margaret used a teleport spell to help us escape. Unfortunately, she was unable to get a lock on your coordinates, so she was unable to support you. But since you came out successfully as she said you would, that must mean you have achieved victory."

I nodded as I took out the Earth Elemental Heart, producing deafening cheers from the knights. Even if the collapsing earth elemental labyrinth could act as evidence for Emordilorcan's defeat, only actual evidence of his defeat could release the pressure from everyone's minds.

"Good job. Without you guys closing the Earth Elemental Door, we wouldn't have been able to achieve victory. I shall reward you all after we return."

However, everyone reacted strangely to my praise. They all glanced at each other awkwardly, as if they had something to say, yet nobody spoke up. It was Margaret who ended up explaining.

"It's not that easy to close an Elemental Door. If I wasn't careful enough, I could have exploded the entire labyrinth or sent us all to a different plane. We just temporarily cut Emordilorcan's connection to the Elemental Door, but that seemed to have been enough."

I was surprised to hear this, but I instantly gave a wry smile.

"Emordilorcan’s death was rather pitiful. If he had remained calmer, perhaps he could have seen through us, as not even Camdian could deal with him. Forget it; it’s already over. There’s no need to think too much about it. Then do we need to go down there one more time to close the Earth Elemental Door?"

Margaret smiled as she shook her head.

"That won’t be necessary. The Earth Elemental Door was being supplied by Emordilorcan’s divine power, and since he’s dead, it will collapse by itself."

I nodded and was just about to introduce Camdian to everyone when the Wind Elemental God decided that it was time to leave.

"My human allies, let’s have a good chat again after everything’s over."

His way of addressing us changed from ‘human insects,’ to ‘mortals,’ to ‘human allies’— for the Wind Elemental God to continually change was scary in its own way.

Nevertheless, since we had been successful and had the advantage over him, I wasn’t worried that he would play any tricks.

And just as I slightly relaxed and was about to heave a sigh of relief, my ring shook and brought a new battlefield message to me.

"Roland, a sudden extreme earthquake has occurred in the area, causing all of Red Maple Castle's walls to collapse. Defending it has become almost impossible; do you have any emergency ideas!"

Hearing this sudden call for help and the sounds of crying and shouting from the other side, I knew that the situation was now extremely unfavorable.

"...You guys want to seal me? Dream on! Even if I die, I won't let you off easy!"

I thought back to Emordilorcan's mysterious dying message, and I now realized that this was his true revenge.

"Margaret, you have the coordinates for Red Maple Castle, right? Could you teleport me there? You only need to teleport me."

At the same instant that Emordilorcan's physical body was destroyed, a stone shard in the Bloodaxe Tent had suddenly transformed into a shining ethereal giant.

As it walked, this ethereal giant kept decreasing in luminosity. Camdian's judgment had been correct; Emordilorcan had already been heading for death, and his current form was merely the final remnant of his soul.

From the very beginning, the Earth Elementals were Amon's Bloodaxe Tribe's allies, which was why Emordilorcan had cut off a small piece of his arm and transformed it into a stone shard for Amon to hold on to as the ace up their sleeve.

"In the final, critical moments of the battle you can summon my power, but remember, you're only allowed to summon me at the final critical moment! Otherwise, I'm going to take my anger out on you first!"

Currently, as he watched his divine power gradually diminish, Emordilorcan, who had temporarily returned to life in his last vessel, knew that he didn't have much time remaining.

"Damned humans, since I'm fated to die anyways, I'm going to pull you all down with me!"

Boom! Boom!

The incessant explosions caused substantial damages to the beastmen in the form of friendly fire, but no matter what, Emordilorcan aimed to self-destruct once more and take his final revenge.

"...Foolish humans, I, Emordilorcan, shall cause you all to tremble as you meet your deaths! Rage, oh earth, for I am your master! Pledge your loyalty to me and transform that damned castle wall to broken pieces under the fires of my rage!"

And that was how Emordilorcan finally lost his physical form once more and returned to the Earth Elemental Plane riddled with injuries, forced to hibernate there until the next Holy War. Yet his powerful final earthquake attack brought devastating destruction along with it.

Yet this was just the beginning. Countless hordes of earth elementals emerged from the ground, their target to destroy the enemy of the Earth Elemental God.

"Red Maple Castle’s defense line is under enormous stress!"

Chapter 186: Castle Defense

During the middle ages of my former world, fortresses and castle walls were considered the penultimate defenses of their time, but due to the eventual development of modern technology, they fell into disfavor and became nothing more than teardrops in history.

Aerial bombings, long-distance artillery, large-scale weapons of mass destruction, and iron tanks that could forcefully break through walls all caused these immovable barriers to become obsolete. That was why these historical places of legend, which had been so significant in wars of past, were opened to the public as scenic tourist spots in a relatively more peaceful era.

"The times will change, and with the emergence of new technology and species, the old maxims of battle will be nothing more than garbage. Even the strongest fortresses will become nothing more than scenic locations in the end."

I had always believed that. Even if the development of magic and technology caused many differences between this world and my previous one, with the people here not inventing weapons like tanks and air bombers, high-ranked air cavalry served a similar purpose. It could ignore castle walls and lob destructive weapons, and with the progress of the engineers' technology in this world, a magical mechanical monstrosity was possible already—since I had already based several magical mechanical monstrosities on the weapons from my previous world. As for weapons of mass destruction, weren't there already forbidden magic spells?

Even though few mages could use forbidden spells, and the ones

that dared to use them were even fewer, with the development of magic it didn't seem impossible for strong attack magic—that could affect even wars—to become commonplace. At least, I also based several insane magical weapons on ideas from my past world as well.

For instance, undead carrying biological viruses, slimes carrying radiation, flying aerial fortresses of destruction, concealed biological poison gas weapons...

Cough, as a believer in peace, let's just seal those obviously anti-human ideas away until the next Armageddon. Now back to the main topic; according to my judgment, I came up with a conclusion that was against the norm of this world.

"In the future, wars will enter a new generation where castle walls are irrelevant."

That was why I took an entirely divergent path from the Sleuweir Kingdom, which had spent so many resources on building high-defense fortresses. No matter whether in the Underground of the past or in the East Mist Communal Country in the future, I unhesitatingly abandoned the system of castle wall defense, which takes much time and energy to build. Instead, I spent my resources on developing new technologies, soldier types, and so on for practical combat.

"Defensive battles with solid castle walls as the foundation might just become nothing more than garbage swept away in history during this Holy War."

But the time for change wasn’t now.

Fortresses and castles seemed to be passive defensive structures, but in the era of limited weaponry, they were critically important. Whether it be for facing the cavalry attacks of nomadic tribes that were like the wind or defending against the beasts that would hunt prey in the darkness of the night, fortresses and castles were irreplaceable tactical centers.

Defending the castle, and attacking a castle. This was the standard of countless battles. Not only were they obstacles in real life, but they were also mental protectors. The citizens living in the castle would definitely feel safe as they looked at the tall castle walls that offered them protection.

Even if the era had already begun to change, castle walls weren’t entirely outdated yet. Besides, humanity’s stubborn habits were difficult to change, as most people still believed that the castle wall’s destruction meant the loss of the battle.

Currently, the Red Maple defense line was being held entirely by the humans’ morale. If their morale suffered a heavy blow…

"It’s over! There’s no hope anymore; we’re all going to die!"

The person who was shouting out in such despair was no coward. It was coming from a general who had just killed dozens of beastmen in close combat, and he hadn’t even had time to treat his injuries yet. But his shouts were just like that of a useless deserting

soldier who didn’t want to become cannon fodder.

The castle walls weren’t entirely destroyed by the earthquake, but numerous large cracks in it allowed the beastmen to enter as they pleased to catch and hunt the humans. The castle walls were now meaningless.

"The castle walls are destroyed" is equal to "the battle is lost"—this was an iron maxim in the general’s mind, and the subsequent mental breakdown caused this brave warrior to begin wailing in despair.

There were many warriors similar to him. Even the most resolute of warriors instantly felt that the battle was already lost.

Battle out in the open against the beastmen who had the numerical advantage? Each individual human couldn’t match up to an individual beastman in strength already, and now they were also suppressed in terms of morale. This seemed suicidal.

Never underestimate the experience and wisdom of the long-lived Gods. Emordilorcan, who didn’t seem to be much of a thinker, was actually a sly one. Even as a participant in the Holy War, he had not only paid attention to everything that was occurring without directly intervening, but he also had done his best to understand the combat situation.

That was why he had viciously attacked the humans at their most significant weak spot in a critical time when he was destined to die. He knew that the fall of Red Maple Castle would cause the most

damage by far.

If Red Maple Castle fell, then there would be nothing else blocking the beastmen on the open fields, and it would definitely topple the balance of power between the two sides. The entire human allied army would be snowballed with continuous defeats, proceeding with the beastmen turning back, surrounding, and conquering Antuen. This would mean he would succeed in his revenge.

"Hurry up and run, the beastmen are coming!"

"I can’t stand it, we’ve stood here and fought them to this step already!"

Luckily, not everyone had abandoned hope. Perhaps a certain princess’s bravery seemed idiotic and gave many people headaches, but her personality of never surrendering until the very end was still quite popular.

The flag of the Mist had yet to fall, and the People of the Mist had experienced being pushed to the brink countless times. If even the slaughters of their cities couldn’t scare them, then how could a simple castle wall’s collapse scare them?

"Abandon the outer castle walls; everyone retreat to the inner city. The injured should go first, and whoever can still stand—block those bastards for me!"

Her roaring, angry voice, which still sounded quite young, sounded out from the top of the city, causing the warriors to wake up from their stupors and transmit her words. The dazed warriors soon began moving again.

"We've already endured countless bloodbaths; now's not the time to give up!"

They instantly abandoned the outer castle walls that were about to collapse. Most of the residents were in the inner city to begin with, and the most number of people that needed to be transferred were the injured. As for the defending soldiers below the collapsed castle walls, they had no spare time right now to clean up the mess of stone shards.

The more critical the situation, the higher the importance of an ace card.

Finally, the People of the Mist used their last trump card.

"Great Judgement!"

The God Equipment Book of Origins was activated, and a silver holy light instantly covered the entire city. As the beastmen were judged guilty of the crime of invasion, all the beastmen immediately felt a restriction to their freedom, and they suffered under invisible handcuffs, leg irons, weapon confiscations, and many other similar constraints.

Unfortunately, though, before Wumianzhe became the Guardian God of the Northlands, the Church of Law had no reason to interfere in this battle. The members of the Church of Law in Red Maple Castle consisted only of a few of Reyne's companions. There was minimal benefit gained from increasing their powers.

Yet even the effect of just restraining the enemy was enough. At a time like this, when every second was crucial, every minute that the beastmen were stalled would help more soldiers retreat to the inner city, where additional warriors were constructing new defensive structures.

"Notify the Borealis to attack with full firepower, we need aerial support... Overload the Train King, and give these damned beastmen a nice present!"

In this time of danger, Reyne showed her true leadership abilities. She didn't need a vast amount of wisdom or experience; as long as she could remain calm and think of ideas to deal with the situation, it would be enough to reassure everyone.

The chaos outside the western castle door was pacified under Reyne's leadership. As everyone watched regretfully, the overloaded Train King was tossed down the castle wall.

Boom!

Yet another mushroom cloud rose up on the battlefield.

The violent explosion sent even the entire castle door flying and vaporized those beastmen who were in the midst of crossing through it. The massive hole could even be used as a makeshift moat now, but everyone had been taken away by the floating airships to reconstruct new defensive structures in the inner city. They were now at a distance from the staggering castle walls.

Finally, the castle walls collapsed entirely, crushing a significant number of beastmen with it. At this time, Reyne was silently cursing the beastmen as she stood inside the floating airship as she gazed at the pile of rubble.

"Damned beastmen! I'm going to make sure your souls eternally struggle painfully in the River Styx... Wait, what did I just say? What is the River Styx?"

If she could look at herself in a mirror right now, Reyne would be even more shocked. The current Reyne had blood-red eyes, and the ethereal black wings on her back were beginning to materialize... Behind her, a ghostly black figure could be seen cackling maniacally.

"Haha, the seed has finally sprouted!"

...

Even though it was now late into the night, Antuen's mage guild was rather hectic.

In the field in front of the mage tower, hundreds of mages were busy etching innumerable magical runes into the ground. Large amounts of precious resources were being utilized, and dragon blood was being used for drawing the runes, which was a difficult and expensive material.

Their precious magical cup of flames was being used as lighting, and even the archmages were crouching on the ground, researching the incredibly rare magical rune arrays.

"Is it still not ready yet?"

"Do you think that mega-long-distance teleportation is supposed to be easy? Let me tell you, this precision has no difference from opening a door to another dimension. Just one small miscalculation will cause you to be tossed into another dimension. Sit there and don’t move; I need to calculate your weight."

The women passing by kept covering their mouths and snickering, and even the mages seemed to be trying their best not to laugh. It was only natural because my current appearance was a fresh humiliation for me.

I kept shivering due to the cold winds as I was only wearing a piece of underwear... Wait, wait! Let me first explain that I was not infected by Xueti!

"Stop shaking; how am I supposed to measure your weight like this? Oh my, you’re a bit overweight—a tad too heavy for my spell’s power. You still need to lose weight!"

I was currently shivering on top of a large balance that was originally used to measure the weight of magical ingredients. Strange dragon blood runes could be seen drawn all over my body.

How else was I supposed to lose some weight? I hesitatingly reached to my final piece of clothing, but seeing as how more and more spectators were gathering around me and that those two women were covering their eyes but secretly peeking at my bottom half, I found myself unable to remove my underwear.

"You're overweight by too much; just your underwear alone won't be enough. Let's shave off all your hair and your eyebrows."

The cold Margaret adjusted her glasses as she made a pragmatic—yet fatal—decision.

I have to shave everything? For some reason, I thought of the smooth shell of an egg.

"Having a smooth round head will be cool in the summer. In winter, you can even reflect the sunlight and obtain warmth that way. How nice, you can even save money on the lighting at nighttime, and that blinding Bullet of Light technique will even have double its power."

"Adam, stop finding such stupid reasons for me to become bald! If you want to reflect the sunlight, go do it yourself!"

Adam, who was watching from the side, was already rolling on the floor with laughter. Those ridiculous words could only be said by someone like him, or perhaps I should say that only he was such a boring person.

Yet my hemming and hawing was causing Margaret's expression to become icier and icier. Her displeasure was evident.

"Is there any other method?"

"Hand."

Instantly, I felt an ache in my heart. Cutting off my hand to decrease my weight; that seemed like the only method left to me.

After some hesitation, I withdrew the Roland Sacred Sword, and measured it against my hand for quite some time... before finally chucking the sword to Adam.

"Adam, do it for me. I'm afraid of pain!"

I shut my eyes and waited for quite a while, but I only heard the sounds of giggling. When I opened my eyes, I saw that Adam and Margaret were exchanging strange looks with each other.

"Stop wasting time, we don't have much time to spare! Hurry up with the sword; I can just find a priest later to reattach my hand... wait, why are you guys laughing?"

"Hahaha!"

Hearing this, Adam began laughing to the point that he had difficulty breathing, while Margaret readjusted her glasses.

"Why are you trying to cut your hand off? It’s not necessary, or were you intending to replace it with a hook and pretend to be a pirate captain?"

"Then what about the weight? Were you just having a joke on me! Can you teleport me already?"

"No, I never joke about anything related to magic." As always, Margaret wore a serious expression with that icy gaze of hers that would easily send chills through anyone’s heart. She was definitely serious. "Your current weight is a bit too much, but when I said ‘hand,’ I was referring to the Age Ring on your hand."

I instantly understood. If the current me was overweight by just a little, the younger me definitely wouldn’t be. Just removing the Age Ring would be enough.

"Why didn’t you tell me earlier? Did you just want to see me suffer? Hey, hey, wait a moment, I still have..."

I was quite angry as I hurriedly removed my ring, but before I could even articulate my complaints, Margaret’s staff swung downwards and the light of the teleportation spell enveloped me.

Now, I could only hurriedly pick up my Roland Sacred Sword and prepare myself as I helplessly accepted the fact that I had been pranked.

After I left, the field fell silent again. Adam suddenly spoke up.

"Was that fun?"

"Of course. This bastard actually forgot about me again; what a terrible friend. It’s annoying to be treated like a stranger."

The oracle, who always seemed so calm, actually had such a fiery, angry side to her. Immediately afterward, though, Margaret’s expression turned dark as she burst out laughing.

"Well, it’s not entirely his fault, so let’s just let the past be the past. And even if he forgot the past, we just have to create new memories. This should probably give him a deep impression of me."

Adam could only helplessly shake his head before turning to look southwards. The final critical battle involving the entire fate of the Northlands would take place in that direction.

"I wonder if Roland will be able to deal with things by himself. It won’t be easy."

"Hmph, he won’t be there by himself. Did you forget about Amelia and that cat? Why do you think they disappeared for so long? That Roland brat is ridiculously cautious; he must have left several trump cards up his sleeve that nobody knows about."

And just as she expected, right then and there, in the market district of Red Maple Castle, a certain witch had finished her final pre-combat preparations.

"Oh my, I ended up using so many resources; I should ask my junior to pay me back for all this later. My babies, it’s time to wake up and eat. Relax, this time your food isn’t going to be those zombies that are difficult to chew. Let’s play plants versus beastmen this time!"

Chapter 187: The Feast of Traitors

It was currently night. Everything was blanketed with heavy snowfall, making this frozen area even more difficult to withstand.

Even the strongest warrior would be unable to do anything without the sense of sight. Yet that wasn't the most critical negative aspect of this battlefield.

"It's so cold! How many can even live through such a night?"

Even the Bear Tribe Leader Londe, who seemed like an immovable ice mountain to his tribe members, was not as emotionless and made of iron as he appeared. After all, in the frigid winter of the Northlands, nighttime was more than ten degrees colder than the already chilly weather, and it was now reaching the point where one's breath would freeze immediately.

Even if the beastmen on the battlefield all had strong bodies, they were nevertheless living creatures. They still had to pay attention to the cold during the fierce battling, and it was so dark that they needed their battle horns and flags to lead them. The most difficult of all was the alleyway battles, where, in the darkness, some would treat the enemy knife-wielding assassins as their friends while slicing off their comrades' heads with their own axes...

In such a situation, according to the unwritten rules of combat in the north, both sides should have rested and come to a temporary truce to prevent the most unacceptable outcome of all—the outcome where one side won but there was nobody left to

celebrate.

Now, however, time was of the essence. Time equaled life itself; with each minute of hesitation, countless lives perished. Don’t even mention a temporary truce; right now, both sides wanted to hurl every last possible weapon at their enemy. Only the utter and complete destruction of the enemy would allow the existence of more survivors.

Londe could already imagine the scene—a beastman warrior would defeat an enemy with great difficulty, but his blood, pouring from his injuries, would freeze into ice. He would lose large amounts of blood as his steps would grow slower and slower before he finally froze to death beside the desolate corpse of his human opponent.

To Londe, these dark alleyways resembled the vicious beasts from the abyss with their mouths wide open, as they grinned maniacally while they waited for food to deliver themselves into their mouths.

Londe suddenly felt a chill run down his spine. He had an ominous premonition. Perhaps he wouldn’t live to see the next day’s rising sun.

This, however, wasn’t baseless at all. Londe’s sharp sixth sense had helped him overcome numerous life-and-death situations, but this time, he decided not to listen to his instinct’s warning.

"Don’t let the other tribes look down on our tribe’s sharp claw!

Everyone, press forward! We definitely can’t fall behind the others. Conquer this castle, and the honor of having destroyed the northern humans’ pride will be ours! The War God is protecting us! His heroic spirit shall keep spots aside for our warriors, and if we’re destined to die here, then let us meet each other again while feasting in the Hall of Valhalla!"

He said something he knew was impossible. Yet his warriors still answered his summons.

They silently drank some rich alcohol to help them defend against the cold, before resolutely stepping into the pitch-black battlefield, into the maw of the abyss from which there would be no return.

There was no hesitation and no cowardice. This war had no justice; there was nothing divine, nothing evil. Everyone was fighting for their own species, fighting for resources and land. They were fighting so that their own species wouldn’t have to fight in this cruel Holy War.

The castle wall was now meaningless. Every moment, at every place, warriors could be seen bleeding and fighting to the death. Human lives were now worthless. Humans were all flesh-and-blood mortals, after all; even a high-ranked battlefield commander may be killed at any moment from an ordinary shovel making its way through the crack of a house.

"We’ve lost contact with Kazlo’s tribe. Twenty minutes ago, we also lost contact with Kagra. The air cavalry is requesting to go to battle; this is their letter signed in blood!"

"Londe is requesting reinforcements; he lost contact with two squads under his command, and he’s met with an obstacle. Many of his warriors have gone missing. He needs more warriors to be able to surround the enemy."

"The Wolf King has been successful in advancing to the designated location as scheduled, but he’s already lost forty percent of his warriors, and he still refuses to retreat."

Each fresh dose of bad news caused Amon’s eyes to twitch. Humanity’s stubbornness had far surpassed their expectations, and the damned snow created an even worse meat grinder for the cruel battlefield.

"Tell the air cavalry to not stir up any trouble for me right now. If they go out now, they'll fall right back down immediately without even a hint of what hit them. Even if they die, they need to die a worthy death. Reinforcements? Let the newly created tribe go support Londe..."

The messenger hesitated for a moment and was about to question Amon when he ended up swallowing his words.

Newly created tribe? That was the tribe consisting of the tribes that had lost almost all their tribe members; all those beastmen were injured losers. They had lost their tribe leaders, their tribe names, and totems, which was why they had banded together and formed a new tribe.

Perhaps they weren't strong enough, but they were still the seeds of the future. But when even the seeds had to participate in battle, that was evidence of the dire straits the beastmen were in.

However, going against orders would be insubordination, and everybody understood that this was no time for hesitation and that the decisive would be victorious. Whoever gritted their teeth and stayed in this until the end would become the new ruler of this land, and now was the time to compete in who was willing to sacrifice more and had the stronger will.

The beastmen were enduring tremendous sacrifices, but for the humans, this war was even more difficult.

This chaotic battle with no rules was an all-around test of people's abilities. After the defending human army lost the advantage of the castle walls' defense, their losses were magnified many times, to double, triple, and even ten times their original rates.

"We have nowhere to retreat! Other than us, there are only the weaponless citizens! If we lose Red Maple Castle, there's no difference from losing the entire Northlands, and we'll become the most vilified humans in all of human history! All our ancestors will be shamed!"

The humans were unwilling to retreat even more than the beastmen. This defensive battle for them wouldn't allow them to withdraw one bit; they were guarding their homes!

The snow would eventually stop, and the sky would eventually get lighter. But at that time, who knew just how many humans could survive. The side that ended up with more survivors would definitely be the victor.

But this night wouldn’t pass quickly. The Frigid Nightmares were all riled up to move in the darkness.

"Ahhh!"

In a small alleyway, a beastman soldier only gave a shout of surprise before disappearing without a single trace.

In an adjacent alleyway, the exact same thing happened to his companions. With their shouts of surprise, they were also dragged into hell by the dark hands that suddenly reached out from below the ground.

"Ahhh!"

"Shamans, destroy this entire area for me!"

Londe was no longer able to watch his subordinates disappearing in succession. Under his command, the beastmen elemental shamans no longer tried conserving their already low mana, and they communicated with the elements to summon mighty thunderbolts and waves of earthquakes to flatten all the buildings in this entire area.

Of course, this helped reveal the true identity behind the beastmen soldiers' disappearance.

"Flowers?"

Right before them was a flower; in fact, it was an incredibly rare and valuable flower in the Northlands. Luckily, Londe had learned about such a flower in the south before. The flower stem and colorful petals matched the ones in his memory, but...

"Isn't this too huge!"

That's right, a flower garden could be seen before them. It was only that the flowers within it were rather abnormal. The magic spells that even destroyed all the buildings had zero effect on them, and the most common flowers among them were sunflowers that were growing larger and larger. They were at least the height of two humans, and these otherwise ordinary-seeming flowers were already more than three times taller than they should have been.

Even though these flowers before them were so beautiful, Londe, who had experienced hundreds of battles, sucked in a breath of cold air. The incredibly strange sight caused his sixth sense feel an indescribable amount of danger; it was to the point where he felt needles pricking his back. All he wanted was to run away.

"Hey, isn't that the missing soldier Katar? Those flowers are currently eating him!"

The moment these words were spoken, all the flowers suddenly turned around in unison. Those flowers actually had huge mouths growing on them, and they were currently chewing on the beastmen's missing soldiers as their fertilizer.

Each flower only had one huge mouth filled with teeth, and even though these flowers had no eyes, the beastmen quickly realized that the flowers had locked their targets—them. That was the instinct of prey that had met its predator.

"I'll be the rear vanguard!"

The incredibly abnormal scene sent chills through everyone's hearts, and Londe instantly gave his order.

But right at the next moment, his beastmen companions began wailing in agony. The vines on the ground had transformed into snakelike creatures as they hung the beastmen upside-down. The sunflowers opened their mouths wide and began devouring the unfortunate beastmen.

"King's Heavy Assault!"

The angrily roaring Bear Tribe Leader used his full force attack, with his two thick arms slamming into the ground with enough force to crush boulders. The wind from his attack ripped through the vines, helping create a gap in the plants' attacks as his God-rank ultimate attack destroyed everything before him. Even after his ultimate attack, though, he could discern nothing but his companions' deaths and heard only their cries of death.

"It’s alright. Hurry up, this place is far too abnormal. We need to leave here quickly." He was kneeling halfway to the ground and was recovering from the usage of his ultimate attack when he noticed the strong hints of despair on the faces of his tribe members. When he turned around to see what they were looking at, he finally realized the reason for his instincts to have been continuously screaming at him that something was wrong.

A small mountain, which was not that far away from them, was rapidly closing in, while the place he was standing on was sinking. When he took a closer look, he realized that that wasn’t a small mountain at all! It was obviously a frighteningly large mouth!

"We had been standing in this monster’s mouth all this time?"

His final sigh was now meaningless. The sky was still dark when the Piranha Plant King finally closed its mouth. With a loud "crunch," the Bear King Londe, who was only one rank below the Beastman King, perished just like that.

"Humility of the Seven Virtues! Perhaps I should call it by another name—Blood-Filled Piranha Plant Garden might be a bit more appropriate."

Since the worst possible situation had already come to pass, and the time previously agreed upon had come, the black cat, which was destined to bring misfortune, had also woken up from its deep slumber.

"Ha, what a bunch of lovely children. They just need so much blood to wake up, though. If it weren't for the availability of so much delicious blood, they definitely wouldn't have grown up this well."

Humility? Seven Virtues? The most unbelievable thing of all was that this witch, who gave everyone such a headache, could really create such a positive, auspicious object.

Humility wasn't a single plant; it was the name of an entire flower garden that consisted of uncountable piranha plants as its foundation. Its only trait, perhaps, was its incredibly high attack rating.

From the very beginning of this war, Amelia had planted a single seed under Red Maple Castle. As for how well this seed would mature depended on the amount of blood and souls it could feed on.

Roland's Pride Omar Mist was doubtlessly the strongest combat unit—he functioned at the level of an entire squad by himself. Amelia had wanted to target Omar's capabilities and had hence designed this piranha plant garden, which was also on the level of an entire squad. She had even given it a name that directly opposed that of the Seven Deadly Sins.

These piranha plants had special digestive chemicals that could easily melt through bones, and the garden also possessed Soul Grass, which could consume souls and render the undead mages' soul summoning spells useless. The amount of nutrition gained from the war would determine the final rank of the Piranha Plant

King, and the humongous devourer wasn’t supposed to be ready until after the end of the war.

Even without an endless amount of battles occurring, this war, without a doubt, gave Amelia’s "Humility" far too much nutrition. Several humongous devourers were already activated, and the dangerous flower garden had awakened itself and was waiting for new prey to deliver itself to its doorstep. The Bear King Londe’s death was just one among many.

"Oh my, it seems that after all this, you’re going to go up in the Calamity Rankings."

"Hmph. No matter how high up I go, I won’t surpass Roland. I’m still far from being as crazed, inhumane, and maniacal as he is."

Harloys really wanted to comment on why Amelia was filled with a regretful expression—it was as if she was sad that she couldn’t surpass him in the Calamity Rankings. Did Amelia and Roland really want to compete in who was more inhumane between the two of them?

"You really like to compete with him in everything; do you like him that much?"

"Who! Who did you say likes him? I hate him to death! Just wait until I receive information on his technology; I’m going to turn him into my fertilizer!"

The moment that Roland was brought up, the sly Amelia would become just like an elementary school student that had never even talked about romance before. Harloys still wanted to tease her a bit more when Amelia, who had been angrily jumping up and down, suddenly stopped and smiled as she gazed out the window.

"What is it?"

"How unexpected! It actually caught a big fish... but that berserk behemoth is still a bit of a problem. I'm going to deploy two small devourers there. Yep, let's not kill that behemoth off; it should be an incredibly rare undead material. Roland will definitely be delighted. Perhaps he'll even invite me to dissect it while it's living together with him. Ah, I'm really getting nostalgic about the past."

Okay, now that she was imagining things, Amelia smiled rather shyly, and Harloys didn't even know where to vent her comments.

Suddenly, however, Amelia's expression changed as she made an exclamation of shock.

"Devourers Number Two and Number Four were instantly killed! This feeling is from... the withering magic of nature magic, from those elves!"

Traitors could never be trusted—this was a maxim of the battlefield. If you could betray someone once, it was highly possible that you would betray another a second time if you were paid with even greater benefits.

No matter in whichever world's history, there would always be traitors who received high positions of power in the end, even if they could never gain true trust from the eventual victor.

The present from Karwenz?

It was just another letter, just like the one to Roland. However, the letter, which was personally sent by the Abyssal Prince Karwenz, was addressed to Lorci.

Okay then, there is no need to go into the details of the letter; it was basically just something like "We already know about the ideas you're having; didn't Roland simply promise that you could be the Main God of the Elves? We can give you a better deal. Since you anyways haven't openly betrayed us, if you return to the Chaos side, we won't care about your past transgressions, and we can even make the Elven Gods your subordinates." Well, it was something like that.

Of course, there was a threat at the end as well, reminding Lorci that her domain was in the Chaos Abyss and that she should be careful of the demon nobles organizing themselves and paying her a little visit. Something along those lines.

Lorci was, of course, the founder of the dark elves, but she was also the one they all imitated. In the dark elves' language, "foolishness" and "loyalty" were the same word; it is easy to imagine Lorci's personality from this itself.

And so Lorci, who had betrayed the Chaos side once already,

unhesitatingly betrayed the Order side now that she was promised an even greater prize.

Of course, this was only part of the reason. On a deeper level, Lorci wasn't satisfied with receiving the title of the Guardian God of the Northlands' Elves. She wanted to be the Guardian God of the entire Northlands, which was the title that Wumianzhe had just received.

In that case, unless she forced the humans out of the Northlands, she would be unable to become its real ruler. And so, right after achieving victory in internal conflict between the elves and the dark elves, she unhesitatingly gave the beastmen a gift when they needed it most.

Perhaps it should be said that since she already reached her goal in allying with us in the first place, and now that there was something she coveted even more right in front of her, she decided to turn on us and directly fight against us for what she wanted. Karwenz's letter was only an excuse to help her firm her resolve to betray once again.

Currently, Lorci's new pet who had her favor, the high-level nature mage who had just wiped out the two humongous devourers, was standing beside Amon, sighing, as he gazed at everything before him.

"I never expected that we would end back here again after going around."

"Hah, it’s just that the last time you were my ally, you still looked presentable. Now you’re my ally’s pet dog; you can only lick the bones she throws to you."

Amon Bloodaxe didn’t hold back at all as he taunted the elf mage in front of him. Amon truly looked down on this untrustworthy and dishonorable elf, especially since this person had even betrayed his own species, despite the fact that he was once a king.

Yep, this long-eared elf mage was indeed once King Adrian of Tassel Kingdom, but now, his skin color had become a grayish black, and he was no longer a regal moon elf. Instead, he belonged to a new species that dedicated themselves to Lorci—the fallen elves.

He used to look down on the beastmen in the past, but Adrian was now faced with Amon’s jeers. He could only turn around with a steely expression.

"I wasn’t wrong, I wasn’t wrong, this is all for the continuation of my species! I wasn’t wrong! I wasn’t wrong!"

It’s just that his fingernails had already begun to imperceptibly overtake his hands. He didn’t even notice the blood.

Chapter 188: Descent

"The Seal of Unlimited Courage."

It was terribly named, but this seal had left a significant mark on history, if only because it was Karwenz's Soul Imprint.

"As long as you resolutely believe you won't lose, you'll become stronger? Are you the hot-blooded main character type? Also, what's with this terrible naming sense of yours that sounds like it was plagiarized from somewhere? Should I help you come up with a new name?"

"No need; precedents indicate that if you come up with a name, it'll definitely be a forever humiliating one. I'm not that foolish."

Back then, Karwenz had answered me like that, but from a certain perspective, I wasn't wrong. This ability was indeed just like one that belonged to the main character of a legendary story.

Never giving up and becoming stronger and stronger as long as he didn't give up in his heart. When he was pushed to the brink, when fate forced him to face armies by himself—this would be the most suitable ability of all.

If this ability was possessed by an ordinary person, well, humans had limited courage and willpower so the rise in strength would be limited. But in the hands of Karwenz, who didn't know fear and difficulty, this was the mightiest Soul Imprint in the world.

"God rank? Great Demon Lord? Won’t they all die if I slice off their heads? As long as they can die and feel pain, what’s the difference?"

As he proclaimed such, Karwenz was maniacally laughing on the battlefield with a mountain of bloody corpses behind him. In front of that insane bringer of death, even the demons who never knew fear became afraid, even the beastmen who still had a War God protecting them became afraid, and even the human allied armies that were attacking the Mist Kingdom became afraid.

...

"Legend-rank beastmen? Behemoths? Won’t they all die if I slice off their heads? As long as they bleed and feel pain, how are they any different from ordinary humans?"

The young Princess Knight’s solitary figure could be seen on top of the fortification as she single-handedly blocked the beastmen’s charge; her silver armor was stained entirely red with the fresh blood of her enemies. Innumerable beastmen corpses surrounded her, making it troublesome to take even a step forward.

And right now, impaled on her longsword, was the corpse of the Wolf King! Inconceivably, not far away was the body of the beheaded behemoth.

"Next!"

The furious Princess Knight stood upright as she clutched on to her sword, while the beastmen warriors in front of her were beginning to hesitate about whether to retreat. Thirty minutes ago, this seemingly weak girl had shouted "Next!" and many beastmen warriors had rushed up to fight her, only to be slaughtered.

"Next!"

Twenty minutes ago, a behemoth caused earthquakes as it roared and rushed to her by itself; it had decided to crush the tiny human before it. Yet a single slice was all it took for her to crush its throat. It died a painful death.

"Next!"

Five minutes ago, the pride of the Wolf Tribe, the strongest of them all, the Wolf King Sostilo, had charged towards her along with his personal bodyguards. He was killed with a single swing of her sword.

"Next!"

When they heard the shout of the silver-armored Princess Knight once more, the brave beastmen finally retreated. While they weren’t afraid of sacrifice, the sacrifices had to, at least, be meaningful.

"Our princess! The world’s greatest princess!"

"Princess Knight, may you live forever!"

Reyne’s vision was currently blurry, and her blood was boiling. The cheering from behind her seemed to be distant, and only one thought was coursing through her mind.

"I need more power; I want more power!"

She was seeking more power within her soul—for her Soul Imprint.

When the light of the Incantation of Law Great Judgement lit up the entire city, the Gold-ranked Law Knight Reyne was promoted in rank by the Forbidden Spell, but this type of forced promotion shouldn’t have been able to aid her in creating a Soul Imprint.

But not only did she succeed in creating a Soul Imprint, it was a Soul Imprint of unimaginable strength—the Seal of Unlimited Courage!

Yep, Reyne’s Soul Imprint was exactly the same as Karwenz’s, in both name and power.

Logically speaking, this was supposed to be impossible. Soul Imprints were the accumulation of a person’s experience and understanding and constituted the foundation for their future growth. It was impossible for entirely identical Soul Imprints to

appear unless the two people had exactly the same lives, personalities, and souls.

Yet this theoretically impossible occurrence did indeed materialize, and something even more abnormal happened right afterward. After the effects of Great Judgement receded, Reyne's power level should have returned to normal, but the current Reyne did not only not return to the Gold rank, but her strength was actually increasing further.

"This definitely isn't an ordinary Legend's strength; perhaps not even divine warriors could be her opponents. Her battle experience and power level are perfect; I had never expected Princess Reyne to hide her power to such an extent!"

Many aspects went into a person's real combat power, such as experience, strength, combat wisdom, special abilities, and basic stats. An overall balance was exceedingly rare, yet not only were Reyne's basic stats growing at an astonishing rate but her combat experience and combat insticts—abilities that could only be accumulated over time—were also improving at a staggering speed.

"Oh, so continually swinging a sword like this must be the trick to becoming a Sword Saint. Identifying the location of the enemy's sight must be what Roland meant by anticipating the enemy's moves."

This type of growth had far surpassed the limits of human knowledge—it was as if Reyne's body already known all this to begin with and she had only forgotten it all. It seemed like her

memories were re-awakening.

Amid the numerous cheers, Elisa was the only one feeling doubtful. Everyone believed Reyne to be showing off her true power, but Elisa naturally knew the level that Reyne's strength was supposed to be. Instantaneous growth to this extent was unexplainable.

"The Wolf King Sostilo was a wolf tribe warrior almost at the Saint rank. He's much more difficult to deal with than a dragon or a behemoth, especially on the ground, and even he was slain in a single blow."

Elisa already had her guess as to what was happening. She was hesitating whether or not to give this body up and kill the Reyne before her, to prevent Karwenz's malicious plot from coming to fruition.

Reyne suddenly turned towards Elsia as if she had noticed Elisa's thoughts. The killing intent in Reyne's eyes caused Elisa to tremble, while her dark yellow-colored eyes could only be explained by one thing.

"...This feeling—it must be the Demon Prince!"

The black wings were materializing, and the black demon was already laughing in midair as all his preparations had finally completed.

With the descent of Karwenz's will, Reyne's own consciousness became hazier and hazier. She felt like she wanted to just have some sleep.

"...I must protect this city! This place is critical to the safety of the entire Northlands... my body is getting hotter and hotter, but I feel like I'm becoming stronger. Right, I want more power, more..."

"You want power? Do you want enough power to overcome any dire situation? Would you like strength so powerful that it can destroy everything?"

Through the haziness, Reyne heard an intimate voice from the will residing deep in her bloodline. Even though she was half-unconscious, Reyne gave her reply.

"...Can I become stronger if I obtain power? Brother Roland always calls me an idiot. Maybe I don't have the talent to become strong."

"No, don't look down on yourself. The strength of your bloodline is that of the strongest. You have the ability to become even stronger. No, it should be said that you were born with the ability to stand on top of the world! As long as you sign a contract with me, you'll have the most powerful strength in the world!"

"...No, no, forget it. Brother Roland has said before that if anyone mentions signing a contract, I should directly refuse. I shouldn't listen to any advertisers' sales pitches as they're all a bunch of

scammers that want to fool you into signing a contract. And I also think my current power level is enough..."

Even though her mind was already in a daze, her half-conscious reply caused Karwenz to be struck dumb. When he spoke up again, it was apparent that he was in a rush and was beginning to get angry and panic.

"As a descendant of the Mist, can't you have more of a backbone? With power, you can have everything! You can defeat those damned beastmen, you can protect your own people, you can become the hero of the world, you can control your own fate, you can have everything you want!"

"...Can I have Roland praise me? He always says I'm stupid, but Reyne isn't stupid at all."

Karwenz was stunned speechless again. His following statement was made out of helplessness.

"Yes, Roland will praise you. I promise."

"Okay, I'll sign the contract then."

With the agreement of her will, her bloodline transformed into the most robust connection of all, forming an indescribable link between the two souls. A tremendous will then descended upon this world.

"Oh my, it’s so difficult to come here."

Reyne—no—"Karwenz" made his first comment as he returned.

There is no such thing as coincidence—there is only the inevitable. Many things that seemed like coincidence were actually "well-prepared" plans.

Looking exactly like an ancestor after countless generations of genetic inheritance? How could that possibly be a coincidence?

From the very start, Reyne didn’t look like Roland but resembled Karwenz instead—that familiar figure was the result of the Abyssal Prince controlling his own bloodline from another plane. From the very start, Reyne was a vessel that Karwenz had prepared for himself!

From a certain standpoint, apart from the different gender, this body was genetically identical to the body that Karwenz had possessed when he was still a human. It was basically a magic clone, which was the best possible vessel for his soul.

"This body has grown to the Legend rank? This is much nicer than that Fismer’s body."

The Abyssal Prince was far too strong, and even the descent of his will was capable of distorting the world. His previous descent had only been for a few short minutes, but it had utterly destroyed Fismer’s body. If Karwenz wanted to control a physical body and

roam around freely in this plane, the body needed to reach certain specifications.

"With this Soul Imprint, there's no need to worry about combat strength, nor is there any need to worry about this body over-exceeding its physical capabilities and collapsing."

Having Reyne reach Legend rank in strength and awaken the exact same Soul Imprint constituted the most critical part of Karwenz's preparations. The Seal of Unlimited Courage would vastly increase the growth potential of this body, to the point where it could truly host a strong will such as his own.

In a way, Roland's efforts actually created the path for Karwenz's descent.

Reyne would not have reached the Gold rank so quickly if it weren't for that system's speed-growth mode. She consequently would not have benefited from the Incantation of Law Great Judgement to such an extent, and she wouldn't have entered the Legend rank at this point and fulfilled the requirement for Karwenz's will to descend upon her.

Right now, the black mist around "Reyne" was swallowed up, and "she" stood back up as the space around her distorted.

When "she" opened her eyes, the entire world suddenly changed. The snow stopped, and countless clouds shrouded the clear moonlight. Thunder and lightning began lashing out from the skies, and the snow mountain in the distance started trembling.

The fire on its mountaintop seemed to bear witness to its transformation into a volcano.

The hyperactive ground started trembling yet again with a new round of earthquakes. An untold number of birds and beasts escaped from their habitats—it was as if they were aware of the arrival of the apocalypse and that it would be difficult to escape with their lives.

Merely his existence could change the world. Even if this was only a vessel of will, it was power at the level of a True God.

At this moment, Karwenz pulled out his sword, lifted his head, and chuckled at the assassin coming at him from above.

"Roland, I said that we would meet each other really soon, but I bet you never thought it would be this soon."

The Roland Sacred Sword produced a lustrous arc in the air as the two silver swords viciously clashed against each other. The smiling "younger brother" provided a contrast to the naked older brother who started to shout angrily.

"Reyne, I told you not to believe the salesmen! Those combo deals are never good deals—they are just scams! See, now your voice is a man’s, but your body is still a woman’s—how disgusting! If you want to be a man, you can tell me; I have the secret medicine from the spring of a drowned man. It’s painless, harmless, has no dangerous side effects, and will take effect in just one second!"

Okay, after hearing a response that he definitely did not expect, Karwenz's smiling face changed to one of confusion.

This is a Ranma ¼ (Japanese manga series) reference, not an actual location. The water from the mystical spring of a drowned man can turn anyone into a man. In Ranma ¼, the main character falls into the spring of a drowned girl and turns into a girl.

Chapter 189: Brothers and Misunderstanding

It was as if time had left no traces on them at all and the wheel of fate had completed a full turn. After three hundred and seventy-seven years, on the very soil of their homeland, the two brothers had finally reunited.

Yet, unfortunately, I had no intention of being nostalgic about the past—my longsword clearly declared my intentions.

Before my silver Roland Sacred Sword could even approach him, however, Karwenz merely waved his hand, creating a terribly strong gust that blew me far away.

"There's such a great difference between us..."

Even though I had been expecting the disparity between us to be vast, being swatted away like a fly was still rather depressing.

Even if Karwenz's vessel was only at the Legend rank, that cheat-like Soul Imprint would limitlessly increase his power—it was too ridiculous; it allowed Karwenz to utilize power far surpassing that of his vessel. With his true power level—which was above a True God's—combined with an appropriate vessel, even a True God who risked death to descend to the mortal plane might not be enough to deal with him.

As for me, I had just reached the Silver rank—and this wasn't

even mentioning the fact that I had used up a significant amount of Fate Points to speedily increase my power to deal with Emordilorcan. I still needed quite some time to improve my foundation.

"Roland, have you still not realized the truth? Strength is everything. The current you is just like you in the past—pathetically weak. If I had as much power as today as in the past, I would never have ended up like that."

Karwenz was obviously proud as he bragged about his power. His attitude was exactly as it was in the past.

"...You're so old already; stop acting so immature."

But even though I was unsatisfied, I still returned the Roland Sacred Sword to its sheath. As for why? I already knew that I wouldn't be able to defeat him. Besides, I had many questions I wanted to ask him, and according to my understanding of him, he would probably respond to anything I asked.

"Is it really that fun to destroy the Mist Kingdom with the help of outsiders?"

This was just a test question, but Karwenz shrugged with a visible expression of indifference.

"Who cares? It has nothing to do with me and nor did I cause it. Did you think that I was the one behind it all? You were wrong."

Although I was rather surprised to hear this, it was still to be expected. Moreover, Karwenz was always one who looked down on lying, so if he said he wasn’t the one, then he was most likely telling the truth.

"The current two living royals of the Mist are both my descendants. For a demon, blood-related descendants are treasures that are difficult to come by. Perhaps my next backup vessel will have to come from them as well, so why would I kill them off? Honestly, without my interference, the East Mist Communal Country would have been destroyed several times over already."

"How’s that possible?"

"Two years ago, when the East Mist Communal Country was on the verge of destruction with enemies already invading the capital, they were still able to counterattack from the brink of destruction. Did you really think that little Reyne could accomplish that by herself?"

Karwenz rolled his eyes with a condescending expression. It appeared that he was displeased with the recent descendants of the Mist.

I was speechless after hearing this. I knew that Karwenz was referring to the previous beastmen attack.

At that time, the previous king had been killed, and Reyne had somehow managed to display exceptional talent in commanding

the army, chasing the beastmen for thousands of kilometers and winning the beautiful title of Princess Knight.

I asked the soldiers who had taken part back then. While the previous Reyne was indeed incredible, she had not personally fought in combat and had only deployed expert military strategic techniques coupled with an extraordinary anticipation of the enemy's moves to send the beastmen packing.

But, unfortunately, it seemed as though her genius was all used up as the her after that was only ordinary in performance.

Of course, I had also asked Reyne herself.

"Ah, how we won? I don't really know either. I felt like my head was really clear back then, and various demonic ideas came into my head one after the other, and I just followed the ideas and won. Brother Roland, am I really talented after all? I'm a genius, right?"

"Yes, you're really talented and a genius."

Back then, I could only woodenly nod my head in confusion.

Looking back on it now, though, the truth had been unknown to everyone. In reality, through his own bloodline, Karwenz had personally guided the Mist Army towards victory, giving Reyne the chance to become famous.

Of course, the Demon Prince wouldn't do something for nothing.

He probably did it for the sake of his vessel that he was now using.

"Then... what about the beastmen this time?"

"They came south by themselves to steal back their homeland. In their eyes, it's only natural—it's the will of their ancestors. It, of course, has nothing to do with me."

"...the elves?"

"That has even less to do with me. You know that I'm allergic to those long-ears who speak in such feminine voices. They went seeking death on their own; whose fault is that?"

"...Lorci?"

"About that, wasn't that just a small joke that I played on you? You wrote a letter to have her betray us, so I also wrote her a letter to have her betray you to see if I could make her betray someone again. I didn't expect that female spider to lack so much honor. Sigh, I even lost a lot of money gambling on her. Damn it; I underestimated the lack of morals of those damned dark elves."

"...The Earth Elemental Dimensional Door?"

"I admit I told my subordinates to do that in order to accomplish at least a little work for my boss. It counts as one of my future preparations. But that doesn't have anything to do with the Mist Kingdom, and it didn't matter if it succeeded or not since just the

revival of the Elemental Gods met the requirements of the will of the Chaos Abyss."

I was dumbstruck after listening to all this. Karwenz was so direct that he told me everything, but he was too direct—I didn't even know what to say anymore.

"Alright, it's so difficult for us brothers to meet up. How about finding a place for a drink?"

As he said so, "Karwenz," who was smiling rather strangely, gestured as if he was downing a cup, angering me even further. We were having so much difficulty fighting this war while this bastard was acting as if he was just playing a boring game, where it didn't matter if he won or lost as long as he had fun. This comparison naturally made me furious.

"Fine, I only have one more question I want to ask you... what's with all these descendants of yours in this plane? Just what plot do you have?"

"Plot? Isn't that underhanded tactic your favorite? If I want something, I'll just take it by force. The current Elemental Tide's density is insufficient, so let's just talk about the main topic later. I'll plant some seeds, and when they sprout, I can borrow a vessel to come have some fun in the mortal plane. Besides, how could these small fights before the main battle possibly have anything to do with me? I am a veteran of the Chaos Abyss; it's below me to interfere in such a low-level battle. Relax, for the time being, I have no interest in any of the countries here. The best-tasting wine should always be saved for last. Perhaps we'll fight in the end, but

definitely not now."

Karwenz's words undoubtedly infuriated me. He really was treating this like a game. The Holy War had just begun, and the truly powerful existences were unable to descend to the mortal plane. So his words did have their own logic to them, but his attitude of not caring either way made me blow a fuse.

"As for those descendants of mine; isn't it normal? You're so old already, but you're still a virgin—isn't that a little strange for a guy? Ah, I shouldn't have said that—sorry, sorry, it wasn't on purpose!"

Karwenz chuckled strangely as he gave an obviously insincere apology. He really knew how to get on my nerves.

"What's with being a virgin man! If virgin girls are pure and beautiful, then why can't there be pure and kind virgin men? This is the ugliest form of sexual discrimination, this is completely unreasonable logic! I strongly request for equality between male and female virgins! There's no fundamental difference, but why is there such a huge contrast in treatment!"

If it weren't for the fact that I was trying my best to remain serious, perhaps I would already be raging. It's been so many years now, and I thought back to how we looked exactly the same back then. I had a higher position, and I was the more handsome one, but I still had a slightly worse luck with women... fine, fine, don't slap my face, I admit that my luck was much worse! But that doesn't mean that what he said—about an almost four-hundred-year-old virgin male being strange—was true!

Karwenz shrugged. He probably understood my fits of craziness better than anyone else, and he knew that ignoring me was best.

"If it weren't for my assistance, then that Charles brat wouldn't have been able to successfully build his country. From a certain standpoint, I worked even harder than you. Our descendants can take care of themselves, and I didn't intend to meddle in their lives. But providing a vessel that can help me descend and have fun in the mortal plane is a price and duty that they must pay."

Apart from the fact that Karwenz just wanted to have fun, if there truly was a plot of some sort, it probably involved harvesting the seeds that he already planted.

"What? What daydreams are you having there? Leave Reyne's body behind, and I won't care about anything else!"

I finally found an excuse to vent my displeasure as I lifted my sword again and blocked him.

Karwenz had all sorts of reasons that made it seem like he was completely disinterested in the current world. Yet how could I possibly let the Demon Prince just roam freely?

"What, do you think you can stop me?"

Karwenz curled his lip disdainfully. He had instantly discerned my actual power level. I doubt I would be able to harm him even if

he stood still and allowed me to hack at him.

"What about if you add me?"

Elisa's voice rang out from behind us. A flame dragon was twisting itself around the right arm of the Flame Sea Marchioness, while her left was covered by a patch of frost. Elisa had already partially unsealed herself when Roland had appeared and was now ready to go all out at any time.

"Marchioness Elisa? Hey, hey, don't be so serious, I really am here just for sightseeing. If you use your full force, my vessel won't be able to take the blow, and I'll have to return to the Chaos Abyss. But then it will be the end of the descendants of the Mist."

"Relax, if there are no more descendants of the Mist, then I'll do my best to give birth to a few more. My ideal family consists of one son and two daughters. My dear Roland, do you think three children are enough? If not, I can consider giving birth to a few more."

Elisa continued to unseal herself as she smiled ever so sweetly while saying such seductive words. One of her eyes was a red ruby gem while her other had transformed into a deep blue icy sapphire. Right now, she had almost completely unsealed herself, and Elisa was prepared to use a single attack to annihilate everything.

In her mind, the Demon Prince Karwenz was far too dangerous a threat to Roland. In that case, even if she destroyed her own physical body, she would give it her all and take Karwenz back to

the Chaos Abyss together with her!

But I blocked her from doing so. I had a better option available to me.

"Do you see this sword? Do you know its use? If you know it, then be obedient, toss down your weapon, and surrender!"

"Heroic spirit summoning? It’s limited only to Mist royalty, but even if you summon the first Mist King, I won’t be afraid—wait, do you intend to summon who I think you are?"

When mentioning that king, even Karwenz, who wasn’t afraid of anything or anyone, began to show signs of panic.

"Yep, I intend to summon that ancient king from four hundred years ago! He’s definitely the only one who can counter you! In front of his grand power, even you, Karwenz, will be nothing more than a weak child!"

"He’s also your counter! Stop it already; this is a battle with no winners! The result will be a loss for both of us!"

"Hmph, so what if I lose together with you? It’s fine as long as you don’t have it easy! Winners in life should die, popular men should all die! Summoning the king!"

A formless wheel began spinning in midair, and even though it was clearly supposed to be a random summoning of a heroic spirit,

I could somehow sense that the king who would answer the summons to come here would definitely be a certain person.

"The descendant of the Mist, Bartholod, may perhaps not be the strongest of all the kings, and his military prowess and combat strategy may only be considered average, but Karwenz, he's definitely your greatest weakness, because..."

"I'm your father."

Yep, the middle-aged bearded man wearing the black cape was our father and the only person who could possibly rein Karwenz in.

"Karwenz! What are you doing? Why do you have a bosom and curves now—are you supposed to be male or female?"

Karwenz wore a dazed expression. This was such a familiar reaction, I suppose; it was to be expected of father and son. From the very start, they would never use their sharp observational skills to focus on the correct, important things.

Yet even as I was snickering, I became the next victim.

"Roland, where's your clothing? Since when did you start strutting around naked? How many times have I said so—as royalty, proper etiquette is more important than anything! Just look at you—you've even tattooed yourself! What's with those strange markings on your body?"

At this moment, I finally recalled that I was still naked—no wonder my lower half had felt so cold when the chilly wind had blown past!

"Roland, I told you this wouldn’t be good for either of us! When this old guy begins lecturing, he won’t stop for at least two hours!"

"Hmph, so what? It’s fine with me."

Alright, to be honest, I was having a headache as well from listening to his nostalgic rants. But what else could I do apart from tolerating it?

The next moment, however, Karwenz vanished in a puff of smoke. Without a doubt, he had escaped.

"Honestly, it isn’t fun at all anymore with that old guy coming out. I’m going to fulfill the terms of my contract with Reyne first before coming back to visit you to reminisce about the good old times."

I had shot myself in the foot yet again; I was forced to face my old father’s angry ranting by myself... but from a certain perspective, my "strategy" had worked, since Karwenz had retreated in the face of our father.

Right now, on the Borealis’ magic map, the symbol that represented Reyne could be seen rushing out of the city.

"Oh my, you want Roland to praise you? Just how much do I have to do to obtain his praise and fulfill this contract? What a troublesome junior!"

A woman who holds the rank of a marquess is called a marchioness .

Chapter 190: Tassel

"The strong prey on the weak, and only the strong survive."

The main difference, perhaps, between the Order Goddess Astrya and the Chaos Goddess Cynthia was whether they agreed with this quote.

Astrya believed that personal strength was not the most important and that the weak and the strong could live together under the laws of the Gods. She believed that they would complement each other's weaknesses—this was her notion of a perfect society. Cynthia, however, believed in the competition between mortals for survival with only the strongest living on. Her notion of a perfect world was one where the best resources were provided to the mortals with the greatest potential.

The root of their enmity was this difference in their ideals, which had also made them develop their creations very differently.

The human society was an example for the side of Order. Most humans didn't have significant differences between themselves, and very few could survive without relying on society. Even the king would be unable to live without the farmer, and it was possible, perhaps, that if they actually competed in terms of strength alone, then the king, who was so widely venerated by the people, might not be able to defeat the farmer who wielded a hoe.

Humans, however, couldn't be considered the best representation of true Order—that label was given to the angels,

the creatures of the top level of Order.

Their future jobs were decided from their births, and for all their lives, they would progress on predetermined paths as they continued to work for the benefit of angel society. While such a community may seem perfect, it lacked flexibility. Without questions about the future, there would be a lack of expectancy and anticipation, and even the unemotional angels had quite a few problems; otherwise, there wouldn’t be existences in the lower planes that were known as the fallen angels.

The side of Chaos was completely opposite. Demons slew and devoured each other, and low-ranked demons followed the strict rule of the jungle—as long as they were powerful enough, they would receive a higher position. Everyone was always trying to climb up the ladder, and even though the bosses were not always considered to be smart, they were definitely strong.

"Weaklings should go die—the strong deserve everything. If I don’t have a good life, that’s because I’m not strong enough yet. It’s fine as long as I’m happy; who cares about anything else."

It was possible that this was all that ran through most demons’ heads. It was also why other intelligent species often ridiculed the demons as idiotic "muscleheads," but this wasn’t quite the truth.

High-ranked demons typically had at least two centuries of memories, and their accumulated experience gave them plenty of knowledge; in fact, they weren’t dumb at all, but they were just too lazy to use their brains. After all, they only ever needed to show brute force, and very few species were better than them at this.

"Idiot! Perhaps I can’t beat you in a debate, but I can just kill you."

Whenever a person tried to use reason and logic with a demon, those demons would merely deal with it in their own way. It was likely that you would be dead and no longer able to debate them afterward.

From a certain standpoint, the always immature Karwenz was quite compatible with the side of Chaos.

Becoming fallen and demonized wasn’t akin to brainwashing, so Karwenz still pretty much possessed the same personality of back then.

It was likely that he would only help his own descendants to create a country on a whim, and even the Mist Kingdom's destruction would completely follow the maxim of "only the strong surviving" that he believed in. He would probably only shrug and utter "how regrettable" before instantly forgetting about it.

As for him taking over Reyne’s mind and defeating the beastmen two years ago, that was likely only because of the upcoming Holy War and because he needed to protect Reyne’s body for his upcoming descent to the mortal plane.

For him to be able to take over Reyne’s body now, it was probably just like he said—"the seed has sprouted," and Reyne’s body could now host his will. He only came to see the sights.

I relaxed somewhat after figuring this out. After all, a person with the power level of a True God just idly roaming about would have far too much effect on the battlefield.

As long as Karwenz still cared even a little bit about our old ties, he wouldn't, at least, stand directly against us, and the old man's appearance would tie him down even more. After all, as long as he hadn't been brainwashed and controlled, not every prince was crazy enough to kill their father and destroy their own country.

In most cases, no matter how rebellious the child—even if, of course, that said child's abilities were already on par with that of a True God—he would still be instinctively afraid of his strict father from his childhood.

"Roland! Are you even listening to me? What were you even thinking going out like this? You are shaming all our ancestors! Your etiquette as a knight and royalty has all been wasted. You're also clearly the older brother; didn't I tell you to teach your younger brother well? Just how have you been teaching him? Karwenz didn't even discuss his gender change with you—why didn't you try to stop him..."

Fine then. Since Karwenz didn't care at all about leaving me behind as he escaped, the raging old man could only vent entirely at me. This lecturing that I hadn't received for over three hundred years made me feel nostalgic, yet it also made me be at a loss for how to react.

"Damn it, when the old man starts lecturing he won’t listen to any explanations at all. That bastard Karwenz left me to suffer here alone!"

At the same moment that Roland was having fun while immersed in his father’s "love," "Reyne" had exited the city and was considering how to fulfill the contract.

"So, what am I going to have to do to make Roland praise me?"

In a way, these vague contracts were the hardest to fulfill.

As a demon, Karwenz could easily break the terms of the contract. Countless souls had already lost everything after making deals with the lower planes, but he didn’t feel it right, as Reyne’s ancestor, to lie to his own descendant. Besides, Karwenz intended to stay in this body for an extended period of time, and having a good relationship with the host was quite necessary for him.

"Okay, I’ll just slightly put in some effort and treat it as the rental fee for this body. I’ve decided that it’s going to be you, Lorci! Heh, heh, this is my main task as well, to deal with those ignorant idiots. But even if I don’t say it, Roland should have guessed it already."

In a way, time had left its mark on Karwenz as well. In the past, at least, Karwenz definitely wasn’t as intelligent as he was now.

He didn’t actually lie; he did come to the mortal plane to have a

look around, but he didn’t tell the complete truth either. He would accomplish some small tasks while having fun as well.

True Gods had to follow the rules of True Gods as well, such as not directly participating in mortals’ battles, which had to do with this world not being able to withstand the power of the True Gods. It was to avoid the True Gods from simply destroying everything with their power, and during the Holy War, the True Gods intervening too early or even personally descending would cause the war to escalate in scale and go out of control.

In a way, if it weren’t for the participation of the Earth Elemental God Emordilorcan, Lorci wouldn’t have conducted her future ambush, nor would there have been the quick death of a True God. Without a doubt, that Forest God Clareladin and the Spider Queen Lorci both obviously broke the rules.

It was as if two kindergarteners were having a fight and the one who lost asked his older brother in elementary school for help. This caused the other side to be on the losing end, so that side invited his cousin in middle school, which was followed by both sides continually inviting more people to participate in the battle. The level of the sides would constantly be raised, and it would result in the two families becoming mortal enemies.

"Perhaps the final battle will come later, but it definitely won’t be now. Disobedient children should be spanked."

The only way to stop this vicious cycle would be if a parent from either family discovered that their children were being unreasonable and misbehaving and decided to teach their children

a lesson with a good spanking.

And the current Karwenz was the parent delivering the spanking. At least on the surface, Lorci was still on the side of Chaos, so the spanking should be administered by them rather than the Order side.

"Oh my, it seems that she's really quite angry. It looks like slapping her one time won't be enough."

If Lorci's betrayal was not quickly dealt with, there would, perhaps, be another traitor very soon. And her double-crossing not only did not gain her the forgiveness of the will of the Chaos Abyss, but it also made the Order side furious and abandon all thoughts of protecting her.

"There's plenty of fence-sitters and traitors, but a double traitor—especially at the very beginning of the war—is unprecedented. Lorci, do you really think the main Gods on both sides are blind or all dead? You attracted too much attention too early, so too bad for you. Originally, that foolish Elf God who had decided on his own to descend to the mortal plane had committed a greater crime than you, but it's too bad that he's dead already. I can only use you as an example for the rest."

Of course, Lorci was doubtlessly the current greatest threat to the Northlands and the Mist Kingdom, and it was unknown if there were any personal grudges or benefits involved in this official task that Karwenz was about to carry out.

A meteor streaked across the sky, and when this meteor crashed into the ground, the Spider Queen Goddess who was trying her best to obtain the position of the Guardian God of the Northlands from Wumianzhe was destined to meet misfortune.

"Oh, right; it's so rare that I get to come here, and I have plenty of time, so let's find a place to have some fun first. I'm already tired of playing with succubi and female half-demons, so why don't I find some new fun while I'm here? With those beautiful and slender female elves as well as the sturdy and cute half-blood female beastmen... beauties, wait for me, this old guy is coming! Cough, I made a mistake, let me try again... beauties, this lady is coming for you!"

Cough, perhaps Lorci would still be able to act as she pleased for some time before Karwenz decided to get to his main task at hand.

By the way, after a particular series of incidents, a certain princess's rumor of being a lesbian was destined to become circulated around by everyone.

...

After night descended, the beasts in the pitch-black darkness began their final evening feast. This land had already bled enough, and this battle was nearing its end.

In the snowy Northlands, even though the ground was covered with snow, there was a strange team proceeding through the ice.

Although they were all elves, they were separated into two separate processions. The dark elves walking behind were in high spirits, while the gray elves walking in front wore depressed expressions.

Grayblood elves—this was the name of this new species of gray elves. These roughly thirty thousand gray elves had blank expressions as they trudged onwards—it was as if they were daydreaming zombies.

They followed their King Adrian to work under a new master, and that master had unhesitatingly sent them right out to fight against the current masters of the Northlands.

"Are we going to have to fight the humans to the death?"

They had returned to their starting point after going a full circle. But to use Amon's words: "You were allies equal to us in the past, but now you're nothing more than dogs."

If Lorci could be said to have lost the trust of both major sides due to her two consecutive betrayals, then these gray elves could be said to not even know how many times they had betrayed others by now.

Betraying their human allies and the side of Order? Yes, they did that at the very start.

Betraying the expectations of the Elven Gods? Well, that

occurred when they had abandoned the northern battlefield and had hurriedly returned to their homeland.

Betraying the elves of the entire Northlands? Their gray-black skin color was the best evidence. They could still remember the looks of shock and immense hatred of the Northland's elves when they had suddenly betrayed them and changed sides on the battlefield.

And they had now betrayed their own species yet again despite the fact that they were on the brink of a disaster, in order to participate in an utterly meaningless battle whose results didn't even matter to their race. That was the reason for their fatigued expressions and why they were visibly tormented by guilt and pain with every step.

It was no wonder they were so exhausted. A warrior who had lost his conviction and desire to protect was no different from a zombie!

Suddenly, amidst the desolate silence, dozens of voices rose in a blending of song. They were singing what would be sung at the year-end celebrations in the Tassel Kingdom and signified the end of the year and the gathering of their tribe.

"Dajh da jd, ka su odd as da..."

[Our distant relatives, where did you go, we miss you here in the homeland...]

"Fre de ld, kad..."

[Are the ancient trees at home still verdant green, that familiar spring lake always reminds me of my childhood, the sky was so blue...]

Back then, there had been continuous internal conflicts among the elves, and the legendary moon elf bard Tassel had wandered the continent in order to find a place where her tribe could live.

After experiencing countless difficulties, Tassel finally settled on a piece of land in the north, where she signed a contract with the Forest Guardian God Clareladin before joyously beginning her trip to return home.

Unfortunately, the return trip was just too long, and Tassel, who was so worn out from her travels, died before she was able to return to her previous homeland.

Luckily, her message was brought back to her tribe by her messenger pigeons, and her tribe completed the promise she had made, transforming that northern mountain into an elf paradise.

Later generations of elves used the songs that she used to sing and created this classical song about the longing for one’s homeland.

And in recent years, at every year-end celebration, it would be the princess who would perform this song for everyone as a

celebration of their now pleasant lives compared to the difficulties of the past.

"Dda jd ad! Dal dada aty..."

[My relatives, I finally found a dreamland for us, our new home is in the north...]

And now, as that familiar, nostalgic song echoed throughout the mountains, the grayblood elves felt more pain than ever before.

The last time they had listened to this song, they had been celebrating with their relatives and friends, but after all the recent events, there was no one who hadn’t lost a loved one.

"That song—it’s the same voice! Impossible!"

As the gray elves’ choking turned into crying, someone among them noticed that this familiar song was being sung by a familiar voice—a voice that belonged to someone who should have been dead!

"Her Highness Suana! Ah! No, this is impossible!"

A sharp-eyed scout had already discovered the truth. A solitary figure could be seen singing in the mountains, and judging by her translucent body, she was probably a banshee like in the stories.

The gray elves' faces turned pale as they faced the indisputable truth before them. They all came to a realization at the same time.

"Kill her!"

As the gray elves were still in shock and in tears, the dark elf general's angry roar woke them all up. His order was carried out by countless dark elves' magical arrows, which were about to destroy that lonely figure in a storm of arrows.

"N—no!"

Some gray elves were no longer able to hold themselves back and started fighting with the dark elves; they were doing their utmost to halt those life-threatening enchanted silver arrows.

Yet it was too late. The expert archers within the dark elf troops had already heartlessly released a storm of arrow fire, and it appeared as if the newly-born banshee before them would die again immediately when a miraculous sight suddenly occurred.

A flaming phoenix flew through the sky burning all the arrows to dust and blocking the several magic spells aimed at her. And when the phoenix landed on the ground, it transformed into a female warrior wielding a flaming divine sword.

Numerous figures instantly appeared behind the cliff. The familiar military squadron was obviously an elite squad from the Underground.

"Um, I didn’t plant this tree or cultivate this mountain, but if you want to pass by, even paying a toll wouldn’t be enough to make me allow you all to pass."

The red-haired girl spoke some confusing words, but not a single dark elf dared to speak up against her. After all, she was the famous figure who was the most likely person to rule over the entire Underground—Phoenix Annie Layde!

And the other familiar voice caused the gray elves to tremble in fear. Perhaps a shocking tragedy was about to be exposed to the world.

"My fellow tribe members, you were all fooled; my death and the sudden declaration of battle was all an underhanded plot by evil, ambitious individuals..."

According to Wikipedia, a succubus (plural succubi) is a Lilin-demon in female form or supernatural entity in folklore (traced back to medieval legend) that appears in dreams and takes the form of a woman in order to seduce men, usually through sexual activity.

Chapter 191: Frigid Winter

Even the longest and darkest of nights would end, and no matter how cold the winter was, there would always be the spring, where life would be restored.

Yet sometimes, the morning following a long, dark night would bring not hope but despair. A snow-covered world wasn’t always as beautiful as it sounded—it instead made the frozen corpses even more frightening to behold.

When the first rays of dawn burst through the skies, the people who had been fighting through the entire, difficult night noticed that it had finally reached a conclusion. The few that who had survived to witness the dawn were definitely lucky enough to be called "favored by fate."

With the beastmen army not caring about sacrifices and insanely sending more reinforcements, the inner city district had already been lost, and all of the defending human armies had retreated to the final third defense line, which consisted of temporary defensive structures crafted from sandbags and earthen walls. It was also the last lifeline of this city.

The catapults outside the city had already stopped firing. In front of such a long distance, the catapults wouldn’t be able to maintain their accuracy, and the restoration of the light and the halting of the snow caused the beastmen’s air cavalry to fly into the blue sky once more.

It seemed that the beastmen had their victory in the bag, but the current Beastmen King Amon Bloodaxe didn’t have any joy at being on the edge of victory. His face, instead, was incredibly fatigued.

"...We’ve lost over seventy percent of our warriors, and countless are seriously injured. Only two of the major tribe leaders have returned, and they’re both gravely injured as well. Among the others, Hamar lost his life in the previous castle siege, and now, Fox King Wen, Wolf King Sostilo, and Bear King Londe have all died in battle. Kagra has disappeared, most likely also..."

Each wave of bad news increased the burden on Amon, but nobody could blame him—the stump of his severed arm, which had been cut off right at the shoulder, was still bleeding. Amon was severely injured from having lost an arm.

As the leader of all the other tribe leaders, he didn’t avoid the battlefield. The reason that he was able to survive, apart from his outstanding personal combat capabilities, was more reliant on luck.

No matter what generation it was, cruel guerilla warfare battles in cities were the most fatal and dangerous of all. Legend-rank warriors could die at any moment in such chaotic battles, and a single sudden surprise arrow or flying rock could kill off a Saint-ranked mage. The pitch-black night and the pounding snow all over added to the chaos and increased the likelihood of such events occurring.

"We finally made it to morning."

Amon’s sigh caused all the survivors to nod in agreement. During the battle of last night, the unlucky had died before even knowing what happened while the slightly luckier had at least seen their opponents before dying under their swords.

The sly and clever Fox Tribe Leader Wen was the classic example of an unlucky person. He had been killed by a stray catapult shot from his own side, and two of his personal bodyguards had died along with him, creating a scene that was simply unbearable to look at.

Yet actually, without them realizing it, the beastmen, who had lost themselves in the fervor of battle, had broken one of the most critical maxims of castle sieges—to never force your opponent to the brink of no retreat.

Surrounding the enemy on three sides and leaving one side open as a path of escape was a tactic in this world as well. Giving the opponent a chance to escape would also mean that your own armies wouldn’t be forced to the brink. Fighting against people who had given up was undesirable, as they would furiously fight to their deaths or at least take you down with them.

On that night, the blizzard and the surrounding beastmen had blocked off all avenues of escape, giving the humans nowhere to retreat. And when they had no chance of escaping with their lives, even a cornered mouse could defeat a cat—so how could those trained military soldiers possibly allow themselves to die worthlessly without fighting back?

"If we can’t escape death in the end, then we have to at least die like warriors; we must take an enemy with us as we die!"

The allied human armies, who were forced to the edge, exploded with incredible combat potential as their fear of the falling of the castle walls transformed into hatred for their mortal enemies. Their spirits, which didn’t fear dying together with their enemies, coupled with the terrain advantage of the city finally started changing the rate of losses on both sides, making the beastmen suffer significant casualties.

Amelia’s flower garden of death named Humility was the rear support; it acted as a death trap again and again, and the sudden ambushes from human warriors within the houses succeeded in killing many beastmen. What happened to the Bear King Londe wasn’t the first example, nor was it the last.

But the beastmen’s rear support had already stopped arriving. When the night turned pitch-black and the combat situation became chaotic, their roughshod siege weapons turned into massive killing machines that wouldn’t separate friend from foe. No matter in any generation, dying via friendly fire was one of the most unacceptable methods of death to anyone.

Large-scale hexes and combat magic? If they tried using these in a situation where they couldn’t even see ten meters in front of them, then there was a fifty percent chance that they would kill their own armies.

And the most fatal was all was that life-stealing winter chill which imperceptibly crept up on them. In this damned weather

where any drop of water would freeze instantly, any cut in their anti-cold weather clothing was fatal, and this wasn't even mentioning any injuries.

The freezing cold numbed the warriors' sense of pain, and although those easily unnoticed small injuries wouldn't become infected in the freezing cold, losing blood and energy because of those tiny injuries would end up being the most fatal of all. There were far too many beastmen who didn't notice their own injuries and ended up collapsing and dying due to them.

When the beastmen forced the northern human allied armies to the brink, the beastmen also thrust themselves to the edge. The long, long lists of the deceased were shocking to look at— every family had lost some members with the serious amounts of injuries and deaths, and probably over seventy percent of the tribes would need to undergo restructuring after the war.

Even their current losses were enough for the beastmen to have basically lost in their goal of returning to their original homeland. Even if they won in the end, they would need several generations to rest and recover.

But if Amon and the other beastmen were given a choice right now, even if they knew about the unacceptable number of losses beforehand, they would probably still make the same decision.

"Victory is before us! Defeat them, and we shall be the new masters of the Northlands!"

With what they viewed as victory right before them, how could the beastmen possibly give up?

But their current goal of becoming the masters of the Northlands would have been laughed at as lacking willpower and courage three months ago. After all, back then, the beastmen had fully been intending to conquer all the way back to their homeland and take the war to San Antonio.

Without them realizing it, the cruel reality had woken the beastmen up, and their current combat goal was only to conquer the entire Northlands.

The current beastmen no longer had the willpower to say that they could conquer all the human countries. Only the poor-seeming northern countries and San Antonio's reinforcements had forced them to such a degree—this caused them to lose the courage to fight against the human mega-empires.

Of course, there was still some misunderstanding here. After this battle, perhaps each country would have to re-evaluate the Northlands' combat strength, especially the astonishing performance of the East Mist Communal Country in this war. Perhaps even military analysts with the highest standards would no longer dare to call the East Mist Communal Country a weak country.

Princess Knight Reyne, the new generation of magic swordsmen and the Four Elemental Swordcasters, the large self-destructing Roland Titan mechas, the floating airship Borealis, and the cleaner of the battlefield known as Train King—all these new concepts and

technologies would definitely help the Mist Kingdom rise to its former status in the Northlands.

Military might also represented diplomatic power. After their solid performance in this war, Roland's Alliance of the Mist was also pushed one step to actualization.

And on another level, when the news about the veteran Earth Elemental God Emordilorcan being killed off in his own home turf started spreading, this familiar name of Roland Mist started drawing attention after remaining unnoticed for several hundred years.

Of course, they had to first get past this obstacle before them.

"The beastmen are coming again, aren't they..."

I could see my own breath in the chilly air as I casually swung my Sacred Sword around to flick off the blood drops from it. This indestructible sword could basically clean itself.

For the northern allied armies that had been struggling all night, the sky's lightning and the snow stopping were both bad news. This would mean that the beastmen could reorganize themselves again, and those damned air cavalry and siege weapons would be usable. While the humans might be able to have a temporary reprieve, the beastmen would surely come again with a destructive force for a final battle.

The movable medium-sized catapults were slowly pushed into the city, as the bloodied elite beastmen soldiers that had survived over a hundred battles treated their own injuries and watched their surroundings with a high degree of vigilance. Even the wind blowing some old tattered curtains would cause these veteran soldiers that had survived the bloody knight to chuck their spears.

And right now, the allied armies' general commander "Black Bear" Anslo was right behind me, or perhaps I should say he was lying on the ground not far behind me.

Beastmen knew more than just to rush in head-on, but the Cat Tribe's assassins had found the general command center and had ambushed Anslo. Even though he received assistance in time and managed to luckily survive, the one-eyed general had become completely blind. After receiving three stabs to the right side of his stomach, he was seriously injured to the extent that he was no longer even able to stand.

But luckily for him, he no longer needed to give any particular commands. The only thing he needed to do was shout a single word with all his might.

"Defend!"

"Defend! We have no path of retreat! If you want to live, the only way is to kill all these barbaric beasts!"

"Defend! There's only injured soldiers, the elderly, the widows, and the young behind us!"

"Defend! If we lose this battle, our country isn't even prepared for war—they'll lose their territory! Our families will also get involved in this endless warfare."

Yep, defend. With the battle proceeding to this point, no tactics or arrangements of any kind were necessary any longer; resolute willpower was all that was needed.

"Defend!"

If a street block was lost? The next street block was already prepared with a new defense line.

A temporary defense wall was knocked over? The next wall had already been constructed.

A squad was slaughtered, and there was an opening in their defense line? The elderly and women that had been ordinary citizens just a moment ago picked up the weapons laying on the ground and filled the gap without saying a word.

"Perhaps it's the end of humanity and we will be defeated, but you barbaric beasts! You want to conquer this city and have a path to every northern country? You'll have to wring every last drop of blood out of each warrior in this city first."

The young humans with tense expressions didn't say much, but they used their actions instead to tell those proud and arrogant

beastmen just what the northerners and the People of the Mist were like.

"The frigid winter is here, but us northerners have long been used to such winters! Even the coldest winter isn't that difficult for us. Just tolerate it for a little while, hug each other for warmth, and play with our doggies—won't spring come right after?"

Even though he was now blind, Anslo was making dirty jokes as always. The "doggies" in his joke earlier was actually referring to something perverted, and judging by the loud guffaws coming from the warriors, everyone understood what he meant.

When the sun finally rose slightly, the arriving sounds of footsteps and catapult wheels seemed to proclaim that the final battle was coming.

At this moment, even I had nothing else I could do. I had used every one of my cards. Antuen was too far from here to be of any help, I had used Annie's squad to block those dark elves, I couldn't control Xiluo's forces to begin with, and I had used all of my newly developed war weapons. I had no more moves I could make.

"That damned Emordilorcan! If it wasn't for him..."

Emordilorcan's final attack had indeed hit us in our weak spot. If Red Maple Castle fell, then there would be nothing I could do.

"Sigh, if only the battle could take ten extra days..."

But there were no ifs on the battlefield. Innumerable famous generals had met their demise in the past due to "what ifs," as accidents and misfortunes were the favored companions of failure. There was only a small difference between who went to heaven and hell.

I supported myself against the Roland Sacred Sword and stood up again. Ever since "Reyne" had left us unexpectedly, I had temporarily taken over her mid-level commanding position, but by now, I had already used up both the remaining summons of my Sacred Sword for today but still couldn’t overturn the situation.

"My Diligence and Temperance have both died; those damned moon elves! Only they can have such a disgusting control over nature!"

The green-haired witch wasn’t doing all that good either. She had used up all her mana in this battle, and two of her treasured Seven Virtues (well, she had only created three up to now) had died in battle, leaving only Humility alive. It seemed that she was at her limits as well.

Moon elves were the priest-type tribe of the Elf Kingdom to begin with, and they excelled at communicating with the Gods and even True Gods, borrowing their powers to use various high-level Divine Arts.

And since the moon elves’ original Guardian God was the Forest God, the nature priests who had used the Forest God’s divine

magic for thousands of years naturally excelled in planting and controlling forests. It was only to be expected that eradicating unnatural plants was in the nature of their job.

That was why Amelia had met her natural counter against a nature priest like Adrian and suffered greatly.

"Senior Amelia..."

Her typically neat hair was now messy, and her eyes were filled with bloody red streaks. The witch who hadn't slept all night was now even scarier-looking than before.

"If the beastmen come up here again, go ahead and leave. I don't believe that you have no way to escape."

"I can leave any time I want, of course, but what about you? Don't tell me you intend to be like a certain idiot knight and die together with the city?"

"Me? I'm the indestructible Roland; how could I possibly die here?"

"Hmph, I'm the 'super willful witch of tempest emotions.' How could I possibly listen to your orders? I'm really feeling like giving it my all against those barbaric beasts today."

"Heh heh, you think that I'm garbage without my summoned pets? I shall allow you to witness the greatness of a melee combat

grandpa mage like me!"

From this angle, Amelia with her sleeves rolled up really did seem like that hot-headed senior from long ago, but I shook my head and decided not to say anything.

"Elisa?"

"Harloys has finished her preparations, but she told me to tell you to not use it unless you absolutely have to, or else all your efforts will have been wasted."

I did prepare one final trump card. The only magic I had which could overturn the situation from the utter edge was the highest-level forbidden undead magic spell—Undead Calamity!

But if I used this mega-forbidden spell that every country on the continent had banned, all the corpses around here would transform into brainless low-level undead, which would be something completely different from when I had summoned the dead previously. Back then, the ones that answered my summons were those who were unwilling to remain silent in death, but the ones under the control of Undead Calamity would forever become brainless, bloodthirsty undead.

This was a forceful and eternal servitude that was utterly disrespectful to all warriors. Perhaps all the warriors on my side would instantly change their attitudes towards me and attack me as an evil necromancer.

The moment I used this spell, then the saying that "undead doesn’t equal evil" would no longer apply to me, and perhaps my Mist Alliance plan would go kaput, and the East Mist Communal Country would then be viewed as a new hub of evil and will be isolated diplomatically.

At that time, even if we won the war, we would have lost more than we gained.

"Anything is better than completely being destroyed; if all these people die here, then there truly will be no more hope."

Hearing these words from me, Elisa merely adjusted her eyeglasses without saying anything, but judging from her downcast expression, she seemed rather displeased and spiritless.

"What’s the matter?"

"Why aren’t you asking me if I can escape or not? Why aren’t you trying to convince me to leave?"

Okay, Elisa, who was pouting as she complained, was actually rather cute. Of course, she didn’t want to escape by herself; she was merely complaining about not receiving any attention or care. At the very least, Roland was still Elisa’s boyfriend in name.

I shook my head. According to my understanding of Elisa, I wouldn’t have to waste time telling her about such things.

"Why are you asking? Didn't you tell me that you would follow me whether it be to the River Styx or to hell? What, are you regretting it?"

Just as I finished speaking, it was as if dark storm clouds had suddenly cleared as she smiled ever so sweetly.

"Of course not; I'll never regret it. Then, let us fight alongside each other to the death. I'll pick your corpse up from the River Styx."

The abnormal conversation sounded somewhat illogical, but it may actually happen. Perhaps the emotional relationship between the undead was just that strange after all.

Seeing her emotions turn sunny again, I secretly wiped my sweat.

But looking at how Amelia was evidently unhappy and feeling Elisa's eyes staring at my back, I suddenly realized that perhaps my luck with women was finally changing. Was I really starting to become a winner in life? But... why was it that I only started getting luckier when I was almost about to die? Was I the type of person who was fated to shout, "After this battle, I'm going to get married in my hometown" and then die right away?

Hey, hey, hey, I don't want beautiful women to only confess at my funeral as they cried and admitted that they liked me...

But the familiar footsteps from not far away interrupted my

thoughts. The final battle was upon us.

The most surprising part was that the person leading the way wasn't a beastman; it was, instead, a familiar figure. That long, slender physique and light footsteps could only belong to an elf.

"Adrian!"

Yes, even though he transformed into a grayblood elf, even though the years had left their mark on his body, I would never forget his familiar face. After all, back then, this arrogant elf species lover who would never admit he was wrong was one of the ones who had given me the final blow.

But at this moment, this cheap brother of mine didn't seem so well, as two ax-wielding beastmen were holding on to him. Adrian kept muttering to himself as if he intended to do something.

"Convince us to surrender? Is that even worth their time?"

This guess seemed reasonable, but there could only be one master of the Northlands, and the grudge between us now ran so deep that it could only be washed away by fresh blood. Trying to convince us to surrender was impossible from the very start.

But I shouted out in shock when I read the beastmen's lips and noticed what Adrian was trying to do.

"Hurry; kill him!"

Yet in the sky, a dark, divine light was already descending as the forbidden ritual finished its final phase.

Those beastmen had said, "It’s time to prove your worth, elf."

And Adrian had only said two words in response.

"God’s Descent!"

Chapter 192: God's Descent

What is a God? There was no way to actually answer this question since this colorful world contained too many existences known as Gods that really did reach the level of Gods in the eyes of people; however, in actual fact, Gods consisted of many varying levels.

The Elemental Gods, the True Gods of Order, the Evil Gods of Chaos, the Original Gods, and the others—they had all created their own organizations, and everything about their abilities and personalities was different. Not a single person could give an exact definition of a God, and even the veteran demons in the Chaos Abyss were able to become Gods, recruit believers, and bestow divine powers upon their followers.

And, to tell the truth, there were quite a few major demons that did this, and their believers usually hid in the shadows. Those dangerous demon worshipers were usually at the top of the most wanted lists.

As a matter of fact, there was actually more information on the Order Gods, the victors of the previous Holy War.

From a certain standpoint, since Lorci was an exiled Order God, she was still similar to a True God of Order as she had her own Divine Country and teachings, and she even protected the dark elf species.

In order to understand these undying existences, one would first

need to understand the differences between the True Gods of Order and the other Gods. Most True Gods of Order had a direct connection with a particular Divine Task, and their existences were representations of certain Concepts.

First, Gods should never be treated as individuals. Yet while they were indeed high above mortals and would never naturally die, they had quite a few limitations as well.

They were on a divine plane, but their main bodies were also trapped in the divine plane. They combined with their Divine Tasks and Concepts and became incredibly powerful, but, because of this, they were partially assimilated by the Concepts and had lost their senses of self.

The side of Order was orderly, after all, and their God system was like a tree with many branches and leaves, with all the Gods being a part of the overall tree, and each Divine Obligation and God had various connections with each other.

Low Gods, Middle Gods, High Gods, Main Gods—this was only a rough separation of their ranks, but in a way, it was indeed the current situation of this world tree.

If each Main God were said to be at the top of the divine tree, then the strongest Gods would be the tree's branches, and the countless souls and their worship that could be seen down the ladder constituted the source of nutrition supporting this tree.

From a certain perspective, Lorci was still the same Elf Order God

from before; she was creating her own world tree so that she could become an actual Main God of the elves, and her first step in accomplishing her goal was to construct the Dark Elf Gods, with the Poison God Felix being the first.

After they became a part of the world tree and lost a part of their self-consciousness, these Gods could be considered to no longer be individuals. The closest analogy to their existences would be a country.

Each God had their own Divine Country, which was the combination of a Concept and group benefits, and these Gods would obtain the powers of administration. However, they were also tied down by the very same administrator powers.

Leaving their own Divine Countries? That was strongly forbidden, and as long as the Gods did not leave their Divine Countries, it would be impossible for them to truly perish. If their physical bodies that they sent out were killed off, then the only thing that would happen would be some loss of divine power.

And now that the Elemental Tide wasn't very active in the current generation, the Gods' physical bodies were rather limited in power, and perhaps a SemiGod-level physical body would be able to deal with normal situations. But when faced with veteran SemiGods who had been through hundreds of battles, they would typically end up as part of their enemies' experiments on researching divine power.

Yet in order to allow their Guardian God to truly be able to assist them, the ancient Elf Kingdom—in this aspect, at least—was far

more advanced than other kingdoms.

"God’s Descent!"

There were certain standards to be fulfilled for a True God to perfectly accept a body as a vessel—the body needed to be customized, and their soul’s wavelength needed to be adjusted in order to adhere to the True God’s soul’s wavelength. This way, the True God could use power close to their maximum.

If a God’s Descent succeeded, and the True God’s will perfectly aligned with the vessel's, then its willpower and soul would transform into strength. And if the alignment ratio was over ninety percent, then with the vessel and will combining into one, the True God’s host would be able to wield power far surpassing that of a God’s physical body, and their combat strength would be almost at the level of a True God.

It was worth mentioning, however, that God’s Descent was a double-edged sword. This soul contained much of the God’s power, and if this vessel, which contained pure willpower and force, ended up being killed, then the True God’s divine power would take a huge blow. It that God was only a weak God to begin with, then there was a high chance of the God directly perishing.

The Forest Guardian God Clareladin had personally descended with his SemiGod descendant as his vessel and had indeed managed to draw out tremendous power. He had even managed to force Lorci into descending into her main physical body, but it was precisely because of this that Clareladin had met his end when his vessel SemiGod Prescott died.

These requirements were incredibly high, especially regarding the willpower of the original vessel. And, of course, the closer the person was to the God, the better. If there was a bloodline relation or a synchronized soul wavelength, then it would be all the better. In a way, Karwenz's descent was the Chaos Abyss' version of a God's descent, and it worked almost exactly the same as that of True Gods of Order.

But there were also professionals at summoning the Gods into themselves, and the human witches in the far west, the soul shamans of the beastmen, and the moon elves' soul priests all had bodies specialized for Gods' descents. Among these groups, the moon elves had the oldest traditions.

The moon elves had always been the tribe of priests, which was an important role in the Elf Kingdom. Throughout the great history of the Elf Kingdom, the greatest priests would always come from the moon elf tribe.

Their innate body structures were the most suitable for communicating directly with the Gods, and their high-level Divine Arts that borrowed divine power aligned with their racial talent to begin with.

And after Adrian had joined Lorci, the Spider Queen had unhesitatingly designated him as a future vessel for the Poison God Felix. Amelia had also been countered all the way up until now because she had been facing against Adrian, who had been borrowing the Poison God's divine power that naturally countered her plants.

"God’s Descent!"

With Adrian’s muttering, a dark-black light fell down from the skies, and a mysterious black mist wrapped itself around Adrian.

Abnormal magical runes appeared on Adrian’s skin and caused him to moan in pain as he knelt to the ground, but all the human spears and arrows tossed in his direction were blocked by an invisible barrier.

"Poison God Felix!"

The already corroding ground around him was evidence of the identity of the descending God. It was the lucky God who had recently just ascended.

Felix, who had been born as a dark elf, had long since reached the pinnacle of a SemiGod. When Lorci had helped him steal the Forest Guardian God’s divinity, a change had occurred in his Divine Obligation of planting and guarding forests, which then combined with the poison assassin Felix’s original body’s specialties and transformed the Obligation into that of the Poison God.

Yet I didn’t even need the sight before me to confirm my opponent because my system wouldn’t possibly remain idle at such a critical time.

[Epic Quest: Slaying a God.]

[Quest Description: Kill the Poison God Felix, and make the foolish Lorci taste the feeling of losing her children again. Let her know the consequences of a double betrayal.]

[Reward: Depends on your performance, but a minimum of 50,000 Fate Points.]

[Punishment for failure: Believe me, if you fail, you won't even need a punishment. Felix is such a weak God. You wouldn't actually fail, would you?]

"Slaying a God? What an overestimation of my capabilities. Even if Felix is a super-weak God who just rose up to the level of a True God, I'm still not certain of being able to defeat him."

The Adrian before me was no longer in a humanoid form. The True God's power had begun changing him, and with the distorted boundaries of reality, he soon transformed into a gigantic black spider.

He was more hideous than a demon lord from one's worst nightmare and was fiercer than a colossal dragon. The eight eyes of this gigantic black spider were filled with looks of greed as its disgustingly large mouth was already spewing digestive fluids that corroded the ground in front of it, and poison kept leaking out of its tail. The ground where it stepped with its poison-needle-studded feet would transform into a poisonous swamp.

Divine power gave him powers far above the norm. Just its stare

would cause people to feel despair, and just looking upon him would cause the weak-willed to go insane.

But...

"Fight him to the death! We have nowhere to retreat! At least we shouldn’t die like cowards!"

Yes, this wasn’t the time to be wasting words repetitively. We had long since had nowhere to retreat to.

"Hmph! Lorci, I’m definitely going to remember this!"

I spat some blood as I lifted my Roland Sacred Sword again and led the charge. I was prepared to finish my Epic Quest.

With a descended God as our opponent, the battle pushed us to the brink right at the very start.

The gigantic spider was incredibly dexterous despite its size, and its enormous legs resembled an exquisitely well-controlled mecha as it moved. It easily tore through our defensive structures over the entire defense line.

Under the Poison God’s control, a black mist surrounded its body, which directly destroyed all magic spells and arrows before they could even reach him.

But the biggest headache of all was the poisonous mist he was emanating, as anyone who so much as touched it died on the spot—there was not even a single survivor.

"I've analyzed the divine power; it's not just a simple poison. It's the Concept of Corrosion and Withering! He's distorting life into death! Definitely don't touch that!"

Just as Harloys finished speaking, one of Felix's gigantic eyes fixated on her as he spat a black gob of poison in her direction.

Felix was no mindless beast. He had senses far surpassing that of others, so even if Harloys only had the physical appearance of a black cat, he immediately classified her as the number one threat since she could point out his divine power's nature.

And while the battle was raging on ferociously, not far away on an observation tower's deck the beastmen tribe leaders were watching this scene with cold eyes.

"...Shouldn't we send our forces to help out? Isn't that our ally?"

The Boar Tribe Leader seemed somewhat confused. He believed that they were supposed to be the main characters on the battlefield, so why were they simply watching their ally fight while watching from behind? This wasn't how beastmen would typically act.

"Help? Hmph, after that spider kills off the humans, if it doesn't

turn around and kill us next then I'll thank the War God for protecting me."

"Ally? Even though our ally has such strong combat capabilities, she watched us lose so many after last night's battle and only now she sends Felix to fight? Isn't this just trying to steal the battlefield achievements?"

Beastmen preferred using their fists instead of their brains, but that didn't mean they were idiots. Lorci's intentions were so obvious that even they could see them.

Amon reached out with his single remaining arm and collected a few snowflakes in his hand. They began to melt due to his body heat.

Crack!

Amon clenched his fist tightly as a ferocious light emanated from his eyes. The current him was the unmistakable Beastman King. "Everyone, prepare for battle. We must reorganize our squads before the snow gets heavier. In this battle, nobody—no species—is worthy of our trust. Warriors, prepare to die in battle. For our honor and for our ancestors' land, even if we're destined to be buried here, we must let this cruel world understand the courage of the beastmen!"

Suddenly, an ancient horn sounded out from far away—a summons from a true ally of theirs.

"They’re finally here!"

All the beastmen tribe leaders had joyous looks, and when I received my scout’s report, I was shocked.

"How are there still more beastmen? Haven’t they already used all their main forces?"

But the direction the beastmen reinforcements were coming from, as well as the tribal flag that the air cavalry scout described to me, instantly helped me understand the situation.

"The beastmen of the plains? That damned Emordilorcan!"

Since the plateau’s beastmen could directly reach the human territories through the Earth Elemental God’s tunnels, then the beastmen from the plains could surely do the same thing. Perhaps this was Emordilorcan’s true final trump card!

But right now, I was unable to do anything, because the highly venomous spider before us was already difficult enough to deal with!

"Harloys, make your preparations! If we must die here, we need to at least take these bastards with us!"

Yet, suddenly, another combat drum’s sound rang out in a familiar elven song, which actually made that huge spider reveal an excited and happy expression like a human.

However, when I listened to it carefully as well, I, too, smiled.

"It’s finally here!"

The Divine Obligation refers to a God’s area of specialty/Concept—like how Wumianzhe’s is Law, Felix’s is Poison/Withering, and Clareladin’s is the Forest.

Chapter 193: Silver Dignity

Iron Bloodline, Bronze Body, Silver Dignity, and Golden Will were the separate ranks the humans had created for each power level, and each rank contained endless amounts of hard work, blood, and tears.

The Silver and Gold species didn't have any need to classify ranks in such a manner as they were innately born above the so-called Silver and Gold. In their eyes, possessing such low-ranked power classifications was no different from giving their children power classifications, something which was deemed entirely unnecessary.

Yet, for humans, each rank represented a foundational change in the warrior's power level.

Iron Bloodline and Bronze Body—these names were already self-explanatory. Human mages at these levels could create mana circuits within their bodies, while warriors could utilize their bodies' potential. "Bronze Body" was synonymous with "perfect body."

Of course, this didn't mean their bodies were actually perfect—it meant that after reaching this level, ordinary humans would no longer be able to drag any more power out of their bodies.

On the contrary, the definition of Silver Dignity was worth wondering about.

After all, it was entirely distinct from the other ranks; the

description of "dignity" for a power level was incomprehensible.

"Incomprehensible? After reaching this level, humans can finally have some dignity in front of other species; only this level can help humans be comparable to them."

"If you only look at the power level, then Bronze and Silver have very little different from each other, but some things can actually be felt when you're at a certain level. The difference between Bronze and Silver is the difference between the highest level that an ordinary person can achieve and the beginning of an extraordinary person's path. While the difference doesn't seem big, they're actually as far apart as the sky and the ground."

While this was all rather a vague description, but for the truly strong in Silver, this was as natural as breathing or eating.

Think about asking a person how to breathe or how to use more strength and if there were any techniques to it. Perhaps everyone knew how to breathe, but nobody could say how they knew it or why.

"After reaching the Silver rank, you won't have to worry about incomprehensible deaths."

For the strong of the Silver rank, life force and mental spirit were both actual foundational strengths, and they could generate the Qi of a martial artist or the magic ring of a mage to create formless barriers.

They had different effects, but all of them could block outside impacts. The strong of the Silver rank had bodies that were their own domain and could resist against outside forces.

"At the very least, if you can know how you die, then it’s enough to be at a cannon fodder’s level. You can die with some pride."

"On a true, major battlefield, without being at the Silver rank, it’s not even enough to be cannon fodder. Under major spells cast by Legends, ultimate sword techniques, or a Divine Domain, people would be just like an inanimate rock or a tree with zero power to resist. Just one thought or one look from these high-ranked existences could kill you—and there would be a zero chance of survival. How could I even win?"

In the generation where many species chaotically fought with each other, a young Silver-ranked genius of his tribe had said that helplessly and sardonically about himself.

"And if the enemy is a God, even if it’s only a Low God who just ascended..."

I shouted loudly as I turned my will into a formless barrier to keep out the purple-gray Divine Domain of Withering.

"...If you aren’t even at the Silver rank, with Divine Domains most likely soon to be everywhere, you probably wouldn’t even see your enemy before you die without realizing what’s going on."

And when I knew that I was about to face God-ranked opponents of Karwenz's level in the future, I unhesitatingly used all my saved Fate Points, so that at the very least I wouldn't die without knowing what happened against opponents who possessed their own Divine Domains.

And now, Karwenz had left, but Felix doubtlessly possessed his own, true Divine Domain as well.

From the moment of Felix's descent, a formless yet still-present Domain already enveloped half the city, and if anyone used any prophecy or detection-related abilities, then they would notice gray-purple smoke present everywhere.

And it wasn't the doing of Felix's conscious efforts; it was the side effect of his Obligation as the Poison God, but just this "side effect" was more than enough to kill off the weak.

"Cough—cough!"

The injured behind us were coughing unstoppably, and this was followed by vast amounts of people spitting up blood. The fact that their blood was blackened was evidence of their worsening injuries.

"Mom, I feel so terrible! I can't breathe."

In a shelter, a yellow-faced girl with lips turning pale-green was requesting her mother for help, but she wasn't the only one.

Most of the commoners taking refuge from the war were coughing in the shelters, and the sick were becoming sicker while the healthy suddenly fell ill. The infectious diseases were spreading as they pleased; the Poison God's Divine Domain of Withering was herding them towards death.

This was also one of the reasons why True Gods were forbidden to descend. True Gods that embodied a concept were always frightening; if they walked about on the mortal plane, they would naturally distort their surroundings.

For example, if the Tempest God descended, then waves as high as the sky would cause destruction in all directions; if the Sun God descended, a terrifying heat would transform the mortal plane into hell—even the descent of the Law God would probably create a strange Divine Domain where any crime would be immediately punished.

Felix was a half-spider, half-elf Poison God, and his new divine job included "the ending of nature (withering poison)," so within his Divine Domain, all living creatures would become distorted, and the chances of acquiring a disease would be vastly increased. Even the healthiest person would become deathly ill if they stayed within Felix's divine domain for too long.

It wasn't that all the Gods wanted to cause wanton destruction; it was simply unavoidable for them.

So, no matter if it were the Order Gods or the Chaos Gods, they

would try, as much as possible, to avoid descending either in a vessel or with their true bodies. But since Lorci had already descended in her true body, the rules had long since been broken, so it didn't matter if Felix, who was under her command, broke the rules again.

"...If we don't defeat him quickly, all of us will die."

Perhaps this newly-born rule-breaking Poison God would eventually be punished by the other Gods, but if we weren't able to take care of this God-ranked enemy right before us, we wouldn't live to see that anyways.

The only part worth celebrating was the fact that the gigantic spider God before us was not very skilled at controlling his Divine Domain; it only spread out naturally from him, weakening the effects to the point where the warriors facing Felix wouldn't instantly perish just from his Divine Domain.

"Everyone that's below the Silver rank, retreat together with the citizens, and get as far away as possible from his Divine Domain! It doesn't matter what your overall rank is, your body has to be at least of the Silver rank."

Yet even the strong ones of the Silver rank were nothing more than cannon fodder that could last a few seconds. Just being stared at for a few seconds by this gigantic spider would cause many to spit blood and die, but what surprised even me was that my condition was surprisingly good. It seemed that Felix's Divine Domain had no effect on me, which was something not even a Legend rank could claim to be able to pull off.

The domain of my physical body seemed to have completely cut me off from the Divine Domain's influence. It didn't seem to be some simple coincidence; rather, it was the special ability of my bloodline.

[Host's willpower is over 20; Host is at the Silver rank. Now that you are under the suppression of a Divine Domain, I would like to congratulate the host. You have awakened your racial talent: Chaos Barrier.]

[Chaos Barrier: Protect your mind from being suppressed by divine or mental realms. Reduce the effects of anything that attempts to reduce your willpower or vision.]

Although the explanation was rather vague and straightforward, it was doubtlessly one of the most practical abilities suitable for my current situation. At the very least, with its assistance, I was able to calmly assess the circumstances, make adjustments, and take command.

What? Go fight in melee combat? With the current me, unless I used some forbidden techniques, I doubt I would cause any damage to Felix. I would prefer to not be suicidal.

"Borealis! Cover us with cannon fire!"

In this long, snow-filled, and back-and-forth battle, the Borealis was pretty much useless during the night when it had no way of seeing anything. However, it still had plenty of remaining

ammunition and energy, and as I gave the command, Envy, who was rearing for battle, instantly turned on all the cannons.

Boom! Boom!

Numerous explosions popped up like fireworks all over Felix's body, as the mage towers didn't rest with their continuous thunderbolts and fireballs. When combined with the sound of explosions, it was truly a grand scene.

Unfortunately, in front of the astonishing defense of a True God who had descended into a vessel, these mortal technologies and spells couldn't even break through its defenses.

However...

"This is enough for a smokescreen—Amelia!"

"Hah!"

With a shout, the green-haired witch flew up into the air like a meteor, and when she suddenly changed direction downwards, she was coming down at a far greater and more frightening speed than an actual meteor.

For the gigantic Felix, that was only an ignorable human the size of a grain of rice, but Amelia's sudden, tremendous punch made him cry out in pain as he shook all over.

Judging from the dark-green poisonous liquid spurting out from his wound, this punch had pierced through his heart.

Amelia had used her strength to demonstrate that experience trumped power. Even if her ability was naturally countered by Felix, she was a veteran SemiGod; she still had her way of battling.

When the elite warriors of the allied armies rushed over to the spider's side, they all stopped suddenly.

"There are sticky substances on the ground! Be careful; there are also invisible webs!"

That was, unfortunately, their final words. Felix, who had just received such a heavy impact, angrily activated his Divine Domain at full force, causing a gray-black poisonous mist to spread everywhere. The closest warriors to him were the first to fall victim to it with strange rashes appearing all over their bodies. And just like that, they fell over while still staring in angry disbelief.

Seeing the way those warriors had died so pitifully, the warriors behind them began hesitating. Since it had come to this, none of them were afraid of sacrifice, but the sacrifice had to have meaning.

What was most fortunate, however, was that the interference of a God was sure to bring another God's intervention to balance things out. When Felix descended into Adrian, some existences

could finally have an excuse to interfere; our reinforcements eventually arrived.

A familiar, brilliant silver light descended. Wumianzhe's will had always been watching this battlefield, and when the enemy's True Gods ignored the rules and did as they pleased, it was time for him to interfere as well.

When that light dissipated, an entire military squad appeared before us. Those various flags were rather nostalgic, and the familiar faces caused several shouts of surprise.

"Dragonslayer Bastlar! That's a Legend-rank hero's spirit!"

"Isn't that General Lololer? She died just two days ago on the battlefield, and General Bastlar is dead as well! How are they alive?"

"Idiot, they're heroic spirits now; didn't the True God make a declaration earlier? Any warrior that died for the sake of defending this land would be able to become a true heroic spirit."

This cruel war had caused countless brave Northland warriors to die on this piece of land, but it also allowed the newly born Guardian God of the Northlands to open up his own Hall of Valhalla for heroic spirits. And, right now, under Bastlar's leadership, this newly born heroic spirit squad re-entered the mortal plane.

Each thrown spear transformed into a bolt of lightning as the sword-wielding heroic spirits began slicing the spiderweb. They now had the advantage, and Felix was forced to retreat, but a fierce look gleamed from his eight eyes as he once again sent more power into his death-inducing Divine Domain.

This time, however, the effect was minimal. The heroic spirit squad before him actually ignored the threat of his Divine Domain and even took the opportunity to unleash a fresh round of attacks on him.

Just a little thinking helped me understand the reason for Felix's pitifulness.

Heroic spirits were of the undead to begin with, and they were only souls, without physical bodies like living creatures. Of course they wouldn't become distorted from Felix's life-altering Divine Domain, and it was obviously impossible for them to become poisoned. This was the natural counter to Felix's powers.

Perhaps the most attention-grabbing person on the battlefield was Dragonslayer Bastlar. Innumerable sharp weapons appeared in midair as precious mystical weapons rained down upon Felix like a storm, with ancient elven magical rune scrolls spreading across the entire area. From the very start, Bastlar was going all-out.

During the dragon-slaying battle, he had temporarily reached the boundary of a True God's level through the help of the power boost provided by the Great Judgement. Now that he understood this power, which was as unstoppable at the ocean, and with the Elf God's Divine Obligation and Divine Authority right before him, he

would, of course, give it his all. The master he had sworn loyalty to had obviously indicated that Bastlar could proceed in increasing his rank.

Huge spears kept piercing into Felix's body, the cannon fire kept raining down from the Borealis without a break, and the witch's ambushes were deadly with every punch. The Poison God found that he was actually forced to the brink as the injuries on his body kept increasing.

But even so, just the heroic spirit squad's combat power by itself was insufficient to deal with a God.

"Spider's Gray Forest!"

For Felix, the opponents before him were a bit difficult to deal with, so he was forced to use his power—the power that he had just barely learned how to use. The Concepts of Nature, Elves, Corrosion, and Withering all melded together as the Spider Prince Felix transformed nightmares into reality.

In his Divine Domain, countless strange plants suddenly sprouted; those plants were twisted and ugly, and these stinky trees were growing at a tremendous pace before soon transforming into a bizarre, thick forest. In the darkness of this forest, there were many massive magical beasts with eight legs and multiple eyes, and these nightmares then came to life and entered the battlefield.

Everything before us was now a scene of utter chaos. It didn't

seem to be a many-against-one battle at all; it had now transformed into something resembling a battle between two armies.

But this wasn’t the only chaotic battle at the Red Maple defense line. At a place not far from here, two real armies were testing each other’s mettle.

On one side, it was the beastmen of the plains that had come through Emordilorcan’s tunnels. At the very beginning, the Earth Elemental God had come to an agreement with Amon Bloodaxe to not complete the tunnels, as they didn’t want the beastmen of the plains to take away their combat achievements.

But when the battle reached a stalemate, Amon and Emordilorcan finally resolved themselves to summon new reinforcements.

As for the forces fighting against them, apart from the diverse species of Underground "demons," there were even more elves.

But Felix’s delight was destined to go unanswered, as those elves weren’t his reinforcements.

Apart from the quiet Underground allied armies, there were also thirty thousand elves of a new species. Their gray-black skin was very similar to the skin of the dark elves, and they had also accepted Lorci The Fallen Goddess’ power at one time. Now, however, these elves had a slightly lighter skin tone, and under the leadership of a banshee princess, they had broken free from Lorci’s

control and stood against the dark elves.

The Underground armies combined with the grayblood elves were on guard against the beastmen from the plains that had arrived after traveling a great distance. Both armies remained vigilant against each other, but neither army seemed to have the resolve to bring it to direct combat.

And in the military camp, as Suana gazed at the gigantic spider in the distance, which was the size of a small mountain, she had an expression filled with worry. After all, she knew that that was her father—the person she used to trust the most, the person she used to respect as a perfect king.

"Humans, who are innately such a weak species, are fighting to protect their home, but our elf tribe is still suffering from disasters. Our entire army and tribe have turned into fallen elves, and even our king has transformed into a monster. Perhaps nothing can save us now that it’s come to this. Father, is this what you wanted? Is this your so-called pride as royalty?"

Chapter 194: Unwelcome Reinforcements

The unnatural amount of divine corrosive power was beginning to infect the world. As a True God, Felix had already stayed in the mortal plane for too long, and his divine power had started to rewrite the natural laws of this world. The space itself was transforming into his Divine Country.

Grayish-purple clouds began gathering in the air, and the snowflakes that fell from them were actually dark purple. The fierce winds had a faintly sweet smell to them, but anyone that accidentally inhaled this air would feel dizzy in their heads.

With Felix as the center, a large area was now devoid of all plant life; all the plants in a circle had withered to death. As for small animals, if they hadn't died already, they would have become distorted and transformed into frightening magical beasts that preyed on humans.

The battle between the humans and the True God continued. Even against the True God's descent into a vessel, the defending army still didn't give up, and they kept adding more members to make up for the ones that had fallen. Perhaps it should be said that they were stalling for time and surviving the best they could...

This was a battle where victory couldn't be seen, or if I described it more directly, then this was a suppressive slaughter.

In the increasingly distorted world, the poison had already infected the very air itself; every moment someone would suddenly

fall over and die.

And the brave warriors of the vanguard fighting against this humongous spider were dying even quicker in front of Felix's sharp claws and God-level poison.

If it weren't for the heroic spirit squad that didn't care about sacrifices or Felix's poison and the Borealis' constant aerial bombardments providing enough of a bother to Felix, perhaps this battle would have been over already.

Yet merely stalling like this wasn't a good idea at all. Even if the heroic spirit squad was dealing with the brunt of Felix's wrath, for the northern countries' strongest warriors to simply die like this, without even a chance for a direct battle—it was only a chance for them to be sent to Wumianzhe's Hall of Valhalla together with the heroic spirits that fell again.

"Is this the power of a True God? How despairing—if such an existence appeared in Auland..."

Hemet, who had an expression of worry, could only shake his head as he watched the battle through his binoculars from a distant observation tower.

At first, the Auland Empire had sent him and a White Wolf Squad as only the in-name reinforcement guest army. Their goal was to collect information on the north—Darsos' ambition had always been burning—while also transporting goods, but nobody expected that yet another beastman assault to occur just like so many times

in the past, transforming the place into a cruel battlefield.

"Is this a Holy War? Everyone has become red-eyed with bloodlust, and even those rarely seen Legend-rank heroes and True Gods have come out. Every country's most treasured Silver and Gold-ranked warriors have actually become nothing more than cannon fodder on the battlefield—oh? Another dozen or so have just died. It takes us a minimum of ten years to train a strong Silver warrior that doesn't rely on equipment."

Hemet sighed in his heart. Not a single person had expected the battle to escalate to such an extent.

Up until now in this battle, the northern humans, elves, and beastmen had given their all in order to obtain greater benefits and land for their own species.

In the short period of just two months, many undying existences had already perished. Not just the Elemental Gods but even a True God had died previously. Merely the ascension of the new True God Felix was major news that would shock the entire world.

And apart from the war fought out in the open, the Elemental Gods and the citizens of the Underground were also getting secretly involved. Countless new weapons of war were changing this generation, and now even the True Gods weren't caring about their appearances and participated directly in battle. There now wasn't a single person who would dare say that the battle in the north was just a small affair.

"If all Holy Wars are battles to such an extent, then even a mega-empire probably wouldn’t be able to survive for long. It seems that I really need to have a good discussion with His Majesty and Her Majesty when I return. Heh—I need to be lucky enough to survive past this, however."

Hemet shook his head and got rid of his idle thoughts. He then proceeded to hand over a magic crystal that had recorded large amounts of information to a griffin knight who had been waiting for his orders for quite some time.

"Hand this over to His Majesty Darsos."

"What about you? Do you intend to stay here? I recommend that you leave together with me."

It was quite natural for the griffin knight to be worried about Hemet. If Red Maple Castle was lost, then the beastmen and the Poison God wouldn’t spare Hemet just because he was from Auland. Hemet, however, shook his head at the griffin knight.

"I intend to watch his battle to the very end. It is worthy of me exchanging my life for firsthand information. And... I still believe that humanity can win!"

The griffin knight took off into the air and flew southward. Just as a feather from the griffin fell on Hemet’s hand, heavy footsteps sounded out from behind him.

Hemet already knew who they belonged to.

"You guys want me to approve sending you out to battle? You saw it for yourselves; you are equivalent to nothing more than cannon fodder in a battle of this level."

Everyone behind him was silent and didn't respond, but this was evidence of the White Wolf Imperial Knights' determination. Even if they were merely a guest army, watching the deaths of other humans and the slaughter of ordinary citizens without doing anything was something they couldn't stand as knights.

They could only be cannon fodder? These knights were no greenhorns to the battlefield, so of course they knew the difference in level. Yet even though they were aware that they were walking a thorny path, the knights still had expressions of resolution and steadily held on to their weapons. From the start of battle until now, their desire to fight had been continually burning, and their blood had always been boiling.

"Knights fight for justice! We swear to sacrifice our blood in order to resist the injustice and evil."

"Knights fight in order to protect! We treat the weak with kindness, but when butcher knives are aimed at the innocent, weak, elderly, and ill, we shall transform into the most solid walls of flesh and blood."

"Knights fight for the royalty! We protect our homes and swear loyalty to our lords, but justice is what we listen to above all. If

there’s a conflict between justice and our lords, we shall choose according to our hearts."

At this moment, the ancient spirit of chivalry seemed to be in full effect. The silence was the choice that all these knights made even with their oaths of loyalty towards the Auland Empire.

Hemet shook his head; he had expected this outcome.

"...It seems that I said something unnecessary. It would only bring humiliation upon the White Wolf Knights to have you guys retreat; it would make these northern hick countries look down on the Auland Empire. Go and perform well, and don’t let the northerners look down on Auland! Make the Auland White Wolf Knights proud!"

"White Wolves..."

"...victory!"

That was the angry roar of the White Wolf Knights. They all left with such a short battle cry, fully intending to not return. Hemet shook his head again as the knights left and returned to paying attention to the combat situation.

Knights had a knight’s duty, while a tactician had a tactician’s duty. The most important thing for Hemet to do right now was to obtain as much combat information as possible. Some information could be worth lives. Every minute was precious, and he wouldn’t

allow himself to relax and miss anything.

But, the next thing he saw through his binoculars confused him.

"That Roland; why did he stop? Hmm? Are they trying to dodge something?"

Karodian, the temporary leader of the Tiger Tribe, had been chosen by all the beastmen of the plains. He was also the one who summoned all his fellow beastmen for this attack.

In a way, he was also familiar with Reyne. Last time, during their previous invasion two years ago, he was among the beastmen that had been defeated.

Karodian was known throughout the entire beastmen society for being a tremendously aggressive war hawker. Every year, in the tribe leaders' conference, he would always shout "we should demolish the East Mist Communal Country and fight our way to San Antonio." Yet the beastman, who was always so decisive, now had an expression filled with hesitation; he seemed to have some regret.

"Fighting here with the elves for no apparent reason? This seems absolutely pointless."

Battle was the product of politics. Nobody would want to fight a battle in which there were no benefits. Amon had promised the beastmen of the plains that they would cooperate in attacking the

humans and splitting the humans' territory.

Of course, if they won in the end, how much Amon's side and Karodian's side could obtain still depended on their strength after the war. If Karodian used up some of his precious military strength for no apparent reason against this enemy that he felt like he had no reason to fight, it wouldn't be worth it at all.

"Look, up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a dragon knight! It's Superman—wait, no, it's just a naked muscular man wearing nothing but underpants! Pfft! So disgusting!"

Soon, however, Karodian didn't have to hesitate anymore, as the huge figure that descended from the sky happened to land right between the two armies.

Boom!

When that person fell to the ground, he instantly moved himself into what he considered a dignified thinking pose. And when he realized that everyone was looking at him, he suddenly lifted his arms, flexed his muscles, and placed his fists against each other in a pose that was obviously to show off his muscles. Then, he smiled.

"Love and peace! Please stop; this world is so beautiful—we shouldn't fight! We should all love each other! Make love, not war!"

With his white teeth reflecting the sunlight, this muscular man

was smiling like the sun. His words kept increasing in volume, and by the end, he was even singing the last few words.

But the most discomforting part of all was that even though he was obviously a ridiculously muscular fellow, he had a handsome and pretty face that seemed like it belonged in a shoujo manga. He even appeared to have an expression of embarrassment, and this tremendous contrast seemed to add to his ridiculousness.

"Kill that pervert for me!"

Okay, then, Karodian unhesitatingly shouted out what so many people were thinking, and his subordinates instantly attempted to carry out his order.

It wasn't only the beastmen who acted impulsively; at the exact same time, even Annie and Suana had ordered their soldiers to fire arrows.

Unfortunately, before any arrows could reach that man, they all fell to the ground as if there was an invisible barrier around him.

"Oh my, what disobedient children. Then, allow me, Omar, to teach you what is love!"

Omar flexed his frontal muscles, his back muscles, and his six-pack in a series of exercise fitness routines that made people feel like throwing up in disgust. He glowed brilliantly, and in the next instant, countless amounts of undead armies suddenly

materialized out of thin air.

"My heart contains all my citizens, and as a king, wherever I stand is where my country is. My undead are beloved to me, and they love me as well. Come, this is my ultimate love!"

He gave an extravagant kiss towards those skeletons and wiggled his eyes seductively. The brainless skeletons under his control actually made embarrassed reactions in unison, and as for those poor undead that still retained their intelligence...

Annie learned, for the first time, that even the undead were capable of being disgusted to the point of kneeling on the ground and throwing up.

But strength was, by far, the most effective method to get people to listen to you. Even though Omar was obviously a pervert, the hordes of undead caused the beastmen who had been so furious to begin retreating.

"Is it Lord Omar? Those bones—er—Roland probably can’t last much longer; please hurry and support him."

"Oh, are you the red-haired Annie girl? Small Lionheart told me about you; you’re just like what I heard! So cute—have you ever considered joining me and becoming a star idol? I recently created many new beautiful poses and dances, and if we team up as a dance team, we’d surely shock the entire world."

"I think it would scare the entire world instead."

Okay, Annie at least knew that the person before her was definitely quite strong, so she merely retorted and complained in a tiny voice only she could hear.

"Why is he even more ridiculous than what I heard? I didn't hear that he had all these problems..."

However, in the next instant, Omar's response helped everyone understand.

"Relax, reinforcements have already been sent to help Father. That guy's such an interesting person; he helped me learn so much about love, and I definitely can't match up to him."

...

When I noticed the black dot in the distance that kept increasing in size, I inwardly realized the truth and couldn't stop my eyebrows from twitching. It was definitely good that I had reinforcements, but if my reinforcements were that person—well, let's just say I would have preferred to fight without his help.

"Look, up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a dragon knight! It's Superman—whoops, no, it's a Beifeng! Ahh! Hide!"

The black dot kept growing larger in my vision before it suddenly crashed into the ground, knocked over a small building, and

created a small crater.

"What? Is he dead?"

The sounds of shock must have been from people who didn’t know him; since, after all...

"No, no. Even if all of Eich is destroyed, that guy won’t die."

Those who knew him were, of course, aware of this undying gentleman.

"Ah! I almost died."

As I expected, in the very next instant, that guy’s head poked out from the building’s rubble with an expression as if he had just barely survived a calamity. However, I knew that he deserved whatever he got.

"You bastard half-dragon! If you decide to tug off my scales one more time and touch wherever you please, I’m going to toss you into a volcano!"

From above the clouds was the sound of an angry roar. With a powerful gale, a purple magic dragon descended from the clouds. After landing, it transformed into a human that glared at the Legend-rank hunter who was attempting to look everywhere but at the dragon.

"Thunderspeed Dragon? This is your animal companion?"

I had heard that Beifeng had used his own dragon blood to ally himself and contract a contract with a Thunderspeed Dragon. The Thunderspeed Dragon was known as the swiftest among all dragons, and only it could have brought Beifeng from Antuen to here in just a single night.

"Well, it’s not bad that you could come, but you won’t be all that useful here. You might as well have let Adam come instead."

I wasn’t looking down on him; our opponent was the Poison God Felix. A Legend-ranked hunter and a young dragon wouldn’t help balance the scales by all that much so it would have been better if the dragon had brought Adam here.

But, right then, I heard a familiar foolish laugh.

"Heh heh, I didn’t expect you to believe in me so much."

I turned around and looked behind me—wasn’t that Adam, the most useful tank? The current him was completely naked except for his underwear and the magical runes that were scribbled all over him.

It turned out that right when the Thunderspeed Dragon had landed, it had unfurled the giant magical carpet it had been carrying—the carpet which had pre-prepared magical runes and

spell formations on it. When this simplified spell formation synchronized with the larger, more complex one in Antuen, Margaret had been able to use her remaining magical ingredients to cast another teleportation spell. And of course, Adam, who was currently laughing like a fool, was the person who had been teleported.

"That’s wonderful!"

I laughed raucously in delight as I kicked Adam away.

"Go be my meat shield; I need fifteen minutes of absolute safety!"

Okay then, I’m not going to talk any more about how that naked man went to battle with a face filled with displeasure. With such a top-level meat shield around, it instantly reduced the pressure on the other warriors immensely, and it also opened up the possibility for me to accomplish something else.

When Harloys pointed out Felix’s characteristics, it immediately attracted his attention and enmity. Perhaps there was nothing that could be hidden from Felix in his own Divine Domain, and I would be unable to do anything significant without sufficient protection. However, now that the tank was here, I could activate a new type of trump card.

Cast a Forbidden Spell such as Ice Aeon? First of all, it’s a major spell that would require more than one or two hours to finish chanting, not to mention that even if I gave up my life, I wouldn’t be able to cast such a high-level Forbidden Spell. Moreover, even

without considering the severe side effects to the environment that such a spell would cause, I felt that such a large-scale Forbidden Spell would probably be unable to defeat Felix.

I also felt that the moment I started chanting such a high-level spell, the tremendous surges in the waves of mana it would generate would undoubtedly make Felix ignore everything else and attempt to kill me at all costs. In the past, I had the protection of the armies of undead, but that was no longer the case.

If my opponent had been an innumerable amount of beastmen, then I wouldn't have had any way to deal with them, but if my opponent was something like a True God, then I really did have an ace card up my sleeve—well, it wasn't exactly an ace card since it was a trump card that definitely broke the rules. It would surely cause me endless amounts of trouble, but I had still prepared it for this type of circumstance.

And it was also the existence of this ace card that gave me the courage to face Karwenz by myself. After all, with the passage of so many years, it was quite possible for Karwenz to suddenly turn on me, so I wouldn't possibly appear in front of him if I, at least, couldn't protect myself.

Karwenz was nice enough to only chat with me, so I still had this ace card to use right now.

And since my opponent had totally disregarded the rules, this ace card of mine, which was definitely on the borderline of the gray area, wouldn't cause any trouble for me either.

As I had thought, just the beginning of my casting attracted a large amount of sky-covering poisonous spit to be spat in my direction.

However, I didn’t even glance at it, and I continued to focus on my preparations. I had full belief that someone would block that troublesome poisonous spit for me.

"Ahh—my underpants! It’s over! I’m so humiliated!"

As I expected, Adam blocked the poisonous spit for me, but the corrosive, poisonous mist ended up destroying his only remaining article of clothing—he was now utterly naked.

"Time out! Wait for me to put on some pants! Hey, I even said time out; why aren’t you obeying the rules? This lady over here, could you please loan your skirt to me? Hey—hey—don’t run away, I’m not really a pervert! I just saw that you weren’t wearing much to begin with, and it seemed easy to take off!"

"Pervert!"

Okay then, let us ignore this person who actually tried to borrow clothing from a female mage and ended up getting slapped—the fact was, however, that his presence gave me enough time to safely cast the ace card spell that I was determined to use here.

"God’s Descent!"

Shoujo manga (少女漫画 shōjo manga) is manga aimed at a teenage female readership.

Chapter 195: Judgement

The battle before us was already difficult to the point of despair. Even though the warriors weren't afraid of sacrifices, the enemy was immune to ordinary weapons, and it was nigh impossible to scratch his defenses—any battle that was impossible to win would naturally lower the warriors' morale.

"In front of True Gods, all are nothing but ants." — Main True God of The Elves, Anslo Shusta Alderban.

Although I didn't approve of such arrogant words, I couldn't help but admit that these existences known as Gods were the most annoying types of entities, and it was all due to their undying natures and broad Divine Domains.

This, right now, was the perfect example. No matter how hard the mortals worked, they were unable to cause any life-threatening harm to Felix, and even if they somehow managed to injure him, Felix only needed to spend some divine power and would recover in the next second.

"What ants? Humph—it's just that divine power is too powerful and disables the mortals from landing fatal blows... but, it's not impossible to deal with."

"God's Descent!"

Yes, my method was God's Descent as well. This was the ace card I had left for myself when I had ascended to a God; it was my

safeguard against any powerful beings that may come looking for trouble later.

True Gods couldn't be defeated? Even if this was treated as a maxim in this world, I had never believed it. However, I had to admit that the special concept known as divine power was incredibly difficult to deal with.

Since I wanted to reach my goal in this Holy War, I knew that I would be facing True Gods sooner or later, and the simplest method to deal with them was to also possess divine power. This was also why I had spent so much effort on creating a True God that was worthy of having believers.

What was the condition for a God's Descent? It was that the souls should be similar and the bodies should be compatible. And there was nobody else who would be more compatible with Wumianzhe—we were the same to begin with, after all, and we could skip all the rituals.

The moon elves were able to achieve a God's Descent with a synchronization ratio of about 60%. Karwenz had specially prepared Reyne's body so that he could synchronize with her at about 80%. However, between Wumianzhe and me, our synchronization was 100% from the very start. Moon elves needed to change their soul wavelengths in order to begin the ritual for a God's Descent, but for me, all I needed to do was make a connection with my other self in the heavens.

Of course, an overly high synchronization wasn't necessarily good either, as two entirely identical souls would create another

problem. But now wasn't the time to be worrying about that.

With the two identical wills and souls connecting, a blinding, silver light descended as a lustrous balance appeared in midair. The judge's silver mask materialized together with a similarly silver Divine Domain that began clashing with the grayish-purple Divine Domain.

Through my body, the Law God and Guardian God of the North, Wumianzhe, had descended!

"Heh, is this the feeling of a God?"

My awareness was crystal-clear; I could clearly notice Hemet's shocked expression in the far-off observation tower as he dropped his binoculars. Falsity did not exist in a God's eyes; a God could see truth and souls for what they were.

I could sense the enormous amount of faith transforming into strength as it rushed to my Divine Domain through the pillars of heaven. Most of the chains of faith in the Northlands were related to me as I was the Guardian God of the Northlands. These many believers helped augment my strength.

"...Increasing my strength right now isn't a good thing. I don't have much time; I should hurry."

One body could only possess one soul. When two souls shared the same body for too long, they would instinctively begin trying to

suppress and devour each other even if special methods were used to make one soul subordinate to the other. However, this wasn't a problem for me.

Wumianzhe was just an automated version of myself to begin with, and our souls were identical. It was just like two file folders that contained identical documents; no matter how much you overlapped them, they would still be the same.

That wasn't my problem.

"Damn it, we have already started combining..."

Yes, my problem wasn't about the God's Descent in itself; instead, it was about how I would separate from Wumianzhe after I was finished.

Let me make an analogy. A normal God's Descent was akin to the mixing of oil and water; they would have to work on making two completely different existences come together and synchronize to raise the compatibility rate. On the other hand, my God's Descent was like the mixing of water and water; the biggest problem was how to separate the two afterward.

Right now, I had already achieved a strategic goal, as vast amounts of knowledge and secrets poured into my mind and a tremendous amount of divine power filled my body. Even though I took a circuitous route, I was finally able to steal the knowledge and wisdom of the True Gods!

"The secrets of the right to become a God, the structure of the power of faith, reincarnation, the Hall of Valhalla—this was all worth it!"

Some things could only be seen upon reaching a certain level. I had been awaiting these divine secrets for quite a while, and now that I possessed them, the next step of my plan could finally be realized. My future personal development now became much clearer.

"I finally made progress. With this, I can focus entirely on increasing my personal combat strength..."

Yet now wasn't the time to rejoice, as my consciousness was already becoming blurry. Wumianzhe was like a vast ocean absorbing a small river—me. If this combination continued, perhaps we would never be able to be separated again.

"No matter if Wumianzhe is pulled down here or if I'm pulled up to the heavens, neither is an acceptable end. That would mean everything I've worked for and waited for was all wasted!"

All these thoughts flashed through my mind in a short instant. The bystanders only saw Roland floating in midair as a silver judge's cap materialized on his head and his divine power transformed into a Divine Domain.

The silver and grayish-purple Divine Domains clashed against and invaded each other; each tried to force itself above the other Divine Domain. The two descended Gods clashed against each

other in an instant, using the most barbaric method of all to prove their strength.

Perhaps Roland as a host was far stronger than Adrian, perhaps Wumianzhe was simply stronger than Felix since Wumianzhe had two Divine Obligations, or perhaps Felix was still far too weak as he had just recently ascended to the position of a True God because it was obvious who the victor was at first glance.

The silver Divine Domain won overwhelmingly!

"A battle between Gods!"

The battle which would determine the master of the Northlands rose to the final level, as even the Gods began directly interfering in the fight. Although the current me seemed rather majestic, I actually had a severe headache, with my consciousness becoming hazy. I only wanted to go to sleep.

But I knew that if I slept now, I might never wake up again.

"Shadow!"

With a low roar, a hallucinatory shadow came to life and attached itself to my body as it greedily devoured divine power and grew.

This was the strength that I had obtained from that great snowy mountain. That Frigid Nightmare that just couldn’t hatch had

finally transformed—but it had transformed into a piece of ice named Shadow. Currently, it was just a newborn that severely lacked nutrition, and divine power from the same source was the best nutrition of all.

What did I mean by "same source?" Wumianzhe's divine power was from the same source as me, and this Frigid Nightmare was my companion and was also from the same source as me. As a result, the Frigid Nightmare and Wumianzhe had the same source of power.

Frigid Nightmares would grow together with their hosts and would absorb their host's emotions in order to evolve. As for this newly-born Frigid Nightmare named Shadow, it had already absorbed more than three hundred years of negative emotions from me. Perhaps growing up in such a crazed and twisted environment created its frightening power.

Even when it had just hatched, it could already easily toy with and kill Fismer. If it could absorb enough divine power in order to make up for its shortcomings of being unable to hatch for so long, its growth potential was unimaginable. I was greatly looking forward to witnessing his growth.

After being succored by the silver divine power, Shadow, who was formerly black, began changing in color, and its hallucinatory form also began to materialize. Thanks to the power of luck and coincidence, a brand-new divine creature was being born.

From far away, Shadow seemed only like a pair of wings of light belonging to Wumianzhe, as it was actually shining brilliantly and

beautifully.

Lustrous wings kept spreading out as a silvery-white hooded cape blocked Wumianzhe's face, and Wumianzhe's silver mask materialized in the mortal plane along with numerous one-eyed emblems. He was watching everywhere, judging the entire world.

To tell the truth, all this customized equipment was the form that Shadow chose to take. As it was a part of me, Shadow was currently helping me bear part of Wumianzhe's divine power, and finally helped ease my burden so that I could spare enough attention to manipulate this unimaginably strong divine power.

"Target locked on Felix. Divine Art: Great Judgement!"

A silver light covered the entire world as the God of Law, with wings of light, reached his arms out to the sky and summoned a nameless massive Book of Law in front of him.

"Judgement!"

A silver-white gavel generated endless waves in the air as the masked and robed judge began judging the sinner before him. In the Law God's Divine Domain, there wasn't a single crime that would be able to escape his eyes.

Currently, under the Eyes of Justice, an untold number of crimes appeared as the Book of Law kept turning to the page with the punishments for crimes. In front of the Law God and the Original

Book of Law, there wasn't a single existence that would be spared —not even a God!

"You are all judged to be guilty!"

The silver-colored Divine Domain began spreading. Since the beastmen were here as well, how could I possibly just let them go? They were still waiting at the scene of the crime to split their spoils, so I was going to judge them together as well!

Hiss!

Unfortunately, the Spider God Felix's high-pitched screaming tore through my spreading Divine Domain, and dealing with its struggling took up much of my concentration, causing me to lose the chance to deal with all the troublesome beastmen in one go.

"Silence!"

I reduced the size of my Divine Domain and used silver chains to bind that gigantic Spider God. I had always believed in the maxim "better safe than sorry," so I used all of my divine power and concentration on the opponent before me.

"Divine Law, The Primary Sin of the Thirteen Sins: Those who purposefully take away others' lives shall be severely judged by the Law God; they shall suffer from impaling and fire torture even after death!"

The Divine Laws didn’t have a limit on their targets to begin with. They were the laws created by the Law God, as well as his teachings and the meaning for the Law God’s existence.

Yep, from the very start, I had never set targets for what the Divine Laws could and couldn’t judge. It had always been my intention to judge the Gods!

"Judge the Gods? Are you crazy?" Ayer was shocked at the time.

"No, this world is the one that’s crazy!" was my response.

"Just let someone as crazy as me to make you idiots high above us, you bastards who treat the lives of human—hard-working humans—as nothing more than toys! I shall teach you what the pride of the mortals is. If I don’t pull you bastards in front of me to be judged, then how could I ever end this damned battle!"

"Divine Law, Execution!"

The silver chains binding Felix began materializing and dragged the Spider God into the mortal plane as Felix’s purple divine soul started entering his body. This judgment was to take effect directly against the True God’s actual body.

A silver rack transformed into sharp knives and the Incantation of Law turned into a viciously boiling sea of magma. The Spider God was currently tortured in both this world and the other plane.

But, this was only the beginning...

"Divine Law, The Seventh Sin of the Thirteen Sins: Those who fulfill their personal desires yet forget their original Divine Obligations, break the laws, act greedily, and play around shall be stripped of all their jobs and demoted to mortal status!"

"Felix, you willfully descended and created a bloodbath, caused a battle, and killed countless lives. Many grudge-bearing souls in the River Styx are because of you..."

Even though he was currently being tortured by knives and fire, the furious spider was still trying his utmost to struggle and escape from his restraints; he had a premonition that this was about to be his end.

"...You no longer deserve to be a God. I declare right here and now that I demote the Poison God Felix to become mortal!"

The complete suppression of Felix's Divine Domain helped the Incantation of Law Great Judgement be effective. At this very moment, Felix lost his Divine Domain, and now, no matter how much strength he had remaining, he was nothing more than a giant spider instead of a venerated True God.

I knew that after my Divine Domain dissipated, Felix would recover his status as a True God. I was still far from possessing the power to truly judge the Gods, and this type of power suppression wouldn't be able to last long.

But it was enough…

Something white viciously struck Felix's head and caused him to scream in agony. As my oldest and most trusted partner, Adam would never let such an opportunity slip past him.

The massive injury on Felix's head didn't heal instantly like before. Without his Divine Domain, and without his divine defense and undying attribute, Felix was now no longer anything more than a slightly larger-than-usual and more robust normal beast.

"Hurry! Don't waste this opportunity that Lord Wumianzhe has created for us!"

"White Wolves! Victory!"

"Silver Cross, charge! Don't let those southern hicks steal away the achievement of Slaying a God; this belongs to us!"

"Blackeye Squad, grit your teeth for me and hang in there!"

"Is there anyone else left from the Rhodes Imperial Guard? Damn it, even if I'm the only one left, I'm going to charge! I won't let anyone look down on me!"

The cannons on the Borealis had been overheating to the extent where they were almost unusable but were reignited once more as the heavily injured knights began their final charge. Amongst all the fatigued armies, the Four Elemental Swordcasters who could

replenish their sources of power stood out most of all.

The other warriors had already used up all of their mana in this long, drawn-out battle, but as a product born in this new generation type of battle, the Swordcasters had already recharged their mana through the Borealis. They were currently tossing out Fireballs and Thunder Arrows, using the most basic elemental spells to deal irrecoverable damage to the former True God; Felix was on the brink of death.

"This isn’t enough! We won’t make it in time!"

I could sense that this wasn’t enough. Felix had yet to receive a fatal injury, but I was almost unable to maintain this for any longer.

I was already beginning to lose my mind as chaos and confusion filled my head, and I felt dizzier and dizzier and wanted to sleep, but…

"…Is there really nothing else I can do? It was so difficult to make it to this step; was everything but a waste? I can’t accept this!"

My soul and Wumianzhe’s soul were on the verge of complete synchronization, and if I didn’t cancel the God’s Descent soon, I probably would never be able to do so. I wanted to grit my teeth and hold on, but my consciousness was becoming hazier, making holding on any longer seem meaningless.

"I just want to sleep; why do I have to hold on—no, this is no good!"

"Then, let me cancel the God’s Descent; my soul is beginning to combine—I definitely can’t do that!"

"Who—who am I? Wumianzhe? Roland? Blackhand? Rolo?"

Alluring words were trying to steal my consciousness away, and Felix’s divine power was still struggling against mine and increasing the speed of the fading of my consciousness. My chaotic memories were affecting my mental stability, and I was almost unable to hold on for any longer, but...

"We Aurora Knights have returned!"

"Let these invaders taste the fury of the Mist!"

"May the Will of the Mist remain unbroken forever! We have returned!"

Their familiar battle cries snapped me back to my senses. Weren’t those in the sky our imperial knights? They finally made it just in time.

"The Imperial Knights of the Mist Kingdom, all fifty-four members of the Aurora Knights have arrived, and we pay our respects to Your Highness Roland! Your Highness, we have returned!"

Ah, my knights, I knew you wouldn’t disappoint me! After all, no matter if it was 378 years ago, 252 years ago, 132 years ago, or 1 year ago, you never disappointed me!

"The Aurora Knights of the Eastern Mist Communal Country; all one hundred and seventy-four members of the Aurora Knights have arrived! We pay our respects to Your Highness Roland! Your Highness, leave the rest to us!"

These new generation youngsters flew a circle around me with their teachers before putting on their iron helmets. They then began laughing maniacally as they charged towards the humongous spider who was still flailing around.

"Nice job, young one!"

The Lion King Frigid Nightmare who belonged to the first Mist King gave me his rare praise as he transformed into a colossal Lion King and pounced towards Felix.

But, he came up empty.

"Ah Dang is here! I shall beat up anyone who dares to bully my father!"

If it weren’t for that familiar voice, perhaps not a single person would be able to connect that gigantic furious titan with Gluttony. The giant, who suddenly landed, directly smashed Felix to the

ground, as a huge bone dragon, which suddenly descended from the skies, shrieked and emanated death with every breath.

This was a rarely seen scene. Undead Knights and Holy Knights had allied with each other and were charging together, dragon knights and bone dragons were actually on the same side, and the corpse-eating king was actually using a human holy sword. Imperceptibly, I felt as if I was getting closer to the utopia I dreamed of...

I was already losing control of my hazy consciousness, but I held firmly onto the chains of the beast that was in my cage.

"Felix! You want to escape? Stop dreaming! Pay some interest for the amount of blood that you've caused to spill on this land! Later, I'll go looking for Lorci to collect the principal!"

1. According to Wiktionary, principal —not to be confused with principle —refers to the money originally invested or loaned, on which basis interest and returns are calculated.

Chapter 196: Slaying a God

An ancient epic was re-enacted at this moment; an undying True God had managed to fall.

The chains that represented divine punishment had pulled Felix down from his status as a True God. And without that status, he no longer had the divine power that could regenerate himself from his injuries, so he finally began panicking.

After receiving the honor of becoming a God, he would never have been able to imagine that he would one day fall in battle. To him, battles were just games, and mortals were just the chess pieces on the chessboard. Yet this game had now turned fatal for him.

Panic and helplessness finally appeared in his eight eyes as he was now experiencing fear and despair for the first time, emotions which he had been giving to the mortals all this time.

He truly wanted to escape.

But it was already too late.

The Seven Deadly Sins had arrived...

"Damned Gods, have we People of the Mist offended you? What's with all this? Is it so hard to just live peacefully?"

The furious Ah Bas of Wrath ripped off one of Felix’s long legs in a single movement, causing dark-purple poisonous blood to spray everywhere. The enormous three-headed hellhound had already become larger than the gigantic spider, and two of Bastian’s heads kept injuring Felix while the other head angrily roared and spat death.

Without a doubt, he was venting his anger, but there was nothing wrong with him doing so—many warriors were also shouting at the ugly spider.

"Why us! Why can’t we just live peacefully in this land?"

The northern people had already suffered so much, and they, too, wanted to ask why war had to occur in their homeland again! Was it too much to ask for to want to live in peace?

Yet Felix didn’t answer, nor was he able to answer.

"Ah Dang, Ah Dang hates spiders!"

The huge titan, which was speaking in a low and muffled voice, had transformed into an enormous octopus, with its flexible yet robust tentacles curling around the vicious spider. Ah Dang used suppression techniques that no human could use to seal Felix’s efforts at resistance, and his thickest tentacle had turned into a round hammer that continually smashed Felix’s head.

To Ah Dang, values such as truth and justice were never of

importance. The concept of peace that humans believed in was also meaningless, but there was one point he absolutely couldn't tolerate—if anyone dared to harm his family, then Ah Dang would go all out and viciously beat that person.

"Lock on to Felix's limbs! Fire half of all our remaining ammunition!"

This time, cannon fire and smoke covered the skies. Even though Felix's still outstanding defense helped him ignore these cannon shells, Envy's Borealis spun Felix around like a dragon before proceeding to brutally sink its horn into his forehead.

That was a cursed horn belonging to a SemiGod Single-Horned Whale. This strike, which contained some partial divine power, wasn't an attack that Felix, who had lost his divine power, was able to ignore.

"Hiss! Ahh!"

Felix's sharp wails sounded just like the cruelest type of curse magic, but unfortunately, he was being suppressed by two undead even larger than himself—he was utterly incapable of movement. Felix could only obediently remain as our living target.

But this was only the beginning. The newcomer to the Seven Deadly Sins wanted to show off its ability in front of its older siblings.

"Mine! All mine! I’m envious of your eight divine eyes! I’m going to take them for myself!"

With a dark glow enveloping Envy, Felix lost four of his eyes, and at this very instant, four dark green eyes appeared on the front half of the Borealis.

And Felix, who had lost half of his eyes, was worse off than having been blind, as the chaotic situation for him turned into twisted scenery. He soon lost his balance under the suppression of the enormous undead that had been causing him to continually shake.

"Ah, my younger siblings, your older brother has arrived."

That familiar magnanimous-sounding voice caused the two colossal undead beasts to pause simultaneously in surprise. This manner of addressing them would only be used by that fellow who causes everyone to feel discomfort when simply looking at him.

But after his light-sounding words came a thunderstorm.

"Million-undead armies!"

Countless undead armies suddenly appeared, and they furiously poured forth as if they had just erupted from a volcano. The low-level undead climbed over the gigantic spider—it was a magical version of a scene of ants swarming an elephant.

Yet this still wasn’t over.

"Ah, my fist is beauty and justice! My justice is the will of my kingdom!"

The man in form-fitting clothes made a sliding movement while being surrounded by innumerable thin threads that were, in fact, soul connections, which gave this man that nobody could stand looking at an endless amount of power. His ridiculously exaggerated flying kick pierced through the humongous spider’s stomach, causing large amounts of divine blood to pour out from Felix’s wound and distort any plants that it touched. The Spider Prince had received a heavy injury.

Omar’s attack definitely attracted everyone’s attention, but what greeted him were his allies’ complaints.

"What’s with calling yourself the older brother? You’re the youngest!"

"Ah Dang is the oldest brother!"

The arrival of four of the Seven Deadly Sins along with strong reinforcements from the fresh new undead army that didn’t know the meaning of fatigue finally helped the defending warriors relax. Meanwhile, the true guardians of this land, the ace knight squadron that had the reputation of being undefeatable whenever they numbered over one hundred, had arrived once again in the present day.

Those beautiful silver-white arcs in the sky were, shockingly, strong warriors. The veteran knights among them were in no hurry, and they acted like a wolf pack surrounding its prey as they searched for their enemy's weak point.

And, at that moment, Felix, who was on the verge of collapsing, had already revealed his weak point.

"Everyone, prepare to charge! Use the 'death slide' tactic!"

The Aurora Knights that never numbered over one hundred actually had nearly three hundred knights now. This famous #1 ranked knight squadron in the Northlands had now revived itself from the ashes of the Mist Kingdom, and its classical combat strategy was now revisiting the stages of history.

The seemingly shining Aurora became beautiful silver meteors as they streaked through the sky. Their thrown spears and ice arrows froze Felix's critical areas and joints as the Frigid Nightmare steeds beneath them created paths of ice in the sky.

When the crystal-clear path in the sky was finally completed, the sleeping white dragon had transformed into a fatally sharp blade.

"Everyone, charge!"

At the beginning of the icy path in midair, the veteran knights were taking the lead as the newer knights loosened their grips on their reins and allowed the legendary Frigid Nightmares to carry

them on this charge.

"Vanguard, ice blades! All invaders shall perish!"

As the Aurora Knights slid on the ice path, the accumulated power of the ice helped sharpen their icy blades as they kept enlarging and increasing in speed. By the time the Aurora Knights reached the ice path's end, their ice blades had transformed into fatal blades at soaring speeds.

"Ahhhhhhh!"

Countless huge blades pierced into Felix's body at light speed, and when most of the ice blades had pierced into his body, the Aurora Knights themselves mixed in with their ice blades and used their own bodies as blades; they transformed into rainbows of colors as they tore Felix's body apart once more.

"Rear guard, reorganize for the second charge!"

After exhausting their ice blades, the knights flew back up to the beginning of the ice path to begin a new round of construction of the ice blades. Unless all the Aurora Knights' Frigid Nightmares used up every last drop of their mana, this ice blade attack would never end. This was the 'death slide' tactic that the Aurora Knights specially used for destroying mega-sized targets.

The largest 'death slide' tactic in history used thirty-six Aurora Knights, and they had managed to slay an Ancient White Dragon.

But this time, their number was more than that by ten times! The endless ice blades were at the top of physical attacks, and they even contained magical attack power from death and ice magic. Except for Ah Dang, who couldn't feel pain at all, everyone—even Bastian and Omar—had to step backwards.

This time, it was the Frigid Nightmare Lion King's turn to transform into a huge beast and suppress Felix, as he was immune to his fellow Frigid Nightmares' ice magic. The Lion King, however, quickly discovered that this was completely unnecessary, as Felix had now lost all energy and was injured to the point where he couldn't even move.

Roar!

The blind spider that had lost its leg pitifully roared in pain. It was no longer a threat; the Poison God, the harbinger of so much death, had its body pierced all over repeatedly before it finally collapsed with the ice blades still stuck into its body. Ah Dang transformed into a huge-mawed devourer and chomped the spider's head in a single bite, delivering the final, fatal blow.

When the gigantic spider finally lost its head and collapsed, I received a message from my System. [Congratulations to Host. You have completed the 'Slaying a God' quest, and your reward is a God Equipment...]. And it was only then that I finally relaxed my incredibly tense mind and immediately canceled the God's Descent.

"Finally..."

I was fully satisfied from the feeling of victory, and as I watched Wumianzhe's soul return to the heavens above, I gave up any resistance and sunk into a deep slumber.

...

"Congratulations; you did it."

After waking up, the first sentence I heard was rather surprising.

The next moment, however, all my fatigue instantly vanished, because I recognized the identity of the young-seeming person before me.

"Ayer."

The person learning against the window and gazing outside was precisely the Death God Ayer. It was only that this time, he wasn't wearing his signature black robe; the long white robe he was currently donning actually made him resemble a bookish scholar.

"What did I do?"

I was still suffering from the backlash of using God's Descent. My memories were still a chaotic swirl in my mind, and I had no idea what had happened after I had fallen asleep.

Ayer was surprised at my question, but then he chuckled.

"Felix died. Although it was with the participation of another God, he's still perhaps the first True God to die by a mortal's hand in more than two thousand years."

My memories gradually returned, and I recalled how the Poison God was finally surrounded and slain. It was very likely that the entire world was shocked—a True God was slain immediately after ascending. Lorci would definitely be infuriated...

"Right, did Lorci do anything? How did she react?"

"Lorci is dead."

Ayer casually tossed such a tremendous bomb at me.

"Dead? How did she die?"

Unlike Felix, Lorci had descended to the mortal plane using her true body. Although she wouldn't be able to return to her Divine Country for the time being, a True God in her complete form would definitely possess frightening strength—a completely different level from Felix, who was a fresh new God that had descended into a host's body. Lorci was a veteran True God with far greater strength than Felix. Who in the mortal plane could possibly kill her?

"It was the Abyssal Prince Karwenz. Not even Lorci's corpse

remained."

"Karwenz!?"

"Yep. It is highly probable that her double betrayal angered the big shots of both sides. The leaders of Chaos wanted to kill her, and nobody on the Order side was willing to protect her, so she ended up dying. Hmph. This will scare those who are still undecided and sitting on the fence."

Ayer described it so casually, but with a little deduction on my part, I was aware that the death of the two dark elf Gods would cause a huge wave.

"Right, how's the battlefield in the Northlands? What happened to those beastmen in the end?"

"Ask her; she's probably anxious to see you."

At this moment, the door suddenly opened, and Elisa entered; upon seeing me awake, she had an obviously relieved expression.

"You're finally awake—you've been sleeping for six days already. If you didn't wake up soon, I wouldn't have known what to do."

Six days? My chaotic memories must have clouded my mind, as I felt like it was less than a day.

Following Elisa was a vast mob of noisy people. And they all had something in common...

"Your Highness, Her Highness Reyne is still missing, and our military reorganization needs you to take charge."

"The other countries' generals and leaders are requesting that you attend conferences for dealing with the aftermath of the battle, drawing of new borders, the division of the victory loot—all these require your presence. Our Eastern Mist Communal Country stands to profit greatly this time, but without your presence, we're unable to control the situation."

"The undead army is currently stationed outside the castle. Thanks to their performance during that battle, they haven't caused a panic, but we need an effective way to communicate with them..."

"The Rhodes Kingdom has mentioned the possibility of them accepting the Church of Law, and their highest-ranked priest Xueti is requesting a personal meeting with you to discuss the specifics."

"The man with the undead army actually started a contest to see who is the strongest and handsomest. He and Lord Xueti are currently competing in the finals. Their clothes have all exploded —that scene is too beautiful that I don't even dare to describe it! My lord, you're the only one who can stop them! Before they destroy this entire city, please do something to stop them!"

Before I could even react, countless chaotic affairs were dumped

upon my head, and when I turned around to request for help, I discovered that Ayer had completely vanished.

After that, I was instantly overrun by the chatting babble before me, and my sickbed was piled to the top with tasks requiring my immediate attention and various official documents.

"That’s right—Elisa! You guys can go find her; she has my full authority as my representative."

Where else was I supposed to find such a good assistant scapegoat? Yet before I could even look in Elisa’s direction, that former Demon Marchioness, who had anticipated that I would push everything onto her, had also already vanished somewhere.

"Hey—hey, don’t be so heartless! I just woke up, and you want me to do so much already?"

I wanted to escape, but the attendants and officials around me had already placed their own swords to their necks—a threat that they would kill themselves if I just ignored them.

I could only helplessly sigh and take a document as I begun the busywork that would make anyone feel powerless.

"If only that little brat were here; just where did Reyne end up? Karwenz should have returned to the Chaos Abyss by now, so why hasn’t Reyne returned? Is it really true that girls won’t return to the nest when they grow up and not care about their fathers

anymore!?"

At the exact same time, Reyne was exclaiming out loud in shock as well!

"Where is this?! Why am I here; am I not in the Northlands anymore?"

In the center of human territory was the Bardi Empire. And on the biggest red-light district street in a certain city of this empire, in the most expensive facility named "Elven Night," Reyne suddenly woke up while being hugged by many women. She immediately discovered that it was quite crowded around her.

"Why are there so many women! Achoo! The perfume is too heavy in here!"

In such a small room, there were a dozen girls that seemed like flowers looking at her, and those women were all looking at her with romantic interest. Some were trying to press their bodies against her while some were even in the midst of removing their clothes.

"Milord, why did you stop singing? I was waiting for your song."

The golden-haired young lady’s face was turning red as she said so, and her red face and the look in her eyes revealed the fact that she was seriously in love with Reyne—she was looking at Reyne as if Reyne was her first love. The large snow-white mounds on the

blonde girl's chest were even more blinding, and she suddenly wrapped her arms around Reyne. Even though they were of the same gender, Reyne didn't have much experience in this matter, so her face instantly turned red. Next, however, the women surrounding her said something even more shocking.

"Milord, do you want more? Let my fellow sisters rest a bit; quite a few of us collapsed last night..."

While she was refusing on the surface, all the women's red faces and efforts at disrobing revealed their true feelings. Reyne was unable to take this any longer.

"Wait, wait, don't take off your clothes! Hey—hey—hey, why are you all taking off your clothes? I'm a girl as well!"

"Hehe, Milord just loves to play these games of pretending to refuse. Of course, we already know that Milord is a woman, but Milord is far better at this than those useless men. Hehe, none of us sisters can be without you anymore, and every one of us is waiting for you to purchase our debts."

This time, Reyne realized she had met with a huge disaster as she looked at those hungry, desire-filled eyes and the pile of snow-white bodies in front of her.

And one week later, a report was placed in front of me.

"What? Reyne had fun in the Bardi Empire's most luxurious red-

light district street for half a month, won countless beauties' favor, received the wondrous title of 'King of Ten Thousand Flowers,' and even agreed to innumerable requests to purchase the women's debts, but in the end, she was penniless, and the red-light district has imprisoned her? And now they're requesting us to pay her debts and bail her out?"

After hesitating a moment, I ended up replying to the Bardi Empire messenger like this:

"You probably got it wrong! We don't have a man named Reyne here. Yep, definitely not! What? She's a woman? Then that's even more impossible since all of us Mist Royalty are normal people. Definitely no perverts at all! Yep, definitely not! I never lie."

Chapter 197: Mist Alliance

"O that blossoming wild lily flower, how charismatic she was! How beautiful she sung! How she danced extravagantly like a butterfly; she was the female emperor of the red-light district! The dream lover of all men and women..."

I intentionally hired several bards to sing Reyne's recent "praises" to her for our reunion.

Surprisingly, however, Reyne had no reaction at all. With bloodshot eyes, she seemed to be in a daze, and the instant after she saw me, her legs gave out and she almost collapsed on the spot.

Zzz!

She instantly fell asleep in my arms, and she actually started snoring!

"This is...?"

All those punishments I had readied for her were wasted. It seemed Reyne must have had a tough time—while physical fatigue wouldn't be much for a Gold-ranked Law Knight to cope with, the mental pressure she had been dealing with must have been significant. After all, since she was a girl, her all-important chastity was now ruined, and it would be difficult for her to get married in the future.

Thinking of this, I couldn’t help but feel some sympathy and some regret at the punishments I had arranged; after all, this was all Karwenz’s fault.

Otherwise, I could have still tried to explain myself. But now, this already existed: ["Legendary Lily Flower Princess Knight Dragon Slaying Chronicles" and "She and Her Eighteen Flowers" published as novels, book reviews, and plays, with a 12% discount for buying in a bundle! Buy three at once and you will even receive a free oil painting poster!]

"I’m so sorry… we old guys really overdid it…"

Thinking of all I had done, I felt even more regret.

"…Brother Roland, Rey-rey doesn’t blame you…"

Hearing the gentle words coming from her as she laid in my arms, I was rather touched, but…

"…so, stop licking my feet, please. Rey-rey knows you like me, but acting like a dog out of love is no good, and also… don’t take off your clothes—you’re such a pervert. You actually want to wear my clothes? Fine then. If it’s Rol-rol, it’s fine… Stop sniffing! I’m so embarrassed… Stop licking… Are pantie-pants that wonderful? Directly licking there…"

My face turned white with anger right then and there. What was with all this!?

"Um, Your Highness, please don’t be angry. Her Highness Reyne is under the effects of a Sweet Dream Curse from a succubus. These days, she’s been pulled into strange dreams, which was why she didn’t sleep on her way back at all. It wasn’t easy for her to stay awake all this time."

A Sweet Dream Curse? What the heck was that?

"Inferno succubi have the natural talent to magnify a person’s innermost desires. With a person’s weakness, a succubus can cause their victims to sink into their desires and slowly fall into depravity; for example, a person in love with money would dream about taking a bath in a mountain of gold, a perverted person would dream about having countless beauties at his service, and as for Reyne... cough, Karwenz most likely left the curse behind so that she would have a tendency to follow her desires more often. This would cause her to fall more towards the Chaos side, and it would make his next descent more convenient."

Ok, fine then, as a demon noble, Elisa would naturally know plenty about the Chaos Abyss. When I heard all this, I laughed out loud with a look of delight on my face.

"That means Reyne’s innermost desires are those types of things? That’s what she secretly wants the most? My dark history of wearing female clothing? Treating me as some type of pervert with several strange fetishes? Hehehehehehehehehe! It seems that she definitely needs some correcting! No, just the Personality-Correcting Fist of Justice won’t be enough—let’s just brainwash her entirely and reconstruct her personality! At the very least, that

dark history definitely can’t be left behind!"

I was filled with smiles as I picked Reyne up and walked towards my room. It seemed that I would be rather busy today making preparations for the brainwashing forbidden spell...

"Her Highness Reyne is so pitiful; His Highness Roland must be so furious."

"His Highness Roland has turned into a darker version of himself; his smile is so scary..."

I suddenly recalled something as I turned around, flashing a smile at those officials.

"You guys didn’t hear anything today, right? Or should I help you all forget?"

The both of them shook their heads nonstop in panic.

"I didn’t hear anything!"

"I definitely didn’t hear anything!"

Seeing those two young guys continuously shake their heads, I nodded in satisfaction. Compliance meant that they were obedient children; naughty children needed to be punished.

I chuckled as I glanced at Reyne, who was still in my arms.

"Where should I start from—oh right, I haven't played mud-wrestling or bungee jumping in so long, and the little dark room seems pretty good as well..."

However, a familiar sound of heavy footsteps along with the roaring of the wind caused me to react by helplessly closing my eyes.

Boom!

The wall that had just been fixed now had a huge hole in it, and by the side of this huge hole were another three newly-added human-shaped holes.

Boom!

Fine, I knew that these guys never knew how to use doors to begin with.

"Haha! You guys, come and catch me!"

"Stop running! Ah Dang is the oldest brother!"

This scene of siblings play-fighting before me was rather nostalgic. However, for the older brother dwarf wielding a stone pillar weighing a ton, smashing large holes everywhere, and the

younger brother muscleman opening holes in the wall as he pleased—it was something I felt helpless about.

From a certain standpoint, they both possessed a very young mental age, and I could understand this type of "play" behavior, but if they involved me...

"No matter if it's Omar's brute strength or Ah Dang's huge stone pillar, I'd probably die instantly. Dying because of playing hide and seek with naughty children? That's just too scary to even imagine."

And so, I did my best to hide my presence with the full intention of leaving the scene secretly. But that was when I noticed that something was wrong.

"Wait a moment—where did Ah Dang get that stone pillar from? Why does it look so familiar, like I just saw it a moment ago?"

But when I recalled it in the next instant, it was already too late.

"Ahhh! Damned Ah Dang—that's the main pillar of this room!"

Okay then, the ceiling that was rapidly getting lower and the room that collapsed with a boom had already given me my answer.

"The Beastman King Amon Bloodaxe has died?"

In a way, this result was completely within my expectations.

Before I lost consciousness, the situation had turned around and the beastmen from the high plains were once again forced into a dire situation.

They had acted as the other beastmen's reinforcements yet were completely blocked off by the Underground and undead armies, and when they discovered that even a True God was about to perish and that the human reinforcements were getting stronger and stronger, the beastmen from the plains, who had suffered a bitter defeat one year earlier, wisely chose to retreat.

When the Plains Beastmen Leader Karodian retreated together with all the beastmen tribes of the plains, the fortunate survivors among the plateau beastmen from that long bloody night discovered, to their astonishment, that they had actually lost all of their allies, while, unbeknownst to them, their opponents' strength had multiplied by several folds.

"We definitely can't allow Felix to die here! Otherwise, we'll all die!"

Even the seemingly undefeatable True God was now in such peril after descending, so the remaining beastmen were all forced back to the battlefield. They knew that the deep grudges held against them by the other species could never be paid back except in blood. When faced with the humans of the Northlands, the Xiluo undead, the grayblood elves, and the allied Underground armies, they had zero chance of victory.

They were trying to avoid unnecessary losses since the very start, and they had retreated to the outside of Felix's Divine Domain.

When they finally started moving to help save Felix, they first had to deal with the interference of the allied armies of the Underground the undead.

Moreover, the reinforcements of Xiluo and the Underground were all fresh armies that were well prepared for battle—it was only natural that the beastmen's attempts at helping Felix were blocked. And when Felix had finally been pushed to the brink and had perished, part of the beastmen had chosen to put down their weapons and surrender, while Amon Bloodaxe and the few remaining beastmen tribe leaders had unhesitatingly chose to fight to the death.

They were aware of the fact that as the perpetrators of this invasion and the primary warmongers behind it all, they would definitely be executed if they failed in battle. In that case, they preferred to "gloriously" die in battle rather than be humiliatingly hung in public.

And that was how Amon's head became the trophy of some young soldier, and the beastmen army, which had been in such a fervor, finally ended up annihilated, with all the remaining beastmen either dead or having surrendered.

With Amon Bloodaxe's huge tribal flag finally fallen, the largest southern beastmen invasion in more than two hundred years had finally officially failed. Even if the humans didn't go exterminate the plateau beastmen completely, they would need at least one or two hundred years to recover their strength. Perhaps they had zero hope left in this Holy War, since without a Guardian God, they would only grow weaker.

And to tell the truth, the beastmen weren't the only species that suffered massive losses, nor were they the ones who lost the most.

The biggest losers were the dark elves that basically had no relations originally to the beastmen.

For the past several thousand years, Lorci had been leading the dark elves in surviving in the Underground, and their worldview, which used to be the same as the upper-ranked elves of the elven empire, had long since been distorted beyond recognition. Everything in the dark elves' society, from their culture, and religion to their social structure and atmosphere had been branded with Lorci's personal influence. It could be said that most dark elves were basically the personal property of Lorci.

Just like how the humans aboveground couldn't imagine life without the sun, the dark elves were utterly unable to imagine life without Lorci.

However, now that Lorci was dead, Lorci's priests and matriarchs that were at the top of dark elf society all suffered heavily in a single night. They either simply died on the spot or went insane, with the best result being a loss of all their power.

In the cruel dark elf world, weakness was the greatest sin, and since the weakest were those Lorci priests and matriarchs who were originally at the top, there was nothing but an even more pitiful end waiting for them.

In a single night, when Lorci's death was proven by the loss of power of all her priests, 90% of the underground cities within Lorci's domain fell into riots; the entire dark elf society sunk into chaos.

And the most dangerous part of it all wasn't simply the rioting society. Lorci had always been the highest and most venerated existence for the majority of dark elves, and her will was what this entire species strove to imitate and follow as law—families would slaughter each other all for the Spider Queen's favor. The entire dark elf species had been living for Lorci's personal benefit.

Yet now she ended up perishing. For the dark elves that viewed her as all-important, this was no different than the collapsing of the sky. The empty hole left by their former belief system's break down was the true trouble for them.

The collapse of their belief system gave rise to fearless criminals, while others chose to commit suicide. Most of them, however, instinctively went searching for a new existence to replace Lorci. In a single night, countless new belief systems of Gods, false Gods, and Evil Gods alike appeared, and several existences that had the potential to ascend to Godhood all locked their eyes on targeting the Divine Obligation that Lorci left behind.

Cough, actually, the Law God Wumianzhe moved rather quickly, and the silver-masked enforcers of justice were efficiently recovering order in each underground elven city at high speed. Of course, there was plenty of military might from Sulfur Mountain City involved. At the very least, the Red Hunting Hounds that had left the Underground were very effective at this.

If the current situation had been allowed to develop, before a new dark elf True God could be born, the entire species would probably collapse on itself and be swallowed by various factions. Of course, the one who would get the greatest slice would definitely be the most powerful person of the Underground—Annie. At the very least, the Church of Law that helped recover order in each city and bring judgement upon criminals and rioters was already becoming more and more welcomed by the dark elves. Perhaps, before long, the new order in the dark elf society would astonish the world.

It wasn't that the other True Gods didn't want to interfere, but this had been a battle between the dark elf Gods and the Law God in a way, and now the victor Wumianzhe was claiming the spoils of victory. Of course the other True Gods were unable to interfere.

In just half a month, not only did Wumianzhe recover the divine power he had used for the God's Descent, but due to the rapid expansion of his believer base and the Law God's area of influence, Wumianzhe even began the path of promoting in rank. If, through all this, he could successfully overtake Lorci's entire territory, then he might even end up as a Middle God like Lorci.

In fact, Wumianzhe was even beginning to consider setting up a follower God just like Lorci had done with Felix, in order to take over the Divine Obligation of Guardian God of the Dark Elves.

If this were a peaceful era, the path from a potential God to a Low God to a Middle God would be an incredibly difficult path.

A True God would typically require several thousand years of accumulated guardianship to increase in rank, but this was the time of the Holy War, which was a great opportunity for the True Gods. In every Holy War, there would be countless new Gods arising and old Gods dying. It no longer mattered who was doing good; the one who could laugh in the end would be the true victor.

I gave all the mundane tasks of the Church of Law over to Xueti and Lilith with the intention of doing zero management of it myself, but since "Roland" had successfully pulled off a God's Descent—and didn't even die because of it—I was now solidly viewed as a divine messenger, and all the members of the Church of Law now viewed me with fervor in their eyes, causing me to recall the past from Wumianzhe's generation.

But right now, I didn't have time to pay attention to any of these things, as a bigger trouble was already in front of me.

"Cough—today, the main point of our discussion is about saving the northern elves. Right now, they're suffering from continuous natural calamities, with constant hailstorms and blizzards, and I heard they even had an ice hurricane a few days ago. Not to mention that they lack food and clothing for winter, and there's even a few crazed dark elves rioting there. If we just sit on our hands and ignore the situation, then the northern elves will likely go extinct."

However, nothing but silence greeted my words.

It was obvious that every country's leaders and generals significantly lacked interest in this topic. After all, each country

had suffered many losses in this battle, and the elves were constantly changing sides—they were on the enemies' side for most of the time. Many people here had grudges against them. It was only natural that they wouldn't be willing to help save the elves now.

I chuckled at seeing this situation.

"Alright, if you guys won't help them, I will."

Hearing this, the leaders all had expressions of surprise. This time, the Sleuweir Kingdom should have the biggest grudge against the elves out of anyone, which meant my People of the Mist. Even though, I had a good reputation on the surface, everyone knew that in truth I was depicted just like an Armageddon-bringing demon king. I definitely didn't seem the type who would have no personal considerations and repay evil with kindness.

"Yep, I've had my eyes on Tassel City for a long time now. Their library, which has been maintained for over ten thousand years, has countless elven empire magical tomes and priceless artwork that shouldn't be lost to this calamity."

My explanation caused everyone to instantly understand. I wasn't going there to save the elves—I was basically going there to steal the elves' belongings, just like a looter.

However, many were thinking that I could have done all this in secret—why did I tell them about it? Just what was this living

legend thinking and planning on doing? And why did he bring this topic up right here and now?

There was a moment of silence in the conference room. The only sound was the tapping of my index finger.

"The Holy War has already begun, and the entire continent will soon be dragged into it. There were many fortunate factors involved in us managing to deal with the first battle, but the next time may not involve a True God's descent. We need many external reinforcements to help us, so to deal with the ongoing Holy War, I intend to create an alliance in the Northlands—the Mist Alliance."

"First, the Mist Alliance will follow the principles of non-aggression. We will never be the first to declare war or start a battle with the intention of invading others' territory, and we will follow the Church of Law and Wumianzhe, the Guardian God of the Northlands. Nobody here needs to worry that this Mist Alliance will be a threat to any of your countries. Under the conditions of the alliance, each country has their own independent rights and won't be allowed to interfere in other countries' internal politics—this shall be the foundation."

"Also, as per Wumianzhe's Church of Law, unless someone commits a crime, each race in and of itself is guiltless and non-evil, which is why this Mist Alliance won't limit the races and countries that can enter. As far as I know, some remnants from Xiluo, some Underground residents that prefer the sun, the half-beastmen from the Shawen Free States, the Barbarian Tribes Alliance, the Eastern Mist Communal Country, and the Sleuweir Kingdom have

all already applied to join the Mist Alliance."

Hearing this, all those present were incredibly shocked. This was not even at the level of out-of-the-ordinary anymore—to hook up with so many non-human species, it wouldn't surprise any of them if the Gods descend and call for the following battle of the Holy War on the very next day.

But if this Mist Alliance could truly be built...

Each of them couldn't help but shiver when they imagined it. Perhaps, if it really could happen, with so many powerful factions allying together, the entire Northlands would be under their solid grasp. Wumianzhe would truly become the Guardian God of the Northlands.

Without a doubt, the Mist Alliance was a military and political megaton bomb for them, and each of them felt they had to seriously consider the effects of its creation.

From a certain perspective, this Holy War had also acted as a melting pot, with many races that bore grudges against each other finally having communication and learning more about each other. It helped this gigantic alliance begin its path to realization.

"This doesn't seem appropriate—what about the Holy Church..."

"Hehe." I chuckled when I heard this, before I continued my explanation with a serious expression.

"Marquess Ash of the Rhodes Kingdom, have you still not recognized the situation? It’s already the time of the Holy War, and we ‘northern barbarians’ can’t rely on anyone else. If we don’t help warm each other, then how else will we survive this bitter winter?"

Marquess Ash still seemed like he wanted to say something, but I shook my head.

"I know what you want to say. Relax. Soon, when the fires of battle appear across the lands, the Holy Church won’t even be able to deal with their own affairs. Besides, this is also the will of Wumianzhe. As a True God on the Order side, do you really think that he would do anything heretical? We’re only pitiful people trying to help each other stay warm, and the Mist Alliance will definitely never invade anyone else first. But are we northerners supposed to not even have the right to survive in peace?"

After some hesitation, Marquess Ash finally decided to not say anything, but, for me, this was just the beginning.

"The only legal successor of the Tassel Kingdom, Princess Suana, has also applied to join the Mist Alliance. After we help save the elves, perhaps the northern elves will also become part of the Mist Alliance."

All the generals sitting here in the conference room were shocked at my words. I said it quite frankly that it was obvious I intended to take over the entire elven species, and they were astonished at my

ambition.

"Which is why I hope each country present here can consider joining this Mist Alliance and help save the elves. I shall open up channels to share technology among all the member countries of the Mist Alliance, including the magic swordcasters and floating airships from the last battle. This time, each elven kingdom suffered calamitous damage, and all their main military forces were annihilated, so perhaps there might not even be a northern elf kingdom in the future. It's not that bad of an idea for the elves to simply live as citizens of various countries, is it?"

Benefits were the most practical method of political discussions between countries. The allure of the Mist Kingdom's newest technology coupled with the generations-old esoteric elven secrets proved to be exceedingly difficult to withstand. There would be no second chance for them if they missed this opportunity. Without a doubt, this invitation was the most effective type of bait. I turned around to leave right after saying this.

I had already finished what I had to say, and if I didn't do a good job in helping save the elves, Suana would haunt me again in the middle of the night.

And, as my most trusted right-hand sub-commander, Elisa was already patiently waiting at the door for me.

"Aren't you afraid that you're forcing them too much, and that they'll struggle with all their might?"

"Relax, nobody here is an idiot. With the Holy War having begun, those mega-level empires won't have any time to pay attention to this area. If small countries want to survive, now's the golden time for them to be carried on someone else's back. And this time, the back that I showed them looks so comforting and reliable—once they think through this situation, they'll be jumping on me in droves."

"Sexual harassment..." Elisa adjusted her glasses and changed the topic in a rather strange direction.

But a servant suddenly walked past me and handed me a slip of paper with a note written on it.

"In two hours, I hope to have a private meeting with you. — Ash Jundor."

"Haha, see, the first person that wants to be carried by me is already here."

1. For those that read Asian novels and still don't know yet, "lily" is a reference to girl x girl love in Asian culture.

2. We're going to be using Lilith instead of Lily (the Lily from Sulphur Mountain City, for those who don't remember!).

Chapter 198: The Continuation of Sleeping Beauty

Actually, I had been thinking about creating the Mist Alliance for a long time already.

It would be an alliance with a mutual goal, and each country would worship the Law God. Each state would have a similar legal system and would obey the premise of non-aggression to create a relatively peaceful area in the Northlands.

Yes, it would only be an alliance, not some legendary kingdom and definitely not an empire. I had no intention of reigning over others and declaring myself emperor in the borderlands or anything like that. In fact, I didn’t even intend to be the leader of any faction.

"I want to reduce the scale of this Holy War and the death it will cause as much as possible. I want to gather more power and be able to survive this dangerous war."

My primary goal had never changed, and after all this perseverance, I seemed to have begun getting results.

First, one of the most important members of the foundation, Wumianzhe, increased in strength.

While this may not seem like a big deal, in my plan to break the cycle of reincarnation, unless Wumianzhe reached the level of a

Main God of Order, the rest of my plans would be nothing but empty words. Only making this "boss behind my back" become stronger could help me survive at least a single blow from any veteran God who decided they didn’t like me.

In a way, Wumianzhe was the true victor of this battle. He obtained his own Hall of Valhalla and Cycle of Reincarnation, as well as the Northlands. From now on, he had his own territory, and he was no longer considered to be among the ranks of the third-rate Gods, false Gods, and Evil Gods.

Currently, Wumianzhe was leveling up from a Low God to a Middle God. His Divine Obligation included Law, Contracts, and the Guardianship of the Northlands, but he still hadn’t yet obtained a complete Divine Obligation. The Concepts of Law and Contracts were both new to this world, and contracts had only begun to popularize themselves in Auland. Although I felt that Contracts had endless potential, there were too few users and believers, so Wumianzhe hadn’t received enough power from this source yet. It was still merely a potential source of power in the future.

And while the power of the law had even greater potential, Sulfur Mountain City was still the place where it was most popular. About the entire city was filled with believers, and this was only the result of me working hard for more than a century. While there were now quite a few believers in the Underground, as well as the small Eastern Mist Communal Country, the time had still been too short. Most believers were rather shallow in their beliefs and only understood the surface of the concept of law, so they couldn’t provide much faith power to Wumianzhe.

But the Guardian God of the Northlands was something else entirely. As long as the Guardian God protected this species and this area, even non-believers would be protected by him.

Those various prayers mixed with gratitude could also give Wumianzhe a large amount of faith power, and this time, Wumianzhe even personally performed a God's Descent. This divine miracle that everyone could see was far more convincing than anything else. Perhaps the miracle of the Northlands' Guardian God's descent would soon be known by everyone in the entire Northlands, and the other northern countries would support the Church of Law and provide additional faith for Wumianzhe in two different Divine Obligation areas—Guardianship and Law).

To almost reach the rank of a Middle God in less than two years after becoming a God was unbelievable. This sides of both Order and Chaos were probably paying attention to Wumianzhe now.

But...

"Being at the center of attention means either becoming cannon fodder or getting slapped to death in a single strike—it's obviously not a good thing. It seems that it's time to lay low for the time being."

I definitely wasn't hoping for the appreciation of the veteran Order Gods, with their "praise" like "with great power comes great responsibilities"—I would be sent to the front lines as mere cannon fodder. And nor did I wish for the Chaos side to treat me as a thorn in their side to be removed early on.

"Since the battling here has stopped already, then we should be able to have a few days of peace. Heh, it’s time to let loose and relax a little."

Thinking about this, I couldn’t help but smile. All this tiring fighting was in order to have a peaceful, flourishing place where everyone could live happily after all. However, thinking about what I was worried about earlier changed my smile of satisfaction into a helpless wry smile.

"...I’m developing too fast. Even if Ayer is protecting me, I still need to be careful. It’s easy for a Main God to protect a Low God who doesn’t even have his own territory since there basically won’t be any clash of personal interests, but now, Wumianzhe intends to take over the entire Northlands, which basically means becoming independent."

"Speedy development without a solid foundation will definitely make others red-eyed with jealousy. Those True Gods of Order may not be all that powerful in a direct confrontation, but they’re experts at underhanded plots and backstabbing. After all, they just had over two thousand years of internal conflict, and quite a few of their veterans died without even knowing what hit them."

"...But the non-aggression principle is an excellent excuse. Since we will never be the first to declare battle against anyone, it’s, of course, impossible for us to become cannon fodder. Then, unless an enemy comes to us... Yep, right now, we should focus on improving our defense, and we shouldn’t blindly focus on increasing our territory, which will give the other True Gods and

major countries an excuse—at least until the arrival of the Undead Calamity. The Mist Alliance countries will be limited only to the Northlands countries; this should at least make the mega-level human empires less concerned."

Of course, I knew that it was impossible to make a tiger change its diet and become a vegetarian. I knew that, at the very least, Auland and San Antonio had had their eyes on the Northlands long since, but as long as I succeeded in stalling them for a few years, they would probably no longer have the time to think about us anymore.

"So, the next catastrophe will be the Undead Calamity? I wonder if it will happen earlier or later."

The internal strife of the Xiluo Empire had never resolved their foundational problem. The Undead Lords that had escaped to the Undead Plane would definitely affect the Undead Emperors there. As long as the Undead Emperors still wanted to return to the mortal plane, with the increase in the Elemental Tide, the Undead Plane's invasion was likely inevitable.

The only part where I could relax a little about was that the Undead Calamity was unlikely to focus on the Northlands since the land here was wide with the people sparse. It definitely wouldn't be as attractive to the Undead Emperors as the densely populated human centers in the middle of the continent. If I was the commander of the undead army, my first target would be to ambush the San Antonio Empire and the Bardi Empire, and I would conquer the cities that had the highest populations immediately in order to cast Undead Calamity and Death Plague—

cough—cough—I accidentally got carried away; problem of occupation.

But I was confident of my own expert-level prediction since I had been an Undead Emperor in the past as well, and my prediction was the same as past undead invasions in history. If the undead army wanted to become stronger, it was necessary to snowball their source of undead soldiers as much as possible, which meant that they had to first conquer those major countries with long histories and resurrect their graveyards' strongest legendary heroes as the undead army's main forces. They would have to use the commoners' skeletons as cannon fodder and create countless amounts of new soldiers from battles—whoops, I accidentally got too excited again.

"When the undead truly begins their invasion, probably the undead under my command will be viewed in a different light as well. Perhaps I should create a preemptive mood and change their brand, giving them a new name and a new organization so that at least people know they aren't those crazed, bloodthirsty undead."

Imperceptibly, the undead under my command kept increasing, with the remnants from Xiluo that Omar had brought back, my Red Hunting Hounds squad, and the undead originally present in Sulfur Mountain City.

"Anubis Squad? It seems that this world doesn't have a dog-headed God by this name, although it's regrettable for dog-head lovers, I'm going to have to reject this name."

"The Forgotten? This sounds plagiarized, and I'll probably have

to constantly explain what was forgotten. Rejected."

"Undead Rock and Roll? Something strange seems to have gotten mixed up in here. Rejected."

"Guards of Hell? This sounds pretty nice, although it does seem a bit ostentatious. I still feel like it's lacking something. How about I combine it with my previous idea—Dog-Headed Guards of Hell, yep, this sounds harmonious and interesting! And we can use Bastian's face as the emblem, and even give him a dog-head helmet! Ahh, I like it more and more already—I'm a genius at naming!"

I was getting delighted and was talking to myself with a constantly increasing volume.

"My lord, please don't, otherwise Bastian and everyone will cry..."

The familiar confused voice belonged to the silver-masked Lilith Milan who appeared before me. Earlier, she had been in charge of work at Diffindor, but after the battle, she had returned here as well.

Just like how a certain naked tauren had exposed his own identity in the Shawen Free States where no other tauren lived, my identity was known by the people who knew me originally. Of course, some things were better left unsaid, with no need to directly ask, but I figured that the Four Heavenly Kings of Law probably knew my identity already as well.

Currently, however, Lilith wasn’t in the mood to reminisce about the past. It was, of course, a joyous occasion for an old friend to meet an old boss, but hearing such words right from the start, which might end up with all the future Northlands undead having the nickname of "dog-heads," was something not joyous at all.

And according to her understanding of Roland, if this "dog-head" title was finalized, it would probably be incredibly difficult to get it changed.

Yet just voicing her opposition wasn’t enough, so Lilith could only rack her brains and try to come up with a better name.

"...How about ‘The Guiltless.’ It indicates their foundational differences from normal undead as well as represents how they choose to stand under the protection of the Law God and that they’re guiltless citizens who choose to obey the law."

I was hesitating whether or not to accept her idea.

Yep, I was just "simply" considering the advantages and disadvantages of these names from a "logical" standpoint. It definitely wasn’t because I felt that a dog-head emblem seemed really cool, and nor was it because I thought that seeing an undead army all wearing dog-head helmets would be really funny—I definitely wasn’t biased at all!

Lilith seemed to discover I was hesitating and mulled it over before apparently coming to an epiphany as she added another few

sentences.

"Even if you call them The Guiltless, they can still use a dog-head emblem and the dog-head helmets. We can even make Bastian into their entire species' mascot! As the leader of the Red Hunting Hounds squad, he should be delighted."

"Okay, nice idea! That's what it'll be then!"

Lilith mentally apologized to Bastian who was about to become a mascot as she inwardly heaving a sigh of relief. After all, in a way, she herself would also be a member of The Guiltless. As a female who loved beauty, it would be too difficult for her to be called something like a dog-head.

But right when she was starting to relax, she heard a nostalgic name.

"Fina!? Isn't this my cute little Fina?"

Amelia actually ran over here with an expression filled with surprise and joy, waving her hand as she rushed to us. It was quite rare to see her so happy, as her typical expression was grim and dark.

However, Lilith's expression rapidly flickered between surprise, disbelief, anger, and helplessness. After having known her for so long, this was the first time I discovered that she had such acting talent with the many different expressions she could pull off.

"You guys know each other? Fina? Lilith, is this your real name?"

I recalled that Lilith had come to Sulfur Mountain City by herself. Every Blood Tribe member with no family would likely have some unpleasant memories, so abandoning her original name would be perfectly normal.

"My lord, there's no Fina Milan here, only Lilith Milan."

All of Lilith's emotions finally quieted down as she spoke with only a calm expression, while Amelia still retained her expression of surprise and delight as she hugged Lilith.

"Fina, just where did you run off to? I've been looking for you all this time."

"Aunt Amelia, please don't call me Fina anymore. I am Lilith. Lilith Milan. Fina Milan disappeared from this world a long time ago."

"Stop being so silly! No matter what, you used to be the female emperor of the Bardi Empire, my cutest and youngest niece..."

I discovered for the first time that actually both of them had the surname of Milan, and they actually resembled each other in physical appearance. It seemed they were relatives. And so, I pulled over a chair, sat down, did my best to erase my presence, and prepared to watch a good show.

And through their words of astonishment, I rapidly figured out the incredibly tangled relationship between the two of them. Well, it was tangled because of how Lilith viewed Amelia—Amelia was simply happy to see her youngest niece who she hadn't seen in so many years.

And the story of their past was truly extraordinary.

"That ridiculous Sleeping Beauty story actually has a continuation in this world?"

Yes, Amelia was the evil witch in the story, and the Lilith Milan before me was the female lead of that very Sleeping Beauty story that ruined my childhood, Fina Milan!

"Fi—okay, Lilith. Relax, your aunt has already championed your cause. I tossed that ungrateful fickle man into a special plant garden, and he probably turned into fertilizer long ago. Sigh, I thought that since the corpse-loving prince wouldn't be interested in normal women, he definitely wouldn't be a playboy or a liar and at least be a good person. It's all your aunt's fault for not seeing through him. Hmph, Lilith, now you'll believe me, won't you? Your aunt is absolutely correct! There's not a single good man in this world!"

Fine, she even viciously glared at me while saying this for no apparent reason. I'm innocent! I swear!

At the very least, I was able to get a clear view of the picture

through their discussion.

So, the true story of Sleeping Beauty wasn’t all that romantic at all. The prince from another country, who was actually a necrophile, woke up the Sleeping Beauty, and the willful witch’s curse was broken. However, the following developments weren’t like a fairy tale at all.

When Lilith’s father, the king, saw his daughter wake up, he was incredibly overjoyed, and he even believed this to be something like a legendary "kiss of true love." He delightedly deluded himself into believing that his daughter had discovered her true love, so he betrothed Lilith, who was still confused and didn’t know what was going on, to that prince. Since that prince from another country wasn’t in the line to directly inherit the throne in his country, he unhesitatingly agreed to marry the Bardi Emperor’s only daughter, who would be the future empress herself.

The following was where the story completely derailed from the usual plot of a fairy tale. The prince, who had a rather unique personality, had no interest whatsoever in his newlywed wife, and instead spent all his time in the graveyards, until finally the prince, who had studied undead magic before, decided to turn his wife into what he loved the most. And so, he used the curse of the Blood Tribe on her, turning Lilith into a living corpse, and he also tried to use evil necromancy magic to enslave her.

But he didn’t expect that Princess Lilith was also an excellent swordswoman, which coincidentally helped her to transform into a Blood Tribe noble who maintained her intelligence.

And so, in the royal palace, the two of them had a fierce battle, until the Bardi Empire's Holy Knights and priests arrived in time and exorcised the "evil queen emperor who bathed herself in evil magic in order to remain forever young." In the end, the scandal was hushed up, and that prince became the emperor.

But, according to Amelia's story, he didn't get to be emperor for very long, because the furious witch discovered this plot when she returned to visit her relatives and finally transformed the prince into fertilizer for her garden. Evil was punished and justice was served; it was a classic fairy tale with a happy ending. Congratulations, my condolences, congratulations...

"To hell with your congratulations! No matter how you look at it, this is all your fault, Roland!"

"What!?"

I took yet another unexpected blow. I obviously had no connection to this story whatsoever; back then during the time it took place, I was busy searching the world for clues for my revenge. How could I possibly have anything to do with it?

"If it weren't for your betrayal, causing me to lose trust in men, how could I possibly set such a strict test in order to assess Lilith's future husband? And in the end, such a pervert was the one who passed, harming Lilith to be befallen with such a terrible fate! In the end, all of this is your fault!"

I was instantly rendered speechless. It wasn't that I was unable to

retort; I was angered to the point of not knowing what to say.

"Even this can be counted as my fault? Then I might as well be the root of all evil!"

"Aunt Amelia, there's no need to blame Lord Roland. I just had a tough life. Heh, I'm over it now; men are all ugly and untrustworthy. I only like women now. The me from that time was so foolish."

Okay then, so the legendary rumor that some people could change their sexual orientation after meeting with a huge romantic setback is true after all!

But when Amelia heard her niece declare that she was now a lesbian, she took two steps back, and her face paled. It seemed that she must have been a lot purer on the inside than what she appeared on the outside.

But I immediately discovered that I was wrong in my understanding, as Amelia actually started bawling out loudly.

"Waahhh! My poor little Fina, it's all your aunt's fault. Even if that bastard is dead already, your aunt will definitely find that bastard's undead teacher for you—waahhh—it's all that bastard teacher's fault, saying something like 'Don't mind what others think of you, and work your hardest at seeking true love. If the one you love doesn't meet your standards, you can try using your own way to change her and accept her.' That undead mage teacher, who didn't take any responsibility for teaching as he pleased, is the

true culprit!"

Hearing her angry roar, I instantly dropped all the snacks I was eating onto the ground. Why did this phrase sound so modern and so familiar? It sounded exactly like a sentence I read in a Chicken Soup for the Soul on Earth. Could it be that it was popular in this world as well?

"A prince? Back then, in order to obtain more information for my revenge, I did take in several disciples from powerful families, including Suana's father, and I think there was a person from Som. Could he have been..."

"Eh? Roland told me this exact phrase before as well; he was encouraging me to follow my heart and seek true love, which was how I worked up my courage and determination and started discarding my bias in order to find my new happiness. Is this a popular phrase? Was it said by someone famous?"

Lilith's expression was filled with surprise, but Amelia had her head lowered as she mumbled, "I knew it, I knew it, only he—" She suddenly turned around and started laughing insanely at me.

"Heh! It was indeed 'said by someone famous,' but soon, it'll become the 'crazed words of a dead man!' As expected, you're the only person who could possibly be the culprit behind it all!"

There was a bestial look in her blood-red eyes, and her green hair was growing at a furious pace. Her killing intent and anger were exploding to the point where even the ground was trembling from

her frightening power.

"I knew those so-called logical seeming Chicken Soup for the Soul books were completely unreliable! Following its advice can only lead to problems! Ahh! Amelia, don’t hit my face! I still have to go to a conference in a bit!"

Chapter 199: Descendant

The Mist Alliance. With the birth of this new faction, some things needed to be settled.

And this was designating tactical combat areas and dividing the land of the Mist Alliance into several districts. If this wasn't drawn up immediately, there would probably be endless internal squabbles about it.

The first to be decided was the location of the headquarters, or perhaps I should call it the capital.

There were quite a few choices. Diffindor and Antuen were both excellent candidates.

The former was the Law God Wumianzhe's holy ground, the Crimeless Capital. It was also very appropriate for the Law God's special characteristics, and it could definitely serve as the new capital. At the very least, if it was chosen as the capital, I wouldn't have to worry about the citizens' popular support or how to defend the place.

"Just try attacking the Law God's holy ground. There will be ability users in Law classes awaiting you with powers magnified by several folds, and perhaps even Wumianzhe himself will descend to the mortal plane and deal with you."

If Diffindor was the capital, it would be almost impossible for others to attack it, which was quite attractive. Especially from a

personal standpoint—I also hoped that Diffindor would be able to rapidly rebuild itself with the Mist Alliance's resources and become the glorious northern city it was in the past, but obviously Diffindor wasn't the best choice for a capital.

As for the latter choice, Antuen—it was the largest city in the entire Northlands. Business and engineering were both highly developed here, and thanks to a certain person's surrender, this city was mostly spared from the fires of war. Relatively little investment would help this city flourish again.

With our rise in political status, this long-famed business capital would surely improve, using its already well-oiled merchant and business trade systems. Add the no-tariff policy between the Mist Alliance member countries and Antuen would likely become a business metropolis in the future.

Even though there were many advantages to these two locations, in the end, I could only helplessly abandon both cities as options for becoming the capital of the Mist Alliance. I ended up choosing Red Maple City.

Yep, I chose this ruined city that was nothing but devastated rubbish. This was originally only a second-tier city in the Sleuweir Kingdom to begin with, with its most famous site being the Battle History Museum. After this battle, perhaps the Battle History Museum would vastly improve its collection.

After over two months of fighting plus the cruel guerilla warfare that had taken place within the city itself, with even two Gods descending upon this place, calling this city devastated rubbish

was already praising it. Making this location into the capital was basically no different to creating a capital on empty land, but in the end, I still chose Red Maple City.

Why? This was the only appropriate location.

Even though the Mist Alliance would, of course, have the People of the Mist at the center, its final goal was to create a non-aggression alliance involving numerous species and many countries. If I chose Antuen or Diffindor as the capital, which was either the Eastern Mist Communal Country's or Sleuweir Kingdom's capital to begin with, it would seem too politically biased.

This would only result in the other countries having reservations about joining the Mist Alliance, and it wouldn't be helpful for the People of the Mist and the other species to live among each other with equality. And so, I could only abandon these two oh-so-tempting choices as a capital city.

Politically speaking, choosing this main battlefield location in the Northlands, where various races and various countries allied together to resist against the invaders, would at least give those who participated in battle a sense of intimacy about the place.

Perhaps it would even give the other countries the impression that the Mist Alliance would exist as a separate entity, and that there wouldn't be too much backlash against joining the Mist Alliance. Accomplishing that would be my greatest political victory.

Of course, since Sleuweir Kingdom and Eastern Mist Communal Country with the People of the Mist constituted the foundation of the Mist Alliance, it was, of course, impossible for the other countries to gain a complete independence, but at the very least it had to appear so on the surface.

However, even if I set Red Maple City as the capital, I wouldn't abandon Antuen and Diffindor. Diffindor, which was almost impossible to attack, may be relatively out of the way and poorer, but it could definitely become a logistical as well as military and technology center. And, its special status as the Crimeless City would help it become the headquarters of the Church of Law as well as act like Sulfur Mountain City in the past and create an example of a place where many races could live together in peace, attracting more believers to the Church of Law.

As for Sleuweir's Antuen, just letting it continue to develop as a business center was plenty. Of course, I still had a series of plans, but I'll talk about those some other time.

From the current development of Diffindor in the south, Red Maple City in the center, and Antuen in the north, I could already expect that they would become three major cities of the lifeline of the Mist Alliance. In fact, I was even beginning to consider creating scheduled floating airship transports between each city, since these three locations would be the first to become the People of the Mist's dreamland. The already destroyed Mist Kingdom was beginning to revive itself in this way.

Of course, ideas were beautiful but reality was always cruel. My

plan was for ten years later, and the current Red Maple City before me was nothing but a pile of rubble.

Today, while the entire city was still bathed in the afterglow of joy from victory, in a certain three-story building that remained standing in Red Maple City, there were guards and hidden sentries posted everywhere. They were only three to five steps away from each other, and this building was heavily guarded.

This used to be a place that Red Maple City had given the Eastern Mist People to live, but now, it was given over to Olive, Dimlet, Amelia, and the other skilled technicians as a logistical and research base.

Intermittent explosions and sounds of agony kept sounding out from this place along with even the occasional large fire or mushroom cloud, and this why most citizens treated this place like the plague and didn’t dare approach it, even though it was relatively peaceful now after the battle.

There was a reason for the current heavy guard on this place. An incredibly significant surgery was occurring, and all the characters involved were very important. No accidents would be permitted.

And since Amelia was the surgeon, it wouldn’t be wrong to describe this as an experiment, either.

The large and spacious room was so quiet that one could hear a pin drop.

There were no unnecessary people in this empty room. Even if this surgery's difficulty level was rather high, Amelia still trusted her own trained tentacle vine assistants rather than newbie assistants that would make many mistakes.

This was a classic witch's room, with voodoo dolls, scarecrows, live lizards in glass jars, various strange drawings that made people think of vicious magical curses, and of course, it had a huge medicinal cauldron, which was basically the hallmark of a witch.

Strange magical runes were etched onto that pitch-black cauldron, and the thick black liquid within it emanated a revolting stench that was almost impossible to withstand.

The things floating on top were even more disgusting; there were dead cats, some dark-green herbs, a strange assortment of gems, and living plants that were still shrieking in agony. Perhaps not a single person in this world would want to drink a single sip of this broth.

At the current moment, Amelia, who was all raring to go, wasn't using her typical tools. She was instead using a precision saw to saw away at some mysterious unidentifiable green creature.

"Hah! I finally finished it."

Amelia breathed a sigh of relief as she put down the precision saw; she had finally managed to slice off a bloody hunk of light-green flesh. She then immediately proceeded to toss that piece of flesh, which was still bleeding green blood, straight into the

cauldron, causing a green mist to arise. A potted plant sitting close by the cauldron instantly withered to death.

"Hey, this isn't right. Isn't this clearly some toxic poison? Hey, Amelia, just what are you intending to do? Didn't I ask you for a surgery—what are you doing here creating a toxic poison?"

As the person currently undergoing this surgery, I felt endlessly regret for my decision. However, I had been injected with a large amount of numbing medicine and had a paralysis spell, with the strength to paralyze even a winter wolf, cast on me. I couldn't feel anything at all below my neck.

That was why even though I felt that something was off about Amelia's actions, I could only lie on the bed and not move even an inch. I was only able to shout at the top of my lungs, full of regret.

"I should have gone to find Margaret. Damn it, where did they run off to now? Hey, Amelia, how could these things possibly have anything to do with the surgery I requested? You surely don't intend to take revenge on me with this opportunity, do you?"

When I saw how the witch was foolishly grinning as she used that saw to stir the contents of the cauldron, my suspicions were stoked even further. After all, I seriously infuriated Amelia and Lily not too long ago.

After the matter, I had immediately apologized as sincerely as I could, and I even wrote a three-hundred-page essay on why that perverted prince's actions had no connection to me whatsoever,

but sometimes women wouldn’t see anything in their rage and would only look at the result they desired. At times like these, talking reason would actually be illogical.

But I was still in a better situation than someone else, since, at the very least, I could move my head after being numbed and paralyzed. The other person to receive this surgery was laying by my side, and she couldn’t even move her head.

Clint (Glina) was chained and tied up tightly. Her always fearless eyes were now filled with terror, and sounds of whining could be heard from her tightly gagged mouth. Even though she was struggling, I knew that she definitely wouldn’t be able to break free. Why did I know? Because I was the one who tied her up…

Cough, I did it at the time just to prevent her from escaping, which was why I used special tying techniques and an especially strong rope. Who knew that I would soon be in the same situation? By the way, even though this method of tying was supposed to be the best way to accentuate the breasts, she was still just as flat as always.

"Uuuu!"

Her face was filled with rage as she seemed to detect the regret and pity in my eyes, but right after that she suddenly began to blink rapidly. Judging from how she pointed her gaze somewhere down on her body, she seemed to want me to look there as well, but just a single look startled me greatly.

"You want me to look below your waist? Hmm? What are you lifting up? A red wire—you actually put explosives there! You're not afraid of exploding yourself to death?"

As expected of a natural-born explosives maniac. Under her long lace skirt, an array of yellow explosives was actually tied to her snow-white legs. A veritable armory of dangerous explosives lay under her skirt.

As the queen of a country, Glina was rather outlandish in her own way. She still spent most of her energy in her favorite hobby —creating new explosives.

However, the maids and officials in the palace wouldn't allow the queen to play with explosives every day, but she would never listen to reason as she lacked a feeling of safety without explosives. This was why she decided to simply hide the explosives in an obvious location; nobody would, of course, dare touch her.

"You mean I should pull the wire and activate the small bomb? Explode through the ropes?"

Glina nodded continuously. She was trying her utmost to lift her skirt, and she kept staring at the smallest explosive tied to her body, which was the explosive with only a tiny amount of power— perfect for this situation.

"Three mandrake grasses, two cursed demons, and these precious mushrooms. Hehe! This will be delicious."

And so, I could only prop myself on my chin and slowly move my head towards Glina's thigh. Why does this description sound so perverted? Okay, let's try again. I did my best to put my mouth against a certain place on a little girl's thigh... fine, this sounds even more perverted. I might as well not say anything.

When her snowy-white thigh appeared right before my eyes, I was dazed for a moment; I felt like I now had an entirely new dark history. But since I had come to this point, this was no time to hesitate.

If the action of me sticking my head up Glina's skirt just happened to be discovered by someone, and this action that appeared like me licking Glina's thighs was publicized, my reputation would be ruined.

"Roland! What are you doing!?"

I was instantly shocked to hear this. Wasn't this Elisa's voice? I brought my head out of Glina's skirt, only to see that it was my demon girlfriend indeed, but her countenance was filled with rage.

"I thought something terrible happened to you. I was always wondering why you suddenly took in an adopted daughter! So it turned out you were planning on committing incest with her!"

Boom!

Okay, this sound wasn't caused by someone hitting me. Since

Elisa was the one who saw me, I knew that I would at least live, but this was just far too humiliating. I didn't know how to explain my actions, so I decided to just smash my head against the wall and knock myself unconscious.

When I dazedly woke up from my deep sleep, I heard Elisa and Amelia having a discussion.

"...You think I'm making some magic medicine? Hehehe! Take a look, this is my recipe for magical cooking that I invented myself! See, isn't it really convenient? You don't need all sorts of complicated steps; all you have to do is add the ingredients, cook, and eat. This surgery will take a minimum of ten hours, and I can't stop in the middle, so I need to first prepare my dinner and midnight snacks."

"What's that green object? It looks really disgusting."

"Green dragon meat, of course. Although the meat's a little tough, it's still pretty good."

"...Is it actually delicious?"

"Incredibly so! As long as you cook it a little, its aroma will even overflow. Would you like a taste?"

"Poison Detection!"

Elisa mercilessly used a Poison Detection spell, and to the

surprise of nobody, the spell's color turned pitch-black, indicating the highest, most toxic level of poison.

"Oh my, sorry about that. I forgot that you probably can't eat poison. To me, eating is just a habit now; only the most poisonous ingredients seem like delicacies to me. Heh heh, I can live just by photosynthesis alone if I want to, and poisons are completely unable to enter my system. This soup is excellent for the skin and complexion, but I temporarily forgot that you're a fragile living creature, and I almost poisoned you to death. Sorry about that!"

Even though Amelia was apologizing, judging from her expression that seemed to portray that this was all was only natural, she was completely insincere in her apology. Right after this, however, Elisa was unwilling to show weakness as she took a bowl of that pitch-black soup and downed it in one go.

"Ick! Disgusting! With such cooking skills, I think I know why you haven't been able to get married."

"Disgusting? You dare insult my cooking skills!? Hmph. It's obviously so nutritious and delicious; there must be something wrong with your taste buds."

"How about we find a third party to judge the taste then? What about that bastard lolicon who just poked his head under a little girl's skirt, or that pervert who obviously woke up but is pretending to be unconscious so he can eavesdrop? What about that bastard pervert who adopted a daughter only so he could molest her?"

If looks could kill, I would have died a thousand times. Judging from Amelia’s expression, which obviously indicated she wanted me to try her soup, I was likely to be forced to chug this "nutritious and delicious" soup that was good for the skin and complexion. I didn’t have the abilities of these two to not fear any poison, and although I would probably survive in the end, who would want to undergo a full intestinal cleaning like that?

Smack!

And so, without any hesitation, I whacked myself in the head again, not holding back at all. At the very least, I didn’t intend to wake up again until the surgery was completed.

"Would you like to become my adopted daughter?"

For someone like me who was used to taking action only after making careful plans, how could I possibly say something so casually? To be honest, I really did have some reasons for taking Glina as my adopted daughter.

"I definitely can’t let Glina and Reyne become Karwenz’s vessels anymore. I need to cut off any information leaks from them to Karwenz immediately."

Even though Karwenz ended up helping us this time, his main goal was to punish Lorci, who had broken too many rules. I had no way of knowing which side he would stand on next time.

And both descendants of the Mist were obviously important. If either of them were drawn into the Chaos Abyss, it would be an irrecoverable loss. Dealing with the problem of them both being demonic descendants was an urgent matter; otherwise, there would be a constant information leakage through them, and the success of any of my plans would then likely depend on Karwenz's mood.

"Powerful demons view their direct descendants as their personal property, and in a way this description is accurate. The summons of the bloodline is impossible to resist against, and Karwenz has a huge difference in power compared to Reyne and Glina, which can neutralize any efforts of resistance to begin with. But, that doesn't mean there isn't a way."

There were quite a few demonic descendants in the mortal plane, and mages had studied them extensively. There really was a rather clever method that could cancel out an ancestor demon's control over his own descendants.

"For demonic descendants, there's a Soul Rope tied to their soul that can't be untied unless they die. And even if they die, the soul will probably be tugged into hell by this Soul Rope. But, we can change the person holding on to the Soul Rope. As long as we use a source of demonic power that's equal or greater, then there's a way to overtake the original individual controlling the Soul Rope."

"For instance, a Flame Demon's descendant can be injected with a Demon Lord's blood, and this blood transfusion can turn this person into a double demonic descendant. After that, the stronger

Demon Lord bloodline will naturally suppress the Flame Demon's bloodline, which is the same thing as canceling out the Flame Demon's control over his descendant. After that, as long as the Demon Lord is killed off as well, there will be nothing to worry about anymore."

I had to say, the mage who came up with this idea was a genius. This person perfectly used the nature of demonic blood where the strong would suppress the weak, but there was just a small hitch for us.

"I can't find any demons higher-ranking than Karwenz as he's the Abyssal Prince. From a theoretical standpoint, only the Chaos Abyss itself is higher ranked than him. Even if we find a demon stronger than Karwenz, it probably still won't work. Besides, we can't deal with demons stronger than Karwenz, either."

But, in a way, we still managed to discover a method that couldn't really be called a method.

"If we can't suppress it by force, then we can try using a roundabout method to trick the Soul Rope."

Karwenz and I had incredibly similar soul wavelengths. If I transformed into a demon, my demonic blood should be very similar to his, and if you only looked at our ranks, my Original Sin Demon form wouldn't be lower than the Abyssal Prince at all. And since my demonic blood was the same source as Karwenz's, it could possibly even fool the Soul Rope into believing I was the master. After locking on to the Soul Rope, I would never let go again, and Glina could be changed to become my descendant. Perhaps this

would manage to cut off her connection to Karwenz.

This all sounded rather complicated, and there were many theoretical problems involved, but it was actually quite simple to accomplish. I just had to activate my Original Sin Demon form, transform into a demon of the Chaos side, and then supply my blood for a blood transfusion. If everything was successful, then this special magical ritual would change Glina from Karwenz's descendant into Roland's descendant.

Of course, since the two of us were twins, genetically speaking, there was no difference.

In a way, when my blood would be coursing through Glina's body, it would truly make us have a blood relationship.

This was also why I abandoned all my worries and suggested that Glina become my adopted daughter.

I couldn't help but faintly smile as I watched Glina, who was in a deep sleep beside me.

"Without realizing it, I suddenly have a descendant. Is this the feeling of family... Wait a moment, this scenario doesn't seem right. Why am I happy? I'm clearly still single, and I'm suddenly going to have a blood-related daughter out of nowhere, as well as a bunch of naughty children!"

Pop

A bottle was suddenly placed right next to me against my ear. The black sticky liquid within it was rather familiar—wasn't it the 'good for skin and complexion' soup from earlier?

"Amelia worked so hard to cook this. Please don't waste her efforts and drink it while it's hot."

Pop

There was nothing else after the pop. Before I could even knock myself out, I was already prevented from doing so. It seemed it would no longer be possible to play the same trick three times in a row.

Chef Amelia's face had already been stained black by the soup as well, but she was all smiles and seemed to be quite proud of her own handiwork.

"Um, no need to hurry. Drink up slowly; there's plenty more in the cauldron. Um, does it taste good? This thick soup that tastes like a dragon and tiger fighting is something I prepared specially for you."

Right at this moment, the cauldron happened to begin bubbling. A distorted skull floated up to the surface, and adding the black liquid before me, it created a scene that was disgusting to behold to the extreme.

"Master, the preparations for your intestinal cleaning have already been completed. Please don’t make Miss Amelia wait any longer. Rest assured, after you die, I shall go ask you how it was at the River Styx."

"...Are you already assuming that I’m going to die? I’m so unlucky!"

Chapter 200: Felix's Hatred

"I've been single for all my life, and now I finally have a daughter to take care of me in my old age. Congratulations! Congratulations!"

Boom! Boom!

I really wanted to say that to myself. However, I was currently standing on a street that had transformed into a sea of fire, and sounds of explosions would ring out continuously. I figured I might as well not.

"So much for congratulating myself! She's getting too excited and going way overboard!"

Should it be said that it was to be expected since Karwenz and I were twin brothers? Our bloodlines didn't clash even one bit, and under Amelia's guidance, the blood transfusion was an absolute success. None of the negative reactions we were expecting occurred—not even the normal non-magical ones like the rejection of a foreign substance common to mundane blood transfusions.

A full one-third of the blood in Glina's body had now been replaced with my blood.

And when I faintly began sensing that subtly wondrous bloodline connection, I used my willpower to directly cancel my demon form and gave Glina her freedom. After being bound by the fear of turning into a demon for so many years, Glina unhesitatingly

removed her eyepatch and walked out of her armor that chained herself within.

Of course, it was impossible to remove the previously demonized parts, but the heterochromia girl didn't care about the way other people looked at her. As long as the demonic eye no long beckoned to her from the Abyss, trying to tug her soul into Chaos, she was quite willing to take off the eyepatch and show off her youth and vitality under the sun.

"...You're overly hyperactive. I just asked you to clean up all this rubble, not flatten everything in sight."

A new city, new streets, and new plans. Since I intended on rebuilding Red Maple City into a major city, the remaining piles of rubble left behind from the battle needed to be cleared away.

Originally, I had intended to invite some engineer specialists to slowly take care of this matter, but Glina, who still didn't want to return to Antuen, volunteered for this task of her own volition. When I thought about how this could save me some money, of course I wouldn't refuse.

I also took into consideration her past history, and expected that she would go overboard. But since everything was already rubble to begin with, I figured that going a little overboard wouldn't be a big deal, and it would even help her to vent her energy that's been rather excessive lately. But apparently, I had still managed to underestimate her.

All the broken mechas from the battlefield became materials for Glina’s explosives. Using her status as the queen of Sleuweir, she even managed to obtain the engines from the broken Roland Titans and created several explosives of frightening power, placing them into a tightly created net of explosives. And then...

BOOM!

After she pressed the red button, half of the city vanished entirely. The tremendous explosion broke every single glass window in Red Maple City. What would have taken the engineers two months to clear away was finished by Glina in just a single day. In a way, I had underestimated, once again, how maniacally passionate Glina was about her explosives.

Fine, I admit defeat. It was better for her to vent on some rubble rather than on me.

From a certain viewpoint, the surgery’s success basically gave us the most solid blood connection of all. I didn’t know how to deal with my "adopted daughter" that I now suddenly had, and Glina probably didn’t know how to deal with her new "father," either.

Back in Antuen, she would occasionally call me "father" once in a while, but mostly just as a joke, and now she hadn’t called me that at all. She probably didn’t even know what she should call me now.

"...Maybe your way of expressing your feelings is rather unique, but even if you don’t want to use normal hugs and act spoiled,

don’t you think it’s a bit much to wake me up with an explosives alarm clock every morning? Waking up every morning is a race for my life, and I’ll die if I’m just a little bit slow, brat."

By the way, ever since the successful surgery, I received a "blessing" from my system just like always.

[A girl not directly related to you is calling you "father," but you’re still an old virgin. All the conditions have been met... Congratulations for receiving the achievement "Enjoys Being a Daddy" and the glorious title "King of All Backup Boyfriends." If you equip this title, it will be easier for you to receive females’ sympathy and male "friendship."]

This was already pitiful enough, but the system was swift as always in pouring salt on my wounds.

[Actually, you can consider the next step in this achievement—gathering seven girls as your daughters who aren’t blood-related to you and raising the beautiful girls well, while you still remain an old virgin. According to how well you raise them, you can receive, in order: "Really Loves Being a Daddy," "Legendary Daddy King," and "Veteran Mr. Mom." These three are the three major epic achievements that will reward you with the epic title "You Truly Are a Nice Person." This title will aid you massively in obtaining female friendship (and at the same time make it massively more difficult in obtaining their love). Of course, if you decide to take the incest route, there’s no need to hesitate. I also have titles befitting any perverted father, and I promise that they’re strong.]

"...Wahh! I’m no ‘King of Backup Boyfriends!’ I don’t want to

become a Daddy God!"

Even though I was mostly immune to my system's provocations after all these years, I couldn't help but helplessly kneel to the ground and have tears in my manly eyes.

[To add insult to injury: Actually, you've already completed more than half of this achievement. Reyne, Glina, Elisa, Annie, plus when you take into the consideration that your physical body won't mature anytime soon... don't struggle, you can't resist fate. Look at it from a different angle, becoming a Legend Daddy God is quite ferocious as well. At least, at least—okay, the system can't find any benefits, and can't make this up anymore, so I shall simply express my sympathies and condolences to you. You have so many naughty children, it's tough being you, Daddy God.]

I didn't even know where to start commenting from anymore—from the fact that the system itself admitted it was intentionally adding insult to injury, or from it calling me a Legend Daddy, or the fact that I was now so pitiful that even the system couldn't take it anymore and started expressing its sympathy?

By the way, I received yet another achievement that day...

[You ate something highly poisonous and didn't die. Congratulations to my host for receiving the "Hungry Enough to Eat Literally Anything" achievement. Equipping this will double the amount of food you're capable of eating, and you'll receive a minor increase to your resistance against poison and disgusting foods. This series of achievements is followed by "Food God—Nothing Is Off Limits," "We Eat Everything with Four Legs Besides

Tables and Chairs," and "The Sky Seems So Delicious." After that is the epic achievement "He Who Stands On Top of the Food Chain," and the Legend title "Devourer of the Void." Actually, with Amelia by your side, you can finish this series of achievements quite quickly.]

"There's even more? Hehe, if I eat any more of those things... I really did see the River Styx last time. Those bastards even asked me 'You're back again? How long do you intend to stay this time?' The next time I eat something from her, I really will be staying there forever!"

Okay, let's just forget about the past. The most important thing now was to find a certain someone for her reckoning.

"You've given me so much trouble!"

Half of the city disappeared, and as the person responsible for the project, I finally finished dealing with all those complaints, bills, and accidents caused by people frightened by the explosions. I furiously went to find Glina for her reckoning, but in the end, before I could even complain to her, I saw an unexpected battle.

In an empty area, Reyne and Glina were currently dueling. Sword energy was flying everywhere causing constant explosions. Judging from their actions and expressions, both of them were being serious about it.

Unlike with his previous useless vessel, the Abyssal Prince had given Reyne quite the gifts. The highest quality abyssal

transformation had given Reyne so much power. Karwenz had been worried that his vessel would randomly die off, so he directly shoved a huge amount of combat experience shoved into Reyne's instinct, and that cheat-like Soul Imprint of hers also improved her stats all-around. The current Reyne would be at the top of the top even among the strongest veteran legends.

Even though the Roland Sacred Sword was unable to simply emit sword energy everywhere, it could still slice through the air like a silver dragon. Each swing seemed like it could collapse the heavens, and the pressure from the sword combined with Reyne's imposing manner allowed her to suppress her opponent's movements.

To be honest, even in practice battles such as these, her Seal of Unlimited Courage was activated and was constantly increasing her strength.

After the trial of that bloody battle on the snowy night, the current Princess Knight seemed to have earned the Sacred Sword's recognition.

"She already has her own unique fighting style? It seems that she's not far from becoming someone who can take care of herself."

I personally taught Reyne. Although Karwenz was somewhat involved as well, her growth was only to be expected. However, Glina, who was facing off against Reyne, was truly incomprehensible.

The shocking part for me was that although on the surface it seemed like Reyne, who possessed the Sacred Sword, was controlling the situation and that Glina had less and less room to move about and dodge, Glina was actually the one who had control of the tempo of the battle.

After Glina took off her heavy armor, she may have been petite and dexterous, but she still had natural-born ridiculous strength. She wielded a weapon in each hand, a pike that flowed like the wind and a longsword that struck like lightning. Her two weapons didn't interfere with each other and even had cooperative techniques—it was almost as if two weapons masters were working together.

"Is she still just a Gold rank? But..."

Suddenly, a round Gnome Mine dropped out from under Glina's skirt, and its lit fuse had almost reached the end. Reyne was surprised for a moment, and then she hurriedly jumped backwards, but when the fuse reached its end, nothing happened at all.

Pop!

The smoke coming from it was Glina's special explosive that had only a miniscule amount of power. After she succeeded in gaining distance between them, Glina unhesitatingly tossed down her heavy melee weapons. Now was the time for her real firepower, her guns and engineered explosives.

I suddenly discovered that while Glina may have been stuck at the Gold rank, she was definitely no ordinary Gold rank. Her skill in both long and short weapons had already reached Master level (for a Gold rank), and her engineering ability was above that of a Master's. Her combined overall power was far above even a Legend's. Not only that, she was also an excellent mecha pilot; she was one of the rare generalist types, good at everything.

Most importantly of all, she had extraordinary combat experience. For someone like her who had been through hundreds of battles, Reyne was nothing more than a fresh newbie. She could predict Reyne's every move and manipulate Reyne accordingly so that she could suppress her.

Reyne's method of attacking was far too simple and direct, while Glina's tricks were numerous to the point where she wouldn't need to repeat a single attack during a battle. After Glina fully understood her opponent's capabilities, she started using her true ability and instantly changed the combat situation.

"Under a normal situation, Glina would definitely win, but Reyne has that... in the end, Reyne will still be the winner—there's no doubt about that!"

Maybe she noticed that I was here now or perhaps she was suppressed to the point where she couldn't take it anymore, but as I expected, Reyne finally ended up raising the Sacred Sword.

"Come here, ancient kings!"

Alright, I won’t bother describing anything else. Some ancient kings’ spirits descended upon this place and Glina was instantly knocked away by three waves of sword energy. The duel was over, Reyne won, and Glina was left alone, sulking.

Yep, three waves, not one. After that battle, the Roland Sacred Sword finished its God Equipment’s evolution. There weren’t any major changes, but the limitation on summoning only one ancient king, three times a day, was modified.

"It can summon four times a day, at most three kings at once, and if you want to go all-out, it can even summon twelve ancient kings’ spirits in one go—it’s a little ridiculously unfair."

Reyne unsummoned the ancient spirits, and Glina instantly ran to my side. Before I could even complain to her, she first reached her hand out to me.

"For me."

I didn’t know whether I should cry or laugh at this. Glina was quite displeased at losing the duel, and felt that it was unfair how I gave the Sacred Sword to Reyne, so now she was looking for something from me in exchange.

"Heh, how impatient. Blaming it on the weapon if you can’t win."

"In that case, Reyne, leave that Sacred Sword on the ground.

Let’s have a rematch!"

"Hmph, why wouldn’t I use a God Equipment when I have one? If you’re unsatisfied, then go ask Roland for another God Equipment..."

Saying so, Reyne laughed at her own comeback. She knew that the God Equipment were incredibly rare, and she didn’t believe that Roland would have another one.

"I do have one more, and I was planning on giving it to you, Glina."

This reply surprised the both of them as I gave a black dagger to Glina.

"I give you this God Equipment to protect yourself, but remember to never let anyone else find out about it. And never use it to injure a friend, or else you’ll regret it."

[Felix’s Hatred, Dagger, God Equipment.]

[Attack: 1-3, every attack is imbued with a random special effect from the following four effects. The dagger’s blade will change color according to the effect’s properties.]

[Divine Authority, Ending of Nature: When this effect is active, those struck will be injected with withering poison. No matter if it’s an animal or a plant—even if it’s just a rock, it will soon meet

the end of its life. (Green colored.)]

[Divine Authority, Distortion of Life: When this effect is active, those struck will have a mysterious hormone injected into them, and will undergo a rapid transformation within a short period of time, changing their shape and species. There is a 10% chance for a beneficial transformation which will increase the original target's power, and a 30% chance for a harmful transformation which will weaken the original target's power. There is a 60% chance for a meaningless, non-important transformation. (Red colored.)]

[Divine Authority - Poison God's Hatred: When this effect is active, anyone struck will be injected with a poison that has no antidote and will be sent into an eternal sleep. (Black colored.)]

[Divine Authority - Felix's Salvation: When this effect is active, an antidote will be applied on the target struck which can cancel any of the above three effects. This effect will not appear unless all three of the above effects have currently been activated.]

[There's a row of small yellow words carved into the dagger's back: My dagger has been coated with fatal poison! Lick—ah, it's toxic!]

It was a dagger of black iron that appeared perfectly ordinary on the surface, normal to the extent where even the poorest of thieves probably wouldn't give it even a second look, but it was indeed a God Equipment.

Felix had devoured the Forest Guardian God's divine power and

then had perished almost immediately, and the divine power that he left behind was transformed by my system into this toxic dagger, which was the biggest prize from this battle.

I already experimented with it numerous times. When the green effect of ending nature was activated, all plants would die instantly. Any animal struck by it would immediately age to middle age if it was young, and two strikes would age it to old age, whereas three strikes would kill it of old age.

And the red effect of distortion was even more vicious. The random chances it had of transformation were transformations that entirely changed the species. I personally witnessed a transformed white rabbit gulp down a wild boar in a single bite.

The black effect was actually the simplest. Just one strike caused eternal sleep.

And the only antidote to all three of these effects, the White Salvation, required at least three sacrifices first before it would appear, meaning it would take three lives to save one.

"As expected of a God Equipment, but... what's with this attack power that's not even at the level of a fruit knife? It needs to at least be able to break the skin to inject poison into someone, so how can such a blunt knife break through anyone's defense?"

I tried using this dagger to gently trace across my arm, but I felt nothing at all. My titan's body directly made me immune to this insignificant damage. And if this dagger couldn't cause anyone to

bleed, this God Equipment would be no different from an actual fruit knife.

Typically speaking, strong SemiGod and God Equipment would all have very bothersome side effects. Perhaps this dull blade was a type of limitation in and of itself, which was why its effects could be so powerful.

But its bluntness, which wouldn’t even be able to pierce through the simplest of leather armors, greatly limited the times and places where it could be used.

"This is useless for direct combat, but it’s excellent for underhanded tactics. If it’s Glina, I believe you can make the best use of it."

Glina nodded continuously as she received the God Equipment dagger, and her icy little expression finally showed a hint of a smile. That momentary smile was especially cute, but in the next moment, she started showing off to Reyne, as if she had won something important.

But now wasn’t the time to be idling relaxing and wasting time, as I had something more important to do.

"Let’s make our preparations. The disaster relief squad has already gathered. We’re going to the elves!"

Heterochromia is a difference in coloration, usually of the iris of the eye, but it can also be of hair or skin.

A backup boyfriend, in Asian culture, is when a girl has a boyfriend but keeps ambiguous relationships with other men, "just in case."