



吾命騎士

The Legend of Sun Knight

3

拯救公主

御我著

The Legend of Sun Knight

(吾命騎士)

Volume 03

To the Rescue of a Princess

Yu Wo

(御我)

Story Description:

The Sun Knight is a man who has shining golden hair, sky blue eyes, a compassionate nature, and a brilliant smile. He is the spokesperson for the God of Light, the captain of the Twelve Holy Knights, and (some say) the man closest to perfection. Beneath the veneer of the Sun Knight, however, lies a very different sort of character...

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

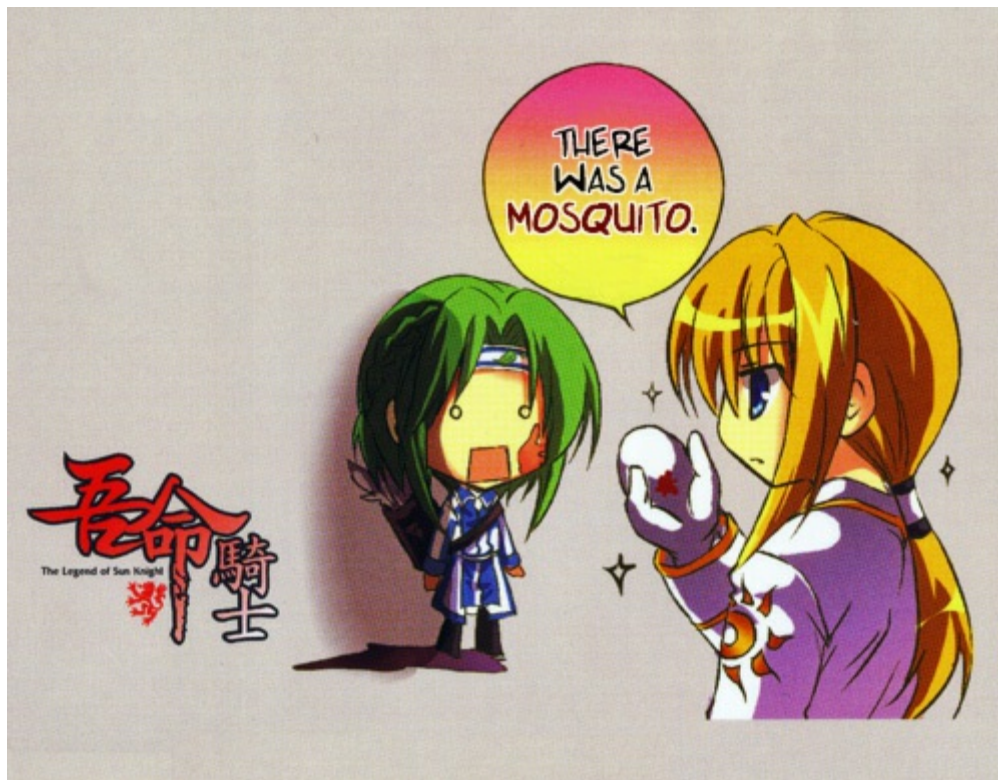
Volume 3: To the Rescue of a Princess

ISBN: 9789866688096

I am a knight. To be precise, I am the Church of the God of Light's Sun Knight.

To be the Sun Knight is to have shining golden hair, sky blue eyes, a compassionate nature, and a brilliant smile.

To forever wear a smile as he says, "The benevolent God of Light will forgive your sins" – that is the life a Sun Knight.



It is with great reluctance that I will smile for twenty-odd years, but when a princess appears before my eyes, and a hot babe at that, the smile on my face is a genuine one.

Since ancient times, writers have had one common rule, and that is: a princess should be accompanied by a knight!

As a knight, and as the protagonist, the princess is obviously mine!

Heh heh, look at that generous bosom, see that slender waist, and then peek at that curvy bottom...

What? As a Sun Knight, I shouldn't have such lecherous thoughts?

“Oh! It doesn't matter, the benevolent God of Light will forgive my sins!”

Prologue: The Seal of the Sword on the Knight

Two travelers strode down a country road wearing big hooded cloaks, one light green and one grayish-white. They both had their hoods up, showing only a sliver of the bottom of their faces.

The two travelers walked for a long time in silence.

Eventually they came across an adventure team with five or so team members. The other party had more people, so the two travelers shifted to the side to let them through. The warrior in the front nodded calmly to the two, looking a little proud, but sincere, so he was tolerable.

There were not a lot of people in the team, but there were two who stood out. The two travelers examined them with interest. The warrior in the front had a head full of black curls; he looked strong yet flexible, like a black panther.

The holy knight walking behind the warrior had a cascade of golden hair that shone like the sun, and a pair of warm blue eyes. His bright smile almost blinded everyone around him.

When the group had passed, the traveler in the green cloak said, “What an energetic team! I don’t know who they are but they definitely looked strong. Perhaps they are one of the top three adventure teams in the continent? Which one do you think they are?”

The one wearing a gray cloak smiled. “I don’t think they are a famous team.”

“Why do you think that?” the green-cloaked traveler asked.

“Because I saw someone I know.”

“Someone you know?”

The gray-cloaked traveler nodded. “Yes, the one with the golden hair and blue eyes—he was my apprentice, but he has no possible chance of being in the top three teams.”

The green-cloaked traveler gasped “Your apprentice? Then he really is a holy knight? But he didn’t have proper footing, or the proper hand position. That’s unbelievable! That was your apprentice? I was wondering, for a moment there, if he was just dressed up as a holy knight, but he actually was the one that adventure team was protecting!”

“...He is a holy knight, and the advanced kind as well,” the gray-cloaked traveler said with twitching lips.

Disbelief was written all over the green-cloaked traveler’s face.

The gray-cloaked traveler coughed loudly several times and then explained, “But that’s because the armor and the sword are not his equipment, but rather his seals.”

“Seal? I’m not sure I catch your meaning.”

The gray-cloaked traveler smiled faintly. “If a magician is wielding a sword and wearing armor, are they any use to him?”

“So as a holy knight you managed to make a magician out of your apprentice?” the green-cloaked traveler jested.

“That was just a fact. My apprentice is a holy knight ...Or at least he thinks he’s a holy knight.”

The green-cloaked traveler stared at the departing team. After a moment he said, “Your apprentice is very interesting. Why don’t we follow them, and see what they are up to?”

“No, no, we will definitely be discovered if we try to stalk them.”

The traveler in the green cloak said, “Why? There are no thieves that could sneak up on us, only the archer, and with our abilities I don’t think we will be discovered by the archer either.”

The gray-cloaked traveler laughed and shook his head. “There are no thieves, but there is my apprentice. Believe me my friend, my apprentice aced every single field besides what is required to be a knight.”

“And he is a knight?” The green-cloaked traveler looked at his fellow traveler with an odd expression on his face.

“Yep, and thank the gods that he is a knight...”

The gray-cloaked traveler looked at the distant adventure team. “If not for the identity of a knight and the sword that seals him, what kind of great things could he do? It’s a truly curious thought.”

“If you are so curious, why seal him?”

“Because in this peaceful world, there is no need for great things,” the grey-cloaked traveler said with a sigh.

“Oh, so that’s why.” The green-cloaked traveler nodded in agreement.

The gray-cloaked traveler looked into the distance and said, “Also, as to why I was so determined to train a spell caster into a knight, there is another very important reason.”

Hearing that, the green-cloaked traveler asked seriously, “Why is that?”

The gray-cloaked traveler turned around and looked gravely at his companion. He explained slowly and painfully, “Because, back then, I forgot to choose a back-up knight!”

Chapter 1: First Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “A Missing Princess”

The Sun shone brightly down from the sky, even spilling through the thick layers of the tree canopy, like little golden flowers blooming on the ground. Walking along the tiny path in the country side, the fresh aroma of nature filled the air. Beside me walked my companions, singing songs and looking as joyful as possible... Slap!

Damned, stupid mosquitoes!

“Ah!”

Losing my composure, I gave a tiny scream as a blood imprint of a mosquito was left on my clean white glove. The mark was actually so clear that I could even count the number of legs it had; it was just like a red mosquito specimen.

I... I only brought along three pairs of white gloves! I can't believe that I wasted one pair just by hitting a mosquito!

“Sun Knight?”

Looking up, I saw the whole team staring at me. Other than Leaf Knight, who didn't show any signs of surprise, the rest of the team stared at me with very confused and surprised expressions. Almost immediately a perfect, flawless smile spread across my face as I replied, “Yes, Son of the God of War? May I ask, is it with the God of Light's reminder that Your Excellency has remembered something that you must consult with Sun?”

“Didn't you call out just now? What were you calling for?” Then, a little impatient, the Son of the God of War added, “And, didn't I tell you earlier to just call me Mike? What's with ‘Your Excellency this, Your Excellency that’? It's irritating just to listen to!”

“Your Excellency, Mike, as today's sun is shining brightly in the sky, spreading its brilliant rays down to earth, Sun could not help but exclaim in surprise, so as to praise the God of Light's benevolence for his people, for creating such a beautiful and breathtaking scene with his radiance—”

Mike frowned as he listened and then with an expression that seemed to result from a terrible headache, he shouted, "Shut up!"

"As you wish."

Smiling, I closed my mouth, quietly thinking, Later on, even if I scream or shout or jump around, Mike will still ignore me. Not bad, not bad; now I can be a quiet Sun Knight throughout the trip.

I changed into a new pair of white gloves as I rejoiced. At least later I won't have to talk to anyone. As it is, even if there's a mosquito, it's still within my tolerance range...

Bzz bzz bzz, bzz bzz...

Frowning, I waved my hands at the tiny black spot before me, trying to chase it away, but the damned mosquito just wouldn't leave. It circled next to my ears slowly, and then danced in front of my face... Slap!

Ah! My second pair of gloves...

Ahhh!

I can't stand it anymore! I want my neat and clean Holy Temple! My room where no one visits! My whole cellar full of wine! And most importantly, a place where there are definitely no mosquitoes at all! Why oh why am I now at this place full of blood sucking bugs, blazing sunshine, a bunch of unwashed humans, and dirty mud?

I flashed back to two weeks ago, when I was still living happily in the Holy Temple, working hard to earn my pension, waiting for the day I turned forty and thus would be able to retire with glory...

*

"Our neighboring country's Son of the God of War is getting married soon, and the Monastery of the God of War has specially invited one member from our Church of God of Light as a groomsman. Hence, as the Church of the God of Light's spokesperson, the Church's walking advertisement, I have to trouble you, Sun, to go on the business trip as the groomsman."

Standing in Pope's study room, I stared at the Pope who was smiling widely and asked expressionlessly, "How many Sons of the God of War are there in this world?"

"Just one," the Pope replied, smiling.

"The one who came to our kingdom previously to propose to our princess?"

Clapping his hands together with an "aha", the Pope said, "That's the one, how clever of you!"

"You're flattering me, but didn't he leave just three days ago?" I persisted expressionlessly.

"That's right!"

"Are three days enough for one to return to the neighboring country to propose?"

Spreading both hands out, palms up, the Pope replied, "Not even enough for one to reach the country's borders."

I fell speechless for a while. Is it that the Pope has been so free recently that he has resorted to tricking me for fun?

Weakly I asked, "Then why is there a marriage?"

"Aiya!"

Sitting down, relaxed, the Pope held a cup of tea and gave me an expression that said 'you are too much of a shut-in' as he explained, "He has the whole Monastery of the God of War to propose for him; even if he's not in the land it doesn't matter at all! Anyway, the queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid has already approved the marriage and is planning to marry her eldest daughter to him. The wedding preparations have already started and the invitations were sent out a week ago. All's ready but for the bridegroom, the groomsman, and each country's wedding gift to arrive."

A week ago? Wasn't that the very day after the three of them battled?

I was utterly dumbfounded by this sudden news. Are you serious?! So the

Son of the God of War already had a back up bride ready at hand? If he can't get this kingdom's princess' hand in marriage then he's just going to return home and marry another? Well, they all have the title of "XX" Princess, so it doesn't matter what the "XX" stands for, does it?

This really makes one (jealous)...feel revolted by his shameful personality and doings!

Nevertheless, there's a high chance that that princess is an undesirable one, and that is why the queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid is putting her daughter up for sale... I tried to confirm that possibility subtly by asking, "Is that princess beautiful?"

Pope immediately gave a thumbs up as he praised, "One of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid's top beauties."

My face twitched before asking again hopefully, "Does she have some sort of terminal illness?"

"As healthy as possible!"

"Lousy personality?"

"She's popular everywhere!"

How heart-wrenching! I can't believe there was once a hundred percent, top quality beauty in my neighboring country. I knew nothing about it and in the blink of an eye she is now going to become another man's wife! Even the invitation cards have been sent and the groomsman is actually me!

Helplessly watching such a great beauty being married to another... My heart ached as though someone was wringing it. My voice filled with pain as I said, "Beautiful, healthy, good personality, and what's more, she is a (rich) princess. I can't believe that there was actually a woman of such top quality in this world... Why didn't you tell me earlier?!"

Placing his cup down slowly, the Pope calmly said, "Calm down, Knight-Captain Sun. Don't forget that you can only love the God of Light, not women. Even if you got married, you could only be 'busy with work', and would continually neglect your wife. This would be just too cruel for the

other party to bear.”

“Bullshit!” Immediately silencing all his glib prattle, I corrected him sternly, “I can spend one hour per day being busy with work, then another hour neglecting her, and finally spend the rest of my time loving her.”

“Your ‘rest of the time’ is a bit of an exaggeration...”

“Hmph! Even Storm who’s in charge of doing all my work isn’t complaining, so what is there for you to complain about?”

The Pope sighed, “He doesn’t complain? You’re really lying through your teeth, aren’t you? The accumulating resentments he had earlier has already grown even higher than that of Knight-Captain Hell. Are you sure you are not going to hide and lie low in case you get murdered by him one night?”

I began to frown. Well it does seem that recently whenever I see Storm along the corridor, the stack of paper documents in his hands is really at a sky-high height... A shiver ran down my spine as I continued, “I’ll go! But I have to bring Judgment along.”

“Bring Judgment along?”

The Pope, who has been sitting there, relaxed this whole while, suddenly jumped up from his chair and in a child’s high-pitched voice screamed, “You might as well say that you’re going to take the whole Holy Temple away!”

That’s true; if both the Sun Knight and the Judgment Knight were to leave then the Holy Temple would become leaderless. After much consideration, I changed my mind. “Then I’ll bring Storm along, take him out for a stroll, and see if it can wash away some of his resentment.”

The Pope immediately rejected the idea. “It is okay for the Holy Temple to have no Sun Knight, but not without Storm Knight around.”

You... I will not argue with you now, but you had better believe I’ll remember this! After all, there’s a long journey ahead for me to think on my revenge! A little annoyed, I replied, “Then I’ll bring Adair; that should be okay right?”

The Pope rejected it again and answered, “I’ll say this again: Sun Knight Platoon can bear it without a captain—after all, they’re equivalent to having no captain most of the time—but they can’t survive it without a vice-captain.”

What’s with that? Raising my eyebrow, I was just about to retort that Adair was my vice-captain and that I should be able to bring him wherever I want or something along those lines when the Pope interrupted.

“Also, although more than half of your work is done by Storm, actually three-fifths of it is thrown back to Adair. If you’re going to bring Adair along, you must be prepared to anger Storm for the eleventh time, and then receive his revenge without warning,” he said.

I’ve been utterly defeated.

“...Then I’ll just bring Ice along.”

Shaking his head, Pope commented, “Ice doesn’t belong to the ‘good, warm-hearted’ faction. If you’re going to bring him along for this mission then, one, it’s just not suitable and, two, if you took him away then who is going to be in charge of the whole Church of the God of Light’s after meal dessert? Do you want the whole Church to have no dessert? Do you want to anger the entire Church?”

“No... Then I’ll just bring Cloud, alright?” I’m a little angry now; no this, no that—they’re all people working under me, but I can’t bring even one of them with me! Am I still the head of the Holy Temple?

“You can’t!” Looking a little frustrated, the Pope explained, “The crop yield hasn’t been very promising recently, causing the donations we receive to be badly affected. So, in order to cut down on the Church’s expenditure, I have just fired the librarian and sent Cloud over to be in charge instead. After all, that’s where he is hiding most of the time. He knows even better than the actual librarian where each and every book is placed, so making him the librarian is just the right thing to do! If you’re going to take him away now, the library will turn into a ruin; we won’t be able to find any books!”

After much thought, I looked up and said, “Then I’ll bring Moon along!”

“I have no comment, as long as you can persuade him to leave his lover for around a month.”

“Okay...” After taking in a deep breath, I bellowed, “Okay, that’s just too difficult! Moon treasures his lover even more than his own life! If I tried to make him leave his lover, wouldn’t he kill me?”

The Pope nodded in complete agreement.

I paced around restlessly and asked, “Then just who can I bring along? Let me tell you this, I would rather die than go there alone; who knows if the Son of the God of War holds any grudge against me due to the previous incident? What if he takes revenge on me later? He’s someone that even Judgment mentioned that he can’t win against! I would never beat him alone!”

The Pope then kindly reminded me, “You can take Leaf along!”

“Leaf?” I stopped pacing around, but after much consideration and internal struggle, I finally said, “But, but Leaf, he... He’s a nice person!”

Giving me a confused look, the Pope replied, “Not only is he a nice person, he’s a very well-behaved child and won’t reject any weird requests of yours. From running errands such as buying blueberries to helping you to beat a dog, he would take them all. What are you unsatisfied with?”

“But he’s an archer,” I complained.

Utterly baffled, the Pope asked, “So what? It’s not like you haven’t seen his archery skills. Even Judgment said that he’s not sure if he could beat Leaf.”

“But I want to bring along someone who can use a sword...” I struggled to say.

Still confused and unable to understand, the Pope replied, “It’s not that I want to complain, but at the moment the careers that require the ability to use a sword are fairly abundant. Knights, warriors—who can’t use a sword nowadays? In fact, in comparison, archers are much more valuable. Now you have an archer to bring along and you’re not only not going to treasure him, but go so far as to dislike and avoid him?”

Expressionlessly, I replied swiftly, “An archer can’t be my meat shield and can’t defend me from close combat attacks. What’s more, the speed of him escaping from danger was definitely much faster than that of mine! What’s the use of bringing him?”

“...” Rolling his eyes at me, the Pope couldn’t help saying, “I’m asking you to be a bridegroom. I’m not asking you to go and run for your life. Just take Leaf along!”

“With the luck I’ve been having recently, even as a groomsman I’ll still end up having to run for my life!” Firmly, I continued, “Let me bring Hell along. If not, you can find someone else to go and take the role as the groomsman!”

“Hell?”

Frowning, the Pope slowly said, “He’s not very suitable for this, right? After all, his ‘identity’ is a little sensitive and not very fitting for appearing on auspicious occasions such as a wedding. If it was a funeral then bringing him along would be a rather apt decision.”

I snorted. “Even if he gets found out by someone, I can just say that he was previously spying as a dark knight in the Cathedral of the Shadow God, and that’s why he’s covered in a dark aura! Or I could just as well say that he turned into this state as his identity was discovered by the Cathedral of the Shadow God while spying there. However, we, the Church of God of Light, would never abandon our friend and hence we still accepted him!”

Hearing this reasoning, which was almost comparable to the ‘The Sun Knight is Perfect’ theory, Pope shrugged and said, “Anyway, he’s your responsibility, if you think it’ll be okay, then it’ll be okay!”

Since even the Pope has no objections anymore, of course I’ll have to tell this to Knight-Captain Hell immediately and then book time in his schedule to talk to him.

He’s very popular now. Knights who want to practice fencing skills with him have lined up all the way from the Holy Temple to the Imperial Palace. Among these people there were even many whom I wouldn’t want

to mess around with, such as Knight-Captain Judgment, the Princess's fiancé, and even two of the King's trusted knights.

Not to mention Knight-Captain Storm. This whole week, as there was now a 'person' to share his workload with, he had looked so happy and blessed. His sky-rocketing resentment towards me had also gone down by quite a bit, and even the dark circles around his eyes had become a lot lighter.

However, I wonder what facial expression he would have if he heard that I'm going to take Hell away? After much thought, I came to the conclusion that since there was still Adair to help him with the workload, it shouldn't be bad enough for him to need to take revenge on me without warning just yet!

That settles it, I'll just take Knight-Captain Hell, then.

*

As planned, I was going to look for Hell to schedule the travelling plan, but just a few short steps out of the Pope's study room I met Knight-Captain Cloud, the one who was always floating around. How rare. Usually when I'm looking for him it would be considered normal to take a few hours of searching; if I'm not looking for him, then the chances of seeing him are even less. Now that I've seen him without searching I wonder if that's actually a good thing or a bad thing...

"Eh?"

Without saying a word, Cloud suddenly grabbed hold of me, and at a staggering speed, brought me drifting across the whole walkway. If not for knowing that this was exactly how Cloud usually moves, I would definitely have thought that there were wheels attached to his feet. Still surprised about why he had grabbed me, I realized that we had already drifted the entire length of the corridor.

But just where is he taking me to?

"Cloud..."

Just when I was about to ask, Cloud wearily raised one pale hand and

pointed ahead, at the same time making a 'shh' sign with the other on his mouth.

I poked my head out stealthily... But all I saw was Knight-Captain Hell and his knight platoon.

Although the act of Hell Knight and his platoon stopping along the corridor wasn't anything that strange, when Hell Knight is standing at one side, and that his platoon is standing opposite him, both facing each other, without saying a word, the situation turns rather strange.

The one leading the platoon now was Knight-Captain Hell... No! It was the Hell Knight Platoon's Vice-captain. For all these years, he had always been the one leading, almost making me forget that he wasn't actually the Hell Knight, but rather the temporary substituting vice-captain, and he was called... Called what? Ty...Tyre?

Just when I wanted to turn around and ask Cloud, I suddenly realized there was no one around me. I immediately burst out into a cold sweat, almost thinking that I might have met up with Cloud's ghost or something like that. But reconsidering, I rationalized that this was the Church of the God of Light, and dark presences such as angry ghosts definitely wouldn't appear here. Cloud probably just drifted away again.

"Are you Tyler?" Roland asked, at the same time reminding me that I had remembered the name wrong.

The other person nodded, and then in a cold voice, replied, "Yes, I'm Tyler, Knight Supreme Dragon."

Hearing Roland addressed that way I was shocked, and yet at the same time I saw that other members of Hell Knight Platoon frowning too. Despite their frowns, their expressions didn't seem surprised at all. In fact, not one of them corrected Tyler for addressing Roland in that manner.

As the Hell Knight, an outsider's address for Roland usually would be "Hell Knight" or at most adding an honorific such as "Your Excellency" while addressing him. As for holy knights and clerics from the Church of God of Light, they would address him as "Knight-Captain Hell", just as Adair would usually address me as "Knight-Captain Sun", and only at

times when it's not as formal would he then address me as just "Captain."

In short, Tyler should only address Roland as "Knight-Captain Hell" or "Captain". Even if, like outsiders, he was to address him with just "Hell Knight", those two words would still be alright. But he actually directly addressed Roland by his name as "Knight Supreme Dragon".

That was an address for knights of the same rank, or even for a knight that is ranked lower... The situation has turned awkward now !

With that, I frowned. Don't tell me the Hell Knight Platoon's vice captain is trying to take over the position as Knight-Captain Hell? Should I go out now and reprimand him?

However, just deterring him on the surface by scolding him wouldn't cause any constructive changes. It might even cause the whole Hell Knight Platoon to think that Roland was simply exploiting the power of Sun Knight. Maybe I should just leave Roland to resolve the situation by himself?

But can Roland really handle this? I was a little doubtful. After all, from what I heard from Elijah, even when Roland was working as a royal knight he was not very sociable to begin with.

Roland couldn't feel the tension in the air and just calmly said, "Then, you're my vice-captain?"

Hearing that, a furious expression appeared on Tyler's face and he bellowed, "Are you taking for granted that that's how it's supposed to be?"

Calm down! Tyler, you must calm down! Roland didn't mean anything, he just wants to confirm that you're his vice-captain Tyler and not just someone who has the same name. There's no other hidden meaning behind it! Hiding off to the side, I wanted to explain for Roland, but I couldn't just jump out randomly so I waited anxiously out of sight.

Roland looked at him. As he was currently wearing the Supreme Dragon outfit, Roland's lower face was covered and no one could see his expression.

That fellow definitely doesn't know what's happening now at all, and

looks very confused... I just know him too well!

A little hesitant, Roland opened his mouth and said, "Indeed, that's not how it is..."

With a cold snort, Tyler said coldly, "So you understand too?"

I rolled my eyes. Come on, you two aren't even talking about the same thing. Roland would say that that's not how it is as he's not the real Hell Knight. But Tyler is trying to say that the Knight-Captain Hell has been missing for thirteen years and has only appeared now to take back the position as the captain, and this was not how things are supposed to be.

No! I can't take this anymore. Just as I went to step out to resolve the situation for Roland, I saw a familiar figure appear from the corner of my eyes and immediately stepped back into my hiding place.

"Knight-Captain Hell."

After bowing respectfully to Roland, Adair turned to face Tyler, his fellow vice-captain, and greeted him like an old friend, "Hey Tyler, haven't seen you in a long time, how are you d..."

Half way through speaking, Adair realized the tension in the air. Looking at Roland, then at Tyler and the rest of the Hell Knight Platoon who was opposite him, he immediately turned very serious. Turning around, in a critical tone, he said, "Tyler, just what are you doing? Are you trying to cross the line here? Are you trying to go overreach your authority and do what you're not supposed to do?"

That's my vice-captain! Within seconds he understood the whole situation. The intuition I had for him was just too good!

"Adair." Looking miserable, Tyler shouted, "For thirteen years I have been the Knight-Captain Hell, but now...!"

"You mean been the substitute Knight-Captain Hell!" Adair cut in and corrected him, not affected by Tyler at all. Then he said coldly, "Since the beginning, you knew that you would only be the vice-captain, and that the captain would return one day. Now that he's back, it's only to be expected, isn't it? What is there to complain about?"

“But I didn’t know that Knight-Captain Hell was such a weird person,” Tyler replied stubbornly.

“Don’t look for excuses, Tyler; you have never cared about one’s outer appearance. Furthermore...” After looking around, Adair then continued in a softer tone, “Among the Twelve Holy Knights, is there actually anyone who’s normal?”

“Yeah!” Ed, who was behind him suddenly cut in. “No matter how weird he is, he can’t be as weird as our captain!”

...Has it really been so long since I last kicked someone down the cliff?

The whole Hell Team couldn’t help admitting, “Now that’s true...”

Even Tyler remained silent for a while before he could continue. “But at least Knight-Captain Sun knows how to maintain his appearance and behave properly. Just look at what he’s wearing... Isn’t that style of dressing overly suspicious?”

Despite hearing others criticizing his style of clothing, Roland continued to remain silent.

Luckily no one knows that I, Sun Knight, have worn that too. I feel very fortunate now.

Under Tyler’s insistence Adair looked at Roland’s clothes. However, he did not say anything and merely continued badgering Tyler. “Tyler, on my behalf, please accept him and treat him as the real captain now.”

Tyler’s expression changed, just as he was about to retort. “But...”

Adair forcefully stopped him, raised one finger, and then said, “Just for one month. If after one month, you still believe that he’s not suited to being the Knight-Captain Hell, then I’ll be on your side no matter what you want to do!”

Tyler stared at Adair suspiciously.

Adair coughed lightly and then shouted in a loud, determined voice, “By then, even if our Captain ordered us not to help you, I would still be on your side!”

“Oh!” everyone exclaimed loudly in their surprise.

To that, Tyler could not respond at all. He could only continue his tirade on the same theme, “But he won’t even show his face.”

Ed muttered, “So what? He’s just faceless, our captain is shameless...”

Adair immediately turned around and growled softly, “Ed, don’t talk rubbish!”

“It doesn’t matter right? Captain isn’t here anyways!” Ed replied, not troubled at all.

“He is,” Roland, who had been remaining silent this entire time, suddenly said. And once he opened his mouth, the whole place fell into a frozen silence.

Ed’s whole body started to tremble, yet he continued to try to act as calm as possible as he said, “St-stop joking, Knight-Captain Hell. I just heard that the Pope had asked the Captain to see him, so how is it possible for Captain to be here now? Hahaha, that is so funny, so, so funny, how hilarious! You’re really humorous.”

Hearing that, Roland pointed his finger towards a corner in the walkway and said, “He’s been there since the beginning. I don’t know why he hasn’t come out.”

“Haha...ha...” Ed’s terrible laughter immediately turned into an even more terrible crying as he howled, “Captttaaaiiiinnnn, please listen to my explanation!”

But I had no time to care about him now. Instead, I began to ponder. Adair had just convinced Tyler to give Roland a month’s “trial period.” I’m completely not worried about what’s going to happen in a month’s time, what with Roland’s skill, earnestness, and natural leadership skills; Tyler definitely won’t have anything to gripe about. What I’m worried about is... If Roland is going to be on trial for a month, then who is going to come along with me to the Kingdom of Moon Orchid to be the groomsman?

I frowned as I continued to think. It seems that I can only take Leaf now. Although he’s an archer, his sword skills couldn’t be any worse than mine,

right? But even if they're not as bad as mine, they probably aren't amazing either... It's better if I ask around now!

As I walked out from the corner where I had been hiding, I faced everyone with a sparkling smile and said, "Seeing how Sun's brothers were standing here at this blessed place exchanging the God of Light's benevolence, Sun's heart was immediately filled with warmth and happiness. Hence, having to stop everyone in the middle of this exchange made Sun feel extremely terrible and bitter about it. Ah! Sun should really receive the God of Light's punishment for this, but I had to interrupt, thus, hoping that everyone present here will understand and forgive my intrusion and please allow Adair to leave this wonderful exchange to follow Sun instead. Later, Sun will definitely, in the name of God of Light, fully exchange and share the God of Light's benevolence with everyone present here as an apology."

"Adair, what is captain talking about? Don't tell me it's something about killing me!" Ed asked with a mournful face.

"No, don't talk rubbish anymore. Captain just wants me to follow him." After replying softly, Adair immediately responded to me loudly with a, "Yes, Captain."

I nodded, smiled toward everyone and saw how terrified everyone was. It was only when they realized that I wasn't going to say anything else, that they then looked relieved.

Smiling, I bid goodbye to everyone and left first while Adair followed closely behind. When we reached somewhere devoid of people, I turned and asked directly, "How are Leaf Knight's fencing skills? Be truthful."

Hearing this weird question, Adair frowned a little and replied with euphemism, "Just a little better than yours..."

"Don't compare him with me!" I was a little agitated now.

If Leaf's fencing really is just a little better than mine, then it's really, really lousy. At a time like this, I don't want to consider things like if I'll lose face or not. Bringing someone who has really lousy fencing skills out with me would be bad since it is related to the important matter of

meeting the God of Light much earlier or not!

Adair then replied sternly, “Yes, Knight-Captain Leaf’s fencing skills are not bad.”

This reply was a little too vague. Frowning, I continued asking, “What if he were compared to you?”

“A little worse than mine, but the gap between our skills isn’t that big.”

Oh! Immediately I stopped frowning, if that’s the case then it must be really good. Adair’s fencing skill should be ranked among the top ten in Holy Temple at least! Looks like I can rest assured and take Leaf along with me now...

“Captain.”

“Hmm?” I responded casually.

Carefully Adair said, “About what Ed said just now, please don’t take it to heart. He always speaks without thinking, with his mouth running faster than his brain. He didn’t really mean what he said. As you know, he has always respected and been in awe of you.”

“Oh!”

Suddenly giving a bright and brilliant smile, I looked towards Adair who seemed to be at a loss as to what to do and said, “I would’ve forgotten about that if you hadn’t mentioned it. Since you, as vice-captain, have reminded me, then before Sun leaves may my dearest brothers from Sun Knight Platoon have a special training session that is as harsh as God of Light’s bright radiance during the summer!”

“...”

Adair’s expression looks as though he was considering repenting his sins before the whole Sun Knight Platoon.

*

“Sun? Sun?”

Returning from my own trail of thoughts, I saw a tiny black spot fly past

my eyes, accompanied by an annoying buzzing sound. Without another word, I swung my right hand...

Slap!

Leaf stared at me blankly with huge eyes.

With an extremely calm expression, I “plucked” my hand off Leaf’s face. With my palm open, I then explained to Leaf, who had just received the swift slap from me, “There was a mosquito.”

Leaf looked down at the red mosquito specimen on my white glove while I looked at his left cheek. Not only has his cheek obviously turned bright red, it’s swollen and there’s even trace of blood near his mouth... Maybe I’m about to be the first person to successfully agitate the Leaf Knight?

“I see.”

After a long while, Leaf finally looked up and said with a smile, “Luckily Sun killed the mosquito for me; if not, I’m afraid there would be a swollen spot on my face from the mosquito bite right now.”

“...”

There is no swollen spot from a mosquito bite, but the whole half of his face is swollen now. Giving a gentle smile, I replied, “Brother Leaf you’re just too courteous, this is a part of Sun’s responsibility.”

“Hehe!” Shading the sunlight above his head with his hand, Leaf then praised, “The sunlight is just so bright today, the way the light hits Sun’s hair makes it sparkle prettily, as if made of gold. Can you give me a few strands of it?”

“If I remember correctly, hasn’t brother Leaf has taken Sun’s hair many times before already?”

“I’ve used them all— No! I mean I accidentally lost them all,” Leaf replied with an apologetic face.

“I see. Then this time, Sun will give brother Leaf a little more in one go!”

In order for Leaf to fully forget about the slap I just gave him, I decided to be extra generous this time! After all, the hair will just grow back; it’s

not anything precious... Although the fact that Leaf always loves to ask for my hair is really strange. I've heard of cases such as pedophilia, fetishes, and such, but the case of a fetish for hair is really rare. Oh right! Not only hair, he asks for my nails sometimes too.

As most of the times he asked me for hair and nails were just after I happened to have done something that might have annoyed him, I could only hand those things over meekly.

I grabbed my Divine Sun Sword, pulled it out from its scabbard and placed the shining sword blade near my head, ready to cut...

"Sun! You are going to cut your head off!" Giving a sudden scream, Leaf was horrified and snatched the sword away from my hands. "I'll do it so please don't hold the sword. You nearly scared me to death..." he said as he swung the sword swiftly.

I didn't feel a thing, but a lock of hair was suddenly in his hand. Carefully holding the lock of hair up, he asked, "I cut a little more, is that alright? I believe that along the way, I will need to use it frequently... I mean, along the road where sunlight shines brilliantly, I will frequently need to take it out and hold it under the sunshine. It will definitely be very pretty as it sparkles."

I shook my head to show that I didn't mind. Looking at it now, it seems that Leaf's fencing skills are indeed as good as Adair described them to be. For the rest of the trip, everything should be just fine. Even if anything were to happen, I can now rest assured as I push Leaf out to block the attacks! So cutting a little bit of my hair off doesn't matter much; it would even be alright if you wanted to cut all my hair short!

Keeping the few strands of hair, Leaf performed a healing spell on his swollen face. After all, it was just an external injury. Although it appeared rather serious, with just a minor healing spell Leaf's swollen face returned to its initial state instantly.

Just then, I suddenly realized there was no one else around me anymore. Urgently I asked, "Where is His Excellency, the Son of the God of War?"

Leaf carefully explained, "Just now the warpriest found a few people

waiting in ambush up front, so Mike brought everyone along to scout the area. Before he left, he mentioned that the archer and cleric should just remain here.”

Oh, I see...

Wait, with ‘archer’, he’s definitely referring to Leaf. With such a huge bow behind him and the few quivers of arrows, only a blind man wouldn’t be able to recognize him as an archer. But just who is he referring to with ‘cleric’?

Expressionlessly, I looked around. The warpriest wasn’t there; only Leaf and I were left.

I stared at Leaf and Leaf stared back at me. “I think it must have been a slip of the tongue when Mike referred to you as a cleric,” he tried to explain evasively. Leaf’s voice became softer and softer as he explained, “Or maybe he made a mistake with your career. Eh, maybe he thought that anyone who can heal is cleric? Or maybe...”

I mentally rolled my eyes. You too used the healing spell just now, so why did he not mistake you for a cleric? Obviously, the Son of God of War said that on purpose!

*

When Leaf and I first arrived at the palace in the Kingdom of Moon Orchid after some rushing, we were met with a pervading sense of gloom throughout the entire palace from the moment we stepped inside. This nearly confused me into thinking that the news we had received was wrong and that we were actually here to attend a princess’ funeral, not a wedding. If only I had known this earlier, I would have brought Hell Knight along after all!

The Son of the God of War stood to one side without any warriors beside him at all.

The queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid sat on the throne, not moving an inch... If I were wearing that gown that appears to be heavier than a set of armor, I wouldn’t move an inch either. What’s more, there’s a

crown on her head that appears as if it's only suitable for showing off in a gallery, not for putting on one's head.

A thin layer of veil covered the queen's face. The veil was very thin, so one could still partially recognize her facial features. Although she already had a daughter old enough to be married, she still looked as if she were in her early thirties. She maintains her skin well.

The queen is just like our king; she almost doesn't need to speak a word. But obviously, this woman's ability to rule is definitely greater than that of her king's. My king has to at least signal to his trusted knights with his eyes before one would jump out to convey the message for him. This queen didn't even move a single eyelash before two female knights behind her jumped out and started explaining the situation to those of us who came from the Church of the God of Light.

The female knight was very wordy, so repeating her words would be annoying. Not to mention that I immediately forgot what she had just said, so I wouldn't be able to repeat them anyway. So, in short; the princess who was going to marry the Son of the God of War had been abducted.

"The princess has been abducted?"

Although I looked shocked on the surface, I was actually feeling rather suspicious about the whole situation. If it were a prince that was abducted then it would still be understandable. After all, princes always run around going on adventures, wooing hot chicks, challenging others, etc. when they have nothing better to do, making them very abduct-able! But how and when would a princess, who never sets a foot out the front door, get abducted so easily?

Also, what can one get from abducting a princess?

If it's for the throne... Under the precondition that there's a prince, the princess doesn't have the right to succession at all, so abducting her is practically useless.

If it's for hot chicks, then one can definitely find someone prettier than the princess just by walking two circuits around the town. After all, there's an abundance of hot chicks in this world. No matter how beautiful this

princess is rumored to be, that is just “among all princesses” that she’s considered pretty. If one were really to compare a princess with all the beauties in this world, then probably not even one out of all the princesses on this whole continent would be able to get into the list of top hundred beauties.

If money was the target, why wouldn’t he just abduct the palace’s gold safe instead if he had the ability to abduct even a princess? Abducting a human is so much more troublesome!

Hence, in conclusion, normally the only one who would be bored enough to abduct a princess is the so called demon king in legends.

As to what I believe, the only reason that a demon king would ever want to do this kind of tough, lousy job would be because they’ve either forgotten to get a brain, or they just want to become more famous!

Don’t tell me it was really the doings of a demon king? But I hadn’t heard anything about the appearance of a demon king recently.

As I was making all kinds of wild guesses in my head, the queen, who hadn’t moved at all, spoke. “Sun Knight, I have one request of you.”

I was shocked. The queen had opened her mouth to request something of me personally, and that just meant one thing... Something bad was going to happen to me!

However, even though I knew that something bad was about to happen to me, I still had to give an unperturbed expression and replying seriously. “Your Majesty, if I, Sun, can bring you even the slightest bit of the God of Light’s radiance, I will do everything I can and put in my best effort.”

Still expressionless, the queen said, “I want you to rescue my daughter.”

Hearing that, I immediately turned in confusion to the Son of the God War who standing there fuming. I was just one step away from saying something like, “What’s your wife being abducted got to do with me?”

Then, with a cold “Hmph,” that damned Son of the God of War looked at me and said, “I have no choice; the princess’ rescue team is still short of a cleric for healing.”

I'm a holy knight, damn it!

Chapter 2: Second Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “Form an Adventurer Team”

Saving a princess is considered good fortune for a knight, for not only can he take a (wealthy) young beauty as his bride, he can also conveniently raise his reputation.

However, going out to save someone else’s princess is not fortunate for a Sun Knight, for not only must he struggle to do his utmost to save the (wealthy) young beauty, he must also look on helplessly as the (wealthy) young beauty marries another. Besides, a Sun Knight’s reputation is already so resounding that it doesn’t need to be raised anymore.

Later that night, after the queen requested that I save her daughter, who was someone else’s princess, Leaf asked me worriedly, “Sun, are you going to decline the queen’s request?”

I took in a deep breath, and just when I was about to say this and that about the God of Light, Leaf forced a smile and said, “Sun, I hope you can use simple words. My ability to decipher your speech is not as good as Storm’s or Adair’s, so I might not understand what you’re saying.”

I released the breath and explained in simple and straightforward terms, “The situation is too odd. The princess was abducted, yet the queen has not sent out people to search for her or rescue her. Instead, she wants us to form an adventurer team to save her. This kind of inefficient method does not seem like the type a mother would use when worrying about her daughter’s safety.”

Leaf nodded after hearing my reasoning.

“Besides, even if they want to form an adventurer team, the Monastery of the God of War has plenty of warriors. The Son of the God of War is a person that even Judgment claims he can’t win against. Just him doing the saving is enough, so why do they insist that we go? We are knights who specialize in group battles. In a small adventurer team, the extent of our

usefulness would be very limited!”

As for the Son of the God of War’s claim that they’re missing a cleric for healing purposes... I’ll pretend I didn’t hear that!

Leaf considered this and said somewhat haltingly, “Maybe they have to deal with undead creatures?”

Hearing his words, I furrowed my brows. Dealing with undead creatures? That might be a possibility, since even though undead creatures have an obvious weak point—they are terrified of holy light—warriors are unable to produce even a tiny bit of holy light, so they can only ceaselessly hack at the undead creatures until they’re completely crushed. That’s why even the bravest of warriors will have a splitting headache after hearing any mention of undead creatures.

“I don’t know...” I said hesitantly.

Slowly, Leaf said, “If they’re dealing with undead creatures, then we have an obligation to join their team.”

I furrowed my brows and asked in reply, “Excluding the two of us, who among the holy knights that we brought has the highest ranking?”

Leaf took a moment to think before he began reciting a list. “We brought along thirty holy knights and ten clerics. Among the holy knights, the ones with the highest ranking would be two knights from the Leaf Knight Platoon, two knights from the Blaze Knight Platoon, a knight from the Judgment Knight Platoon, a knight from the Earth Knight Platoon—”

Immediately, I made my decision. “Okay! We’ll have that knight from the Earth Knight Platoon and one cleric follow the adventurer team to save the princess!”

“...”

Outside the door came the sound of knocking. I glanced at the door and said dully, “That’s probably a sweet talker sent by the queen. Leaf, don’t talk while I deal with this.”

Leaf is a good person. No matter what kind of request someone makes,

he always accepts, so the best way of dealing with this is to have him shut up. He also knows this, so he very obediently shut up.

I casually fixed my clothes, put on my smile, and shouted out with quite some propriety, “Even though Sun does not know which brother is outside his door, Sun upholds the generous love of the God of Light and welcomes any and all brothers.”

The door opened, and the person that walked in immediately brightened the entire room. The new person was definitely not a brother. It was, in fact, a girl who wore a fairly simple light-blue dress. Her face was as soft and cute as a honey peach, and she had a pair of tender green eyes that sparkled like the surface of a lake under the light of the sun. Her lips were as pink as two petals brought together, and even though she looked to be a girl around eighteen years of age, her figure was curvy in all the right places. Especially that waist that looked so slender it wouldn't be able to withstand one squeeze...

Anyway, although the girl before my eyes wasn't the most drop dead gorgeous beauty out there, she definitely counted as a beauty. She was a radiant, petite beauty full of youth and vitality!

She then shyly started speaking. “It is a pleasure to meet you, Sun Knight, Leaf Knight. I am the Kingdom of Moon Orchid's third princess, Ann Nalis Jeffrey...” she said.

Ann... What a great and easy to remember name!

“Princess Ann, how do you do? Sun is the spokesperson of the God of Light, the Sun Knight.” I introduced myself with a perfect smile, and then also mentioned Leaf as an afterthought, saying, “This is Sun's brother, the Leaf Knight, who is one of the Twelve Holy Knights of the Holy Temple.”

Leaf greeted the princess with a wide smile.

“Sun Knight, Leaf Knight...” Princess Ann nodded at Leaf and me. After she returned our greetings, she suddenly grabbed my arms in an unusually abrupt manner, and pleaded, “Please, you must help my older sister, Alice!”

Shocked, I “forgot” to shrug off the princess' hand, and cried out in

alarm, “Sun does not understand what the princess means? Might Princess Alice be in some sort of trouble?”

“My sister Alice is the Son of the God of War’s fiancée. She...she was abducted, and now her whereabouts are unknown...”

Ann finally seemed to realize that her behavior was indecent. She quickly let go of my arm and even backed up a few steps before she lowered her head and spoke as if she were on the verge of crying. “I am very worried about my sister Alice’s safety, so I begged Mother to allow me to join the adventurer team. Mother has agreed, except...”

“Except what?” I took this opportunity to take two steps forward. I timed it just right, making it look like I moved closer in inquiry because of my concern.

Although Ann didn’t become suspicious, her head was still lowered, and her tone was despondent. “Except...”

“Except what, Your Highness?”

I moved two steps closer. Now, only the princess’ lotus-shaped dress separated us. I could faintly smell the extremely refreshing scent of honey peach from the tips of her long hair. She truly was a girl just like a honey peach!

Ann finally opened her mouth to say, “Except, Mother claimed that it would be unacceptable to have a princess mix in with a bunch of warriors, so if I wish to go, I must have knights by my side to escort me. That is why Mother requested you to go today while you were at the palace, but, but I heard that you seemed unwilling to go...”

Having said this, Ann turned glistening eyes toward me. Hopefulness shone within those lake-green eyes filled with tears.

With a smile, I replied, “Sun is no such thing, Your Highness. Escorting a princess is a knight’s duty. Even if it’s to the ends of the earth, so long as it is a place the God of Light shines upon, Sun will be able to escort you there.”

“Then I’ll go and tell Mother right away!” Ann’s tears turned into a

smile. Probably because she was overexcited, she almost tripped over her own dress. After she skipped over to the door, she turned her head and smiled as she said, “I look forward to adventuring with you, Sun Knight.”

I smiled as I waved. I look forward to this too! Cute Princess Ann.

After the princess closed the door to the room, I turned to see Leaf looking at me, so I looked back at him. After we had stared at each other for ten seconds, he silently went off to pack our luggage.

What a considerate, understanding, and obedient child.

*

And that is the complete process of how I came to be in this desolate wilderness full of mosquitoes... Slap !

Thank goodness I hadn't changed my gloves yet... I laid my palm flat, and with my other hand, I lightly flicked off the fresh specimen.

With a concerned expression, Leaf asked, “Sun, Mike and the others still haven't returned. Should we try following them?”

I furrowed my brow, honestly too lazy to chase after them, but I was also afraid they might truly have run into trouble. After thinking this through, I simply decided to use my ability to sense elements to search for them... What? You say you forgot what that ability is?

Okay, it has been some time since I last used this ability, so I'll explain it one more time. Don't forget it again.

This world is filled with all kinds of elements. No matter if it's the forest, the city, mankind, or even undead creatures, everything has an element. Generally speaking, everything contains a variety of different elements. Only under certain circumstances will an object have an abnormally high amount of a particular element.

For example, undead creatures have an extremely strong “dark” element. In comparison, as the Sun Knight, I have a very strong “holy,” otherwise known as the “light” element. Because the holy element can keep the dark element in check, my very existence is an anathema to undead creatures.

For them, everything from my hair all the way to my toe nails is a fatal poison.

I was born with this ability to sense elements. This type of ability is rare and can be considered a kind of gift, because even though it can be learned later on, learning it later on doesn't produce good results. The ability to sense elements allows me to perceive what kind of elements other people have, and from their elements I can determine their profession. Those with a strong "holy" element must either be clerics of the God of Light or holy knights.

Warriors often have a somewhat higher amount of fire and wind elements, but only a little. Compared with magic users who specialize in fire-type magic or wind-type magic, it's not a large amount, so they're still easy to identify.

Warriors who favor strength are often of the fire element type, while those who favor speed are often of the wind element type. As for that Son of the God of War, he's a little too impressive. His fire and wind elements are both so high, it's alarming. They're almost as high as what a magic user would have— What? You say you remember my ability now? And you even remember that my teacher had instructed me not to use this ability in front of other people?

Ahem! No matter, there's only Leaf by my side, and he's a good person, so it's all right!

I extended my ability out...

"Ah! They've returned," Leaf cried out softly.

I hadn't seen anyone, but as an archer Leaf's eyesight and hearing are both so superb that if he claimed they'd returned, then they must have returned.

When I reeled my sensing ability back in, I accidentally discovered that there was something with the dark element not too far away from us.

Could it be an undead creature? I was a little worried. If it was, then as the Sun Knight who utterly hates undead creatures, I would have to chase

it and destroy it... Wait, this thing with the dark element was actually right next to something with the holy element?

What kind of situation is this? Generally speaking, these two elements cannot exist together ... I was even more bothered.

“Sun, Sun?” shouted Leaf repeatedly. He looked in the direction I was facing and asked doubtfully, “Why have you turned to look that way? Is there something behind us?”

I fell silent for a bit before I smiled and said, “Brother Leaf, the God of Light once instructed us through ancient writings that we must always take note of what is behind us, for there may be forgotten darkness that needs to be illuminated.”

This time it was Leaf’s turn to fall silent. I think he probably didn’t understand what my words meant, because I didn’t understand either.

It was just then that I heard noise signaling the return of the Son of the God of War and the others, so I returned to “what the entire continent knew” of the Sun Knight, the mode where the Sun Knight must speak of the God of Light in every three sentences. I also conveniently diverted Leaf’s attention.

As for the dark element that I had just sensed... As I said, my teacher once instructed me that I was not to use my ability to sense elements in front of other people. Since I wasn’t supposed to use it, then I couldn’t know there existed something with the dark element in a place removed from us, and since I didn’t know, then I of course couldn’t chase after it!

“Mike, Princess Ann, Austin, you’ve returned, eh?” Leaf fairly resolutely decided to give up on pondering the meaning of my words. Instead, he warmly greeted the three people who had just returned.

Thump!

I jumped in surprise, whipped my head around to look, and discovered the corpse of an animal lying on the ground. The corpse was around the size of a human, and stirred up dust was still drifting around it, so it must have been thrown to the ground with a lot of strength.

“Hahaha! I thought you didn’t have any other expression other than your smile. So even the Sun Knight can be surprised?”

A female warrior jumped out of the bushes by the rural path. She laughed heartily, her every action full of vigor. I didn’t know if it was because she had been moving about, or if it was from laughing too hard, but her face was all red... Ann truly is cute!

That’s right. This armor-wearing, female warrior who had two one-handed axes on her back and a supremely high amount of fire element happened to be the previously mentioned young beauty, Princess Ann.

I smiled at her, not finding what Ann had just said to be very offensive. I strongly believed that even though I might have been surprised just now, I must have been surprised in an elegant way, so it should not have damaged the Sun Knight’s reputation.

Besides, among the things the entire continent knows, there isn’t anything about how the Sun Knight is never surprised.

Seeing my reaction, Ann grumbled some words under her breath, probably something like, “how boring.” She then turned toward Leaf and somewhat angrily shouted, “Elmy, didn’t I say you can call me Ann? You’re willing to use Mike’s name, yet you’re unwilling to call me by my name?”

“Actually, my name is Elmairy, but forget it, at least Elmy is much better than Strawberry,” said Leaf as he glanced at me. He then told Ann, “I understand. I will call you Ann from now on.”

Considering their statuses as the Son of the God of War and a princess, directly calling them by their names doesn’t seem to fit etiquette, but as I’ve said, Leaf is a good person, so he never declines any requests. Even when I changed his name to Strawberry and used the term of address with him for three years, he still continued to answer my calls.

At that moment, Leaf suddenly cried out in alarm. “Austin, you’re hurt?”

The Son of the God of War, Mike, and his warpriest both walked out of the bushes. The warpriest, who had some years on us, was the Austin Leaf spoke of. Only half of his right sleeve was still intact, and it was also

speckled with blood.

“Let me heal you!” said Leaf as he helpfully walked up to him and threw out a Minor Heal.

With a smile, I said, “Brother Leaf, Sun is afraid that the brilliance of the God of Light his brother used is not enough, or else Brother Austin would have healed himself under the gracious concern of the God of War.”

Hearing my words, Leaf paused for a moment before realization struck. “Ah...you’re right. If a Minor Heal were enough, then Austin would have healed his own injuries and would not have returned with them.”

After he finished speaking, he turned toward Austin and asked worriedly, “Austin, are your injuries very serious? Did your bones fracture or break? If it’s just a fracture, a Moderate Heal will be enough, but if it’s broken, then we’ll probably need Sun to use an Advanced Heal.”

Austin shook his head and sighed. “I’m afraid it’s broken. I was too careless, forgetting to keep up with my teammates when I saw some rare herbs. I ended up being attacked by this animal on the ground. I was too far away from Mike and Ann, so they weren’t quick enough to prevent this.”

It’s actually broken... I should have kept my mouth shut, but even if I didn’t remind them, the task of healing him would still fall on me because it’s very taxing for Leaf to use an Advanced Heal.

Though it’s pretty taxing for me too, since I have to speak a bunch of words praising the God of Light.

Wait, why wasn’t the warpriest using a healing spell on himself?

I also want to tell him to heal himself, but the fact is, warpriests aren’t very good at healing spells. You could even say that their healing spells are even worse than a holy knight’s. Of course, I mean a normal holy knight. Don’t take me into consideration. If I’m the norm, then even a cleric of the God of Light would be worse than a “holy knight.”

This has a lot to do with the god you believe in. Healing is considered to be holy magic. Clerics who believe in the God of Light and holy knights

who are completely covered with “light” have a much easier time at using healing spells than other types of believers.

Besides the god they believe in, their specialization is different too. Because the God of War holds strong people in high esteem, warpriests mostly specialize in magic that strengthens their warriors. The Wings of God spell and Light Shield that I used before belong to this type of magic.

My mind continued mulling this over as I spewed a bunch of nonsense praising the God of Light. “The gracious love from the God of Light allows all of His children to live in warmth and affection, and furthermore keeps pain and sorrow away from His children. Ah! God of Light! Now your children need your radiance. Please bequeath your benevolence upon this earth and bestow your children an Advanced Heal!”

A ray of white light enveloped Austin’s hand before disappearing in a flash.

“Completely healed. Thank you very much, Sun Knight.” Austin moved his hand about, his expression turning into one of amazement as he thanked me quite gratefully.

At that, Mike snorted and coldly said, “The rumored Sun Knight who’s extremely strong at holy magic isn’t nearly as strong as I thought, speaking so much rubbish just to perform a mere healing spell.”

I didn’t show much of a reaction to his words, and merely continued to smile. I had just spoken a bunch of nonsense praising the God of Light, so much in fact that I’d rather ignore his disdain than speak another word!

Leaf, however, smiled awkwardly.

With a grin, Ann said, “With the Son of the God of War, me, the youngest warpriest of the Monastery of the God of War, and two of the Twelve Holy Knights—one archer and one cleric of the God of Light... Oh my! Maybe this adventurer team of ours is even enough to slaughter a dragon?”

I’m a holy knight!

Weakly smiling, Leaf said, “That...that is... We’re here to save Princess

Alice. Ann, you couldn't have forgotten? Weren't you very worried about your older sister?"

Ann looked like she was surprised. She quickly exclaimed, "Of course I'm worried for my older sister. I was just joking. You're too serious, Elmy."

"I see. I'm sorry," said Leaf with a small laugh as he rubbed the back of his head.

I furrowed my brows. Yesterday night, Ann looked like she was very worried about her older sister, yet today she was behaving like this. What was going on here?

"All right, let's move on. Today we need to reach the lakeside as planned," Austin said and everyone nodded their agreement. As the eldest, he sort of gave off the feeling of a reliable captain. Even though he didn't look all that old, he was most likely around thirty something. Among this group of twenty-something year-olds, he had the privilege to be our senior, with his ten year head start.

Because we had fallen so far behind schedule, Mike and Austin decided that we would not sleep tonight and would continue for two days straight.

Wait, wait a minute. Continue for two days straight? My face twisted a bit.

Leaf glanced at me before he quickly suggested, "Maybe it's better if we slept for a bit. After all, we need to be energetic in order to have enough stamina for the road."

"Setting up camp takes too long. We're already very behind," said Mike impatiently. "It's just two days. It's not much for us at all!"

Leaf gave this some thought before he tactfully said, "But Ann is female and Austin is a warpriest. They might not have enough stamina to last two days."

Hearing this, Ann immediately started scowling. Mike snorted coldly and looked at Leaf as if he were an ignorant child. "So what if she's female? Ann is one of the best warriors of the Monastery of the God of War. Her stamina is definitely not beneath yours. You think I would be willing to

bring along useless baggage?”

Austin also smiled smugly as he spoke, “Elmairy, you don’t have to worry about this priest. I normally train my body too, so two days is no problem.”

“Ah...” Leaf gave me several glances, but he caved in the end because he was a good person and would never decline any request.

I couldn’t open my mouth to refuse at all. Since even a female and a cleric said it was fine, as a holy knight how could I have said I would not be able to make it, that I could not travel for two days straight?

Under the majority’s decision, where the minority could not refuse to compromise, we started making haste as though our lives depended on it. Even though we weren’t running as we went, everyone’s legs seemed to be so much longer than mine. Each step of theirs appeared to be five times that of a normal person’s and their strides were fast, so it was pretty much the same as a normal person’s run.

This is totally killing me! I was only wearing light armor, but even that weighed more than ten kilograms! That wasn’t even taking into consideration the weight of our luggage either.

We ran from morning to noon, quickly ate some beef jerky and some bread, took a few breaths before we ran for the entire afternoon, stopped to eat some stuff for dinner, digested, and then began running again... After a whole day like this, my sweat soaked through my entire shirt, the wind dried my shirt, and then my sweat soaked through my entire shirt once again. This process repeated countless times. I felt like I had probably perspired an entire year’s worth of sweat.

By this time I had already fallen to the very back of the team. Leaf slowed down his steps so that he would be shoulder-to-shoulder with me. With a very worried look on his face, Leaf asked quietly, “Sun, are you okay?”

With labored breaths – there was nowhere my body didn’t ache – I managed to squeeze a reply out through my clenched teeth. “No.”

Hearing my words, Leaf again took assessment of my sad condition. He

then sighed softly and suggested, "Then let me carry you. You can sleep on my back for a bit and continue running later."

"Leaf..." I grabbed hold of his hands with overflowing emotion. Touched, I said, "Even though it be nighttime at the moment and the God of Light is not a witness, you are still a good person!"

With a helpless laugh, Leaf crouched down in front of me, turning into a comfortable bed...No! I mean, he turned his back toward me and said, "Climb up."

Afraid that he would change his mind, I immediately jumped on his back and strove to find a comfortable position. This wasn't easy because Leaf was very skinny. No matter how I tried, he was not as comfortable as my bed.

Afterward, Leaf began running. In order to catch up with the team, he ran very quickly, so the jolting was quite bad. This made me a little unsatisfied, but I was afraid I would infuriate even such a good person as Leaf if I complained, so I decided to show some restraint!

Once Leaf caught up with the team, the other three people looked at us and reacted very similarly. First, they were shocked, as though they couldn't believe their eyes; then, they threw disdainful glances at me before giving sympathetic looks to Leaf.

"He..." Ann began to say with astonishment.

Leaf actually forcefully interrupted their queries and said, "We should continue on, or else continuing through the night would lose its meaning."

They fell silent for a bit and gave me who knew how many glances in the meantime, their gazes mostly filled with contempt.

Everyone was running, yet I needed someone to carry me. That was a little embarrassing for me, but if I had to get off and continue running nonstop I'd die from exhaustion! I'd rather die of embarrassment!

Besides, no one said a Sun Knight has to know how to run, or that a Sun Knight can't let someone carry him.

“All right, let’s go,” Mike said, laughing icily. “But you have to stay strong. If you can’t make it, none of us are going to help you carry ‘that thing.’”

It looked like Mike didn’t believe Leaf would be able to run for an entire day while carrying me, but he was wrong. Although warriors like him truly do have very high offensive power, if we’re talking about endurance, no class can compare with a holy knight!

What? Then what about me?

Ahem! Holy knights are divided into different types too. I’m the type that’s not so good with endurance, but my ability to sustain holy light is unrivaled by anyone. Even that old Pope can’t compare with me... No, you’re not allowed to call me a cleric! I’m a holy knight!

Anyway, what followed after was a super-duper boring marathon. I believe no one wants to hear me recount this part, and I can’t recount it anyway since I slept for a full twenty-four hours.

It couldn’t be helped. Leaf said that once I woke up, I would have to get off and run, so I did my best to sleep for a full twenty-four hours. I slept until my body ached. It was really exhausting.

When I woke up, the team had already reached the lakeside and was starting to set up camp.

Chapter 3: Third Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “Carry out the Adventure Trip”

“Sun, wake up. It’s time to pitch camp.”

I was dreaming a dream in which I was lying down on grass wet from rain that had just fallen. As I was thinking about using fire magic to roast the grass dry because of my discomfort, I was blurredly woken up by Leaf and slid off his back. When I became a little more lucid, I finally realized Leaf was completely wet all over... So that wet grass was Leaf.

Fortunately, he woke me up. Otherwise, even as a good person, once he was roasted medium rare he would have probably erupted with fury, right?

While this was going on, Austin had already started assigning jobs. “Mike, you go hunt with Ann. Everyone’s tired. Eating some fresh meat is very helpful for recovering stamina.”

Mike accordingly gave a nod.

I really didn’t know what kind of status this Austin held to actually directly use Mike’s name. I was a little puzzled. In the Monastery of the God of War, even the highest ranked warpriest should be ranked lower than the Son of the God of War, so directly addressing the Son of the God of War by name was very impolite.

After receiving their assignment, Mike and Ann left swiftly and promptly while Austin stayed in the same spot and continued to distribute the jobs. He turned and courteously asked Leaf, “Elmairy, can you help start a fire and cook our food?”

With a smile, Leaf nodded. “No problem.”

“Then I’ll set up the tents.” After he finished speaking, he turned to me with a smile and said gently, “Sun Knight, you’re in charge of gathering firewood. Is that all right?”

“Of course.”

I smiled in response. I was about to call out to Leaf before I left for the

forest to gather firewood, when the sound of multiple howls from wolves drifted over... Both Leaf and I took a look at the thicket. At night the thicket was so dark that we couldn't see what was hidden within. Occasionally the underbrush would move a little, with no hint as to what kind of animal was hidden inside, and from time-to-time came the calls of unknown animals.

Leaf's complexion changed as he very worriedly turned to me and said, "Let me gather the firewood instead, Sun. You can just stay here and start the fire. As for cooking... Wait until I return to start."

I, of course, nodded my head, but not because I was afraid of the howling of the wolves just now. Once I break away from places populated with other people, I can use magic to protect myself. Plus, wolves aren't capable of protesting that it's against the rules for the Sun Knight to use magic.

What I was actually afraid of was...the mosquitoes in the forest! I only had one pair of gloves left. If these went to waste too, I'd have to peel Leaf's gloves off his hands.

I nodded to Leaf and he said, "I'll leave Austin in your care."

As I heard this, I caught the strange expression that came over Austin's face. He probably doesn't think that I have the ability to protect him!

Leaf did not leave as swiftly and promptly as the two before him. First, he gathered a few branches from his surroundings. He then took out his spare bowstring and tied it to either end of one of the branches. Next, he gathered dried branches and dead leaves into a pile. He then picked up another branch... This process sounds complicated, but simply put, he was helping me prepare all the necessary items I needed to start a fire. All I was responsible for was going forward and rubbing the fire-starting tools he had prepared for me.

After all the preparation, he handed me the branches that were tied with his bowstring and asked a little worriedly, "You know how to use this fire-starting tool, right? You just wrap the bowstring around the other branch once, and then you start twisting it... You should have no problems with this, right?"

Sometimes I truly feel that Leaf is the momma of the “good, warm” faction of the Twelve Holy Knights, while Ice is the momma of the “cruel, cold-hearted” faction. One is a busybody who loves to help other people take care of every single trifling matter, while the other is one whose cooking is superb without comparison. The two of them together would be the perfect mother.

Considering Leaf had carried me for twenty-four hours, I nodded my head and opened my mouth to reply, “Please do not worry, Brother Leaf. Even though the night is not blessed by the God of Light’s gracious concern, Sun will nonetheless not let down Brother Leaf’s expectations.”

Leaf nodded and then left, though he looked back three times before he actually walked into the forest.

After Leaf’s departure I lowered my head to look at the fire-starting tools in my hand, truly feeling a bit frustrated with myself. I mean, if I used fire magic it wouldn’t just start a fire, it would even be more than enough to cause a huge forest fire. Yet there had to be a warpriest there with me, making it so that I had no choice but to play the part of the Sun Knight... who doesn’t know magic!

Since I couldn’t use magic, I resigned myself to using the fire-starting tools Leaf gave me. After taking in a deep breath, I rubbed, rubbed again, and rubbed, rubbed, rubbed some more...with not a wisp of smoke. My palms hurt from the rubbing... I really want to use magic!

But no, Austin was staring at me. Although, I was very suspicious about how he could put up a tent in such speed while still staring fixedly at me the entire time. Shouldn’t it be against the rules for a warpriest to have this kind of skill?

I continued rubbing. Rub... Rub... Oh, there’s some smoke! Must add some more enthusiasm and rub faster— The smoke went out...

“...” In my entire life, I had never, ever wished I could use fire magic so much.

But I couldn’t, because Austin was still staring at me. Damn him! Why can’t he earnestly focus on building his tent instead? Or get the need to

pee? Even if it's just lifting his head to look at the sky, or to admire the stars, that's good enough. Just give me a second—a second is all I need to use fire magic to ignite the dried branches in front of me!

But he just had to stare fixedly at me without even blinking!

By this time Austin had already finished setting up one tent, but he didn't continue on with the second one. Instead, he placed the tent-building tools he had in his hands down.

All right! Does he finally need to pee?

However, he didn't walk toward the forest, but instead slowly came up to my side, reached out his hand, and somewhat grudgingly said, "Sun Knight, please let me start the fire!"

I silently gave the fire-starting tools to Austin and then, in retaliation, it was my turn to stare fixedly at him without letting up. Don't you dare secretly use magic to start the fire! Warpriests aren't supposed to know fire magic either!

All I saw was him calmly rubbing, and smoke appeared. Rub, rub, rub, and sparks appeared. Rub some more, and the fire started.

"..." Those fire-starting tools must have something against me!

After that, Austin picked up a few branches and began building a rack for barbecuing the meat.

Although Leaf was the last to leave, he was the first to return. When he spotted Austin starting the fire and building the rack, he stared blankly before he took the firewood he had gathered over to the small fire and began adding firewood. While he did that, he said, "Thanks for all the trouble, Austin. Sorry for the inconvenience."

Austin smiled in response and said, "It's nothing, merely starting a fire. Looks like the Sun Knight doesn't come out on adventures much."

"If I remember correctly, this is actually the first time Sun has left Leaf Bud City?" While adding firewood with one hand, Leaf turned his head to look at me. "Right?"

Maintaining the perfect smile on my face, I nodded.

“I see.” Austin’s sudden realization showed in his expression.

Leaf hurried to add, “As the leader of the Holy Temple, Sun is busy, so he doesn’t have much time to leave the Holy Temple.”

Austin smiled as he spoke. “That’s actually a little different from us. Mike is the one with the most decision-making power, but normally there aren’t too many matters that require his input, so most of the time Mike is more like a spiritual leader.”

Actually, we operate the same way too. I normally don’t have too much I have to do—and even if I do, I throw it at Storm for him to handle; I only do it when I’m required to show up in person, like this case with attending the royal families’ wedding.

“So that’s how things work. No wonder you all commonly call him Mike. Not a lot of people address us Twelve Holy Knights directly by our names.” Leaf glanced at me and said, “Especially Sun. Except for Knight-Captain Judgment and the Pope, no one may call him directly by his real name!”

Austin smiled and explained, “That’s not the case. Even in the Monastery of the God of War, there aren’t many people who dare address the Son of the God of War by his name. Ann grew up with Mike, so as childhood friends she directly calls him Mike in private, but she still respectfully calls him the Son of the God of War in public. As for why I can also call him directly by his name, that’s because Mike is my son.”

Hearing that, both Leaf’s and my eyes grew wide, but we soon relaxed. Even though Austin only looked around thirty, maybe he used magic to maintain his appearance, so we wouldn’t know for sure how old he was. Since my teacher and the Pope both did so as well, it was not all that alarming.

“May I ask exactly what your age is this year?” Leaf asked somewhat curiously.

“Thirty-five.” The age that Austin gave us fit with his appearance perfectly.

“...” Both of us fell silent. Leaf promptly got to the main point and asked, “Then how old is Mike?”

“Twenty-one.”

Even though the Son of the God of War was two years younger than me, which kind of surprised me, what surprised me even more was that thirty-five and take away twenty-one would have to equal to fourteen, right? Add the ten months needed for pregnancy... Didn't that have to mean that the man in front of my eyes actually conceived a child when he was thirteen years old?

Doing this and that with a woman at the mere age of thirteen... I thought that was the privilege of nobles! Since when could even warpriests, who are supposed to be virtuous, be that amorous?

Austin blinked and said, “Right, this is a secret, so don't go spreading it around.”

The looks Leaf and I were wearing must have looked a bit strange. Letting other Churches hear about their secrets is...a bit too negligent, isn't it?

When he saw our expressions, Austin started smiling openly. His smile truly did resemble the Son of the God of War's. After a moment he explained, “This secret is a publicly known one in the Monastery of the God of War. You only need to ask around a little to find out, but even though everyone knows, no one will go around exposing it, so you don't have to worry about it.”

I see. It's pretty much like “the Sun Knight is a perfect person.” Even though everyone sort of knows that there is no perfect person in this world, they still believe in it completely.

At this time, sparse sounds echoed from the forest not far from where we were. The three of us looked toward the forest together, not too concerned since we were quite a distance from the inner forest. To an adventurer team of our caliber, this kind of place was no more dangerous than being within the Church.

Mike and Ann walked out of the forest. On Mike's shoulder hung the corpse of a wolf.

Once they reached the camp, Mike handed the wolf over to Ann. Ann, with indescribable joy, took the wolf and walked over to the side of the lake. It looks like she left to cook that piece of "dinner."

Mike took a look at the current state and asked with furrowed brows, "The tents aren't up yet?"

Austin smiled slightly and said, "I'm sorry, my hands are too slow."

Hearing this, Mike displayed a strange expression. I was completely able to understand why. Just now, Austin only spent five minutes to set up a tent. He took no more than a minute to start a fire, and was able to build the barbeque rack in another minute. He could only be described as super fast with his hands.

Presumably, Mike must be fairly familiar with his own father's style of action, so that was why he displayed that skeptical expression of his.

Mike took a pot out from his own bag and set about inserting a long branch through the two handles of the pot. While he did this, Austin and Leaf continued chatting, and Mike occasionally added in a word in response.

I had little interest for a conversation between three men, so I turned to look toward the lakeside. Hehe! I am much more interested in a cute and sweet babe—even though she wore armor and carried two one-handed axes... How in the world is she going to cook that huge wolf that is half the size of a human...?

It just so happened that I was watching just as the wolf got thrown into the air. As expected, with her crazy strength, Ann was a warrior strong in the fire element. Although the wolf was very large, it was as if she were throwing a small pebble. After she threw the wolf, she put her hands behind her back to retrieve her two one-handed axes. By this time, the wolf had already fallen down to the height of two people stacked on top of each other. With a powerful jump, Ann jumped to the wolf's height. Slash, slash, slash. In the dark of the night, only two quick streaks of silver light

could be seen before the wolf suddenly disintegrated into several chunks, landing on the ground one after another. I even heard a “thunk ” sound; a sound that resembled a large mass of something falling to the floor. With the dusky sky, I couldn't see very clearly, but I could venture a guess. That was probably a chunk of internal organs...

Under the moonlight, Ann rinsed off her one-handed axes with water from the lake. Replacing them on her back, she hummed a lively tune, squatted by the lakeside in a motion that was no less than elegant, and washed the dozen or more meat chunks that were red with blood. After washing the meat chunks she pulled a long, red and white, string-shaped thing from the messy pile of internal organs and began washing it.

I then decided...to turn my head back and watch the conversation between three men instead.

“I wonder who kidnapped Princess Alice...” Leaf was in the middle of saying with a doubtful tone. Concerned, he added, “I hope whoever abducted the princess will treat her well!”

Austin then said in a quiet voice, “May the God of War protect the princess. We actually do not know much either. The princess was abducted without a single soul knowing. Once the royal family discovered what had happened, there was only a letter left at the scene.”

As he spoke, he took out the aforementioned letter and looked like he was about to hand it to Leaf. However, when he saw that I was paying attention to the conversation, he instead handed the letter to me. He sure is a person who pays quite some attention to etiquette.

“May the God of Light's radiance take care of Princess Alice,” I said as I took the letter and began reading it. Leaf probably knew I didn't like talking very much at the moment, so he simply moved near me and read with me, saving me from having to explain it to him later on.

The contents of the letter were very simple. Threats, enticement, kidnapping for ransom... None of that was in the letter. It very simply explained that he had taken away the princess and that if we wanted her safe return we were not to utilize the army nor were we to distribute a

bounty notice. We could only have the Son of the God of War personally lead an adventurer team to hunt him, and if we defeated him, then we would be able to bring the princess back.

Could it be that this person's goal isn't the princess, but rather a conspiracy directed at the Son of the God of War? I thought somewhat suspiciously. Why else would he specifically have the Son of the God of War start an adventurer team?

But if that's the case, why not have the Son of the God of War come by himself? Why ask him to form an adventurer team? Or could he have been worried about the Son of the God of War not going if he were asked to go alone, since his status is equal to that of a princess'? Hmm... If this letter is real, then it's not strange that the queen would force Leaf and me to accompany him.

In fact, having the two of us accompanying them might even be the condition for the Monastery of the God of War to agree to let the Son of the God of War help rescue the princess. With the Sun Knight and the Leaf Knight involved then, first, as part of the Twelve Holy Knights, our strength must be greater than most, and second, if the opponent is plotting anything, they would also have to keep in mind that they would be angering the Church of the God of Light as well ... Grrr!

I reflected so much that my stomach protested its hunger, but thankfully the sound wasn't too loud. After I returned the letter to Austin, I asked doubtfully, "Sun is of humble talent and shallow learning, and was therefore unable to see where the letter pointed out the location of the princess. Yet, the children of the God of War have not once hesitated about our future path. Could it be possible that you have already received whisperings from the God of War?"

Seeing everyone's expressions from hearing my words and not understanding them, Leaf quickly explained, "Sun means that the letter doesn't say where to go to find the princess, yet none of you seem to be hesitant about which direction we should take..."

At this moment, Ann happened to walk toward the camp while carrying

a bunch of meat chunks. She cut into the conversation to explain, “That’s because the princesses of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid all carry with them enchanted objects that allow people to trace them.”

I nodded my head. In sudden realization, Leaf said, “I see.”

Even though I still had a lot of suspicions, none of them were fit to be posed as direct questions, so I kept them inside my heart, waiting for a chance in the future to continue unearthing secrets.

In the following moments, Leaf cooked the meat while Austin used the pot to boil a bunched up—and thoroughly red—knot of internal organs. When we saw that pot of red and white stuff, Leaf and I both revealed strange expressions.

Seeing our expressions, Austin smiled and said, “Internal organs are very nutritious. Eating them will make your body healthy and strong!”

Compared to the Son of the God of War’s way of cooking, by merely throwing the internal organs into the pot and adding water, Leaf spent much greater effort on cooking the meat. He took out an entire box of seasoning. Salt and pepper were the most basic, but in addition to these two bottles, the box held at least another ten bottles.

Ann, Austin, and Mike’s eyes were spinning as they watched. Unable to keep quiet, Mike asked, “What are these?”

“Seasoning! How can we eat without seasoning?”

Leaf answered in a somewhat shocked way, and then took out a bottle of seasoning from the box. As he sprinkled the seasoning on the roasted meat, he explained, “This is powdered rosemary, good for taking away the tangy taste of meat. Once the meat is almost done, it’ll just need a bit of wormwood, pepper, and salt before it’s ready for us to eat—or maybe not pepper, but garlic powder instead? Wormwood is good for preservation, so that we can bring the meat we don’t finish on the road with us—it won’t go bad for days. However, lemon verbena can enhance our appetites and help digestion. Which ones do you prefer?”

Leaf looked somewhat distressed as he willfully turned and asked

everyone. Everyone looked on with wide eyes and could not say a single word.

As for me, I was used to this. Although Leaf wasn't as good as Ice at cooking, he was a fan of seasoning. Even when eating bread, he has to sprinkle on at least two types of seasoning. Without seasoning, Leaf might even die of starvation.

But, things like seasoning aren't cheap at all, so he practically spends all of his salary on buying seasoning. As a result, Leaf can be said to be the poorest among the Twelve Holy Knights; poor to the point that if the Holy Temple's kitchen took a vacation for a day, Leaf would have nothing to eat.

Thankfully, even with nothing to eat, there would still be Ice's sweets to fill his stomach.

However, every time Ice sees Leaf add seasoning on his sweets, his expressions would turn as cold as ice—no wait, Ice always bears an ice cube face, so how should I put this—ah, I should say his expressions look like “he could eat Leaf right then and there even without adding any seasoning.”

“No wormwood,” I answered simply.

Leaf smiled and said, “Almost forgot. Sun, you hate the bitter taste of wormwood the most, so I'll use lemon verbena instead?”

Noncommittally, I nodded my head, since I didn't know what kind of thing lemon verbena was. In fact, I couldn't even say how wormwood tasted either, but since it bore the word [“worm”](#), this type of seasoning was forever rejected by me.

After Leaf finished sprinkling the seasoning, he still refused to rest. He looked at the pot of internal organs, pondered for a bit, and then took out an exquisite bottle from within his box. As he gently and cautiously sprinkled it into the pot of internal organs, he explained to everyone, “This is saffron, a very expensive seasoning, but it's the best for simmering soup.”

They seemed to understand and not understand as they nodded their heads, even showing some disapproval. From their expressions, it looked like they couldn't care less whether or not seasoning was added... Ah! I snickered a little.

The meat finished cooking and the internal organ soup finished boiling. As the three took a bite of the roasted meat, ladled out a spoonful of soup, and swallowed slippery internal organs, their expressions completely changed!

It was a good thing that wormwood, with its great preservative effect, was not used on that meal...because there wasn't any meat left that needed preserving.

There's a reason Leaf has been a poor man all this time!

*

Within this kind of thicket, someone must keep watch at night. After we finished eating dinner, under Austin's delegations, Leaf and I were responsible for the first shift. After us was Mike by himself, and last came Ann and Austin.

Once the three of them entered their tents, I turned to Leaf and said, "Leaf, it's not all that dangerous around here. There is no harm in you leaning against the rock and taking a short nap. It's enough for me to keep alert by myself."

For some reason, Leaf looked a little frightened. He very carefully took measure of me from head to toe before he smiled and said, "All right, then you can take a turn and sleep later!"

Absentmindedly, I murmured, "No need, I think I will be busy for quite some time."

Leaf showed a puzzled expression as he looked at me.

"Go to sleep," I urged him with a smile.

Leaf leaned against a large rock and fell asleep. After around twenty minutes, I thought that the people in the tent must have fallen asleep too,

so I promptly asked in a low voice, "Leaf... Leaf, are you asleep?"

Leaf's body jolted a little, and then he immediately opened his eyes. When he discovered that nothing was amiss around him, he asked suspiciously, "Is something wrong, Sun?"

"So you haven't actually fallen asleep." I instructed him seriously, "Once you fall asleep, remember to tell me."

"..."

Leaf closed his eyes once again and quietly mumbled, "I'm asleep."

"Ah, good." I nodded my head and said matter-of-factly, "Since you're asleep, you won't know what I'm doing."

"..."

I walked back to the tent and fished out a pile of bottles and jars from my luggage...but these weren't seasonings, they were materials for my face mask.

Before Leaf carried me, I had walked for an entire day. Even though I had tried my best to walk in the shade, my skin was still exposed to too much sunlight. If I didn't hurry and use my facial mask to remedy this, I would need to spend even more effort in the future on whitening my skin.

I even perspired a whole lot. If I didn't shower tonight, I'd for sure be smelly without comparison tomorrow. As the perfect and graceful Sun Knight, emitting a stinky odor... Could I even be called the Sun Knight then? I might as well be called the [Supreme Stinky Knight!](#)

That was why I was currently fishing out from my luggage the items I needed for bathing and for my facial. In order to fit in all these items, the outer appearance of my luggage alone was two times the size of Mike's and the others'. If I hadn't stuffed some in Leaf's luggage too, I probably would have given up on setting foot outside just from lifting my luggage. No matter how cute Ann was, she would not have swayed me.

But now, having to make haste, being under the sun all day, being unable to start a fire, plus needing to apply a facial mask every day, all these were

enough to make me regret that I had been momentarily [possessed by “Ann”](#), actually promising to come on this adventure.

I sighed, but I did have to come out on at least one adventure eventually. It wasn't just that Ann was very cute. It was also because I once promised my teacher that I would go on an adventure at least once... Thinking back, when my teacher got around to the lesson about how the perfect Sun Knight should conduct his graceful survival in the wilderness, just hearing that I needed to apply a whitening facial mask every day, learn how to find material for the facial mask in the wilderness once I used up my stock, how to gracefully start a fire, how to gracefully make haste on the road, how to gracefully bathe in the outdoors... Having these pointed out to me was enough to make me almost cry.

*

When my teacher saw that I looked like I was about to cry, he smiled and said, “Child, this is a necessary lesson. As a Holy Knight, it might be unavoidable for you to have to leave on an adventure one day. As the Sun Knight, even if your team members are all filthy and stink all over, almost like savages, you must still be exceptionally graceful!”

I protested, “But Teacher, it can't be that ‘the entire continent’ knows that the Sun Knight is an adventurer?”

That was the first time I questioned my teacher. This made my teacher blank out, ponder a bit, and grudgingly answer, “I think no one knows that! Who knew you would hate the adventure lesson this much? All right, you don't have to learn how to adventure.”

Praise the God of Light's benevolence! I couldn't be more touched than I was at that moment. It was the first time in my life that I had praised the God of Light of my own volition.

My teacher sighed and said, “If you continue like this, you will become a church hermit.”

“Teacher, what's a church hermit?”

“A male knight who hides away in the Holy Temple all day and never

leaves, who only knows how to steal a look from the windows at the female clerics from the Sanctuary of Light next door, yet is afraid to go hit on them. Once you get a day off, you can go to the hallway near the Sanctuary of Light and take a look. The windows are completely occupied by church hermits! You don't want to become like them in the future, do you?"

A little awkwardly, I mumbled, "But... I... I think being like that wouldn't be too bad?"

My teacher vehemently and angrily said, "You useless person! Your teacher has at least fifty lovers, if not one hundred. As my student, you actually want to become a church hermit? No! Swear to the God of Light right away that you will for sure leave the Holy Temple in the future to go on an adventure. If you don't, I will seal all the windows in the hallway near the Sanctuary of Light, and then I will announce to the entire Holy Temple that I sealed those windows because of you."

"..."

*

At the time, in order to avoid the wrath of all the church hermits from the Holy Temple, I was forced to swear to the God of Light that I would for sure go on an adventure, but who would've thought that on the first day of the adventure I would already want to go home...

Now I could only hope that we would find Princess Alice soon so that I could return to the Holy Temple early to be a church hermit. As I mixed my facial mask, I implored the God of Light within my heart, let me return to the Holy Temple as soon as possible to serve You!

After I finished mixing the facial mask, I walked to the lakeside, hoping to apply my facial mask and bathe at the same time, but when I reached the lakeside, I felt something strange. There was actually something with an overwhelming fire element within the thicket. Normally, thickets should have mostly wood and water elements...

I twisted my head to look, just in time to spot a pair of scarlet eyes from within the dark thicket. As I was contemplating whether or not I should

shout for Leaf, that thing with the pair of scarlet eyes nimbly jumped out of the thicket— It's a demon wolf!

A demon wolf's appearance is like that of a wolf and dog, except it has an additional three red horns on top of its head. Because of this, it's called "demon wolf" or "demon dog." It is a type of demon beast.

So-called demon beasts are beasts that are able to use magic. The dragon that everyone's familiar with is also a type of demon beast, a rare demon beast of the highest level.

However, demon wolves aren't particularly high-leveled. Their agility isn't much different from a normal wolf, but they can use the horns on their heads to send out fireballs to hurt their enemies.

How can there actually be a demon beast that can use magic near the forest? Even though demon wolves are a low-level type of demon beast—I furrowed my brows, seeing the demon wolf pounce my way.

With the basin of facial mask in my left hand, I extended my right hand toward the demon wolf. A streak of ice blue, chilly air billowed toward the demon wolf. This is advanced water elemental magic—ice magic. As its name implies, it's magic that can turn the opponent into a huge chunk of ice... I secretly learned this from Ice. After all, he's also fairly busy, so he can't always make blueberry shaved ice for me to eat. Sometimes it's so hot that I can't stand the heat, so I have to resort to my own devices. I put a little effort into learning ice magic, and then I made shaved ice for myself.

Even though the demon wolf also spit flames at me, and fire does trump ice, it's only when both sides have around the same power that fire can trump ice. As for right now... Hah! I coldly smiled as I watched the demon wolf, which had been pouncing toward me, slowly turn into a chunk of ice in midair. Then, with a "clunk," it fell to the ground.

Snap!

That was the sound of a branch being stepped on...

Alerted, I turned around to look, but blinked. "Leaf?"

Leaf just stared at me and apologetically smiled as he said, “I woke up because I felt something unusual.”

With that said, he looked at the demon wolf on the ground that had turned into a popsicle.

I explained soberly, “This demon wolf suddenly sprang out. It sprang out so quickly that it tripped on a rock, fell, and died from falling.”

“...” Leaf couldn’t speak for a moment, and then he tried to remind me, “But it’s frozen.”

“Ah!” I suddenly realized this. I shook my head and sighed as I spoke, “Before it died, it probably didn’t want to end up eaten—digesting in someone’s stomach—so it used magic to freeze itself.”

Leaf couldn’t speak again, and he didn’t continue to ask practical questions like, “Does a demon wolf of the fire element know how to use ice magic?” or “Can’t something once frozen be unfrozen for eating?” He merely glanced at the basin of facial mask in my hand and said somewhat exasperatedly, “I see. I’m going back to sleep.”

“Go to sleep quickly. Not enough sleep is a huge taboo among beautiful people.”

“What?”

I revealed a brilliant smile as I said, “I said, not enough sleep will hinder us in rescuing the beautiful princess.”

Leaf nodded his head and obediently went back to the camp, returning to the side of the large rock to sleep.

Afterward, I leisurely took a bath, applied my facial mask, and then switched with Mike for the next shift before returning to my tent to sleep.

Over the next few days...

Whenever we needed to make haste on the road, I would climb on Leaf’s back and sleep twenty-four to forty-eight hours, depending.

Whenever we needed to pitch camp, I would be responsible for staring off into space.

Whenever I needed to keep watch at night, it was my time for applying my facial mask and taking a bath.

Except for there being too many mosquitoes, it being bothersome to apply my facial every day, missing Ice's sweets after meals, and sleeping too much during the day, which resulted in not being able to sleep at night, there was nothing much I could find fault in with this kind of adventuring lifestyle.

While we ate dinner, I actually heard Leaf mention that we once ran into bandits, another adventurer team assailed Ann, and demon beasts came to attack us while we were on the road. However, all of that was easily taken care of by Mike and Ann in person, so there had been no need to rouse me.

I heard that the bandits didn't even have a chance to speak their opening lines. Once Ann, with one foot, kicked down the tree by the side of the road that two people had been hugging, the adventurer team ran off and disappeared without a trace. As for the demon beasts, they all turned into dinner.

As I ate the meat of the demon beasts and listened to Leaf recount what had happened during the day, I ignored the disdainful gazes that the three person group from the Monastery of the God of War shot at me.

Yup, an adventurer's life isn't as bad as I thought it'd be!

Chapter 4: Fourth Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “The Mandatory Antagonist for an Adventure – A Cool and Handsome Character”

After hurrying along for two weeks’ worth of travel, we once again set up camp, but tonight’s atmosphere was unlike our usually relaxed one—it seemed a little oppressive.

“There’s no one who can match our traveling speed, so why is it that we haven’t caught up?” Mike finally asked Ann. Even though they were childhood friends, it was clear by his tone that he was unhappy.

As a knight, Leaf upheld the noble belief that “princesses are always right,” so he didn’t say a single word. But merely seeing how he didn’t come to Ann’s defense let me know that he was also starting to get suspicious. As for me... I hadn’t opened my mouth to speak for approximately three days, so everyone customarily treated me as if I didn’t know how to speak.

Confronted by everyone’s doubts, Ann only left behind the words “Wait for me” before she walked into the forest. She took a while to come out, and then told everyone, “We’re already very close, but I don’t know what the actual distance is.”

The item that could locate the princess was somewhere on Ann’s body, but she was unwilling to let us know what that item was, which was why she went into the forest.

After hearing such a vague answer, Mike was still somewhat unhappy. Ann quickly consoled him in a soft voice, “Mike, we’re really very close now. It definitely won’t take long before we catch up!”

Mike grudgingly nodded, leaving the topic alone.

When it came to sleeping that night, I tossed and turned...and still couldn’t fall asleep! It wasn’t surprising. I had slept twenty-four hours and

hadn't woken up until dusk. If I could still fall asleep at night, I would have to start wondering if I were possibly related to pigs.

After tossing and turning incessantly, I decided to leave the tent altogether. After sleeping for so many days, I had better exercise my muscles and bones a bit. If I continue to eat and sleep, and sleep and eat in this manner, this could result in a fatal consequence—becoming fat!

Mike was currently on night vigil. When he turned to glance at me, I smiled at him before silently turning toward the forest. His gaze was cold and he didn't even speak to stop me. It seemed he looked down on me a lot.

I walked into the forest. After I used my ability to sense elements to make sure there was no one around me, I fished out a dragon-shaped badge from my pocket and pressed it down on my chest. In a low voice, I said, "Dragon's Saint Brigandine, in the name of the descendants of Dragons, I command thee, activate!"

In an instant, black, skin-tight material spread from the badge on my chest to cover my entire body, while my lower face and vitals were covered with silver scales. At this time, I discovered that even though the plating was silver, it didn't gleam even in the midst of the night. Instead, it blended into the darkness. When I lowered my head to take a look, I couldn't see anything and almost thought I had no body. That scared me!

"Even though I did command you not to speak as you please, let's forget about that command after all," I said somewhat helplessly. Even when "silent," I was still aware of it, so not allowing it to speak didn't have much meaning.

Understood, my lord.

After that, I walked this way and that, picked the closest and tallest tree, and began climbing. After changing into Dragon's Saint Brigandine, climbing a tree was practically as easy as walking. In no time at all, I climbed to the very top of the tree.

I lowered my head to survey the surrounding terrain. I then looked above me at the starry sky and found the constellation I was looking for. Once I

noted the position, I climbed down the tree and drew on the ground the terrain and constellation position that I had just observed.

It's as I expected. I laughed grimly to myself...

My lord, someone is currently using their ability to sense elements to watch you.

I was startled. I'd always been the one spying on others. Now there was actually someone spying on me? I quickly asked Dragon's Saint Brigandine, "From which direction is that person spying on me?"

Your servant does not know. My lord, the watcher has already retracted their reach.

They retracted so quickly? I pondered for a moment. It was most likely Leaf. He was an archer, so it was possible that he might have later received training in sensing elements. I might have startled him awake when I left earlier, so he customarily did a search. Since my holy element is extraordinary strong, he would have immediately discovered it was me and then retracted his search.

All right, I finished my business. It's about time to head back.

At first, I wanted to return to the camp. However, when I remembered Leaf's earnest action of remembering to use his sensing after he was startled awake, I thought I should also try sensing to see if there was any danger around. Otherwise, I would feel guilty when I climbed on Leaf's back tomorrow.

I breathed in deeply and then extended my sensing to its limits...

Suddenly, I froze. I looked into the distance. Not too far ahead, there was actually a life form that had a very, very high amount of dark element. I've only ever felt this much dark element from Roland, who was a Death Knight. Even though Pink's dark element was no less than Roland's, she knew how to hide her aura...

Could this be the princess' kidnapper? I thought back to the queen's request. Was this a coincidence, or did the queen already know that the opponent was a dark creature, which warriors are the most ineffective

against, and so she forcefully made Leaf and me tag along?

Other than the life form that was giving off the dark element, I also sensed another life form with a very strong wind element. It was most likely a mage versed in wind magic.

I furrowed my brow and wondered, “Has my ability to sense elements grown stronger?”

After I became the Sun Knight, the holy element that my body gave off became so strong that I practically couldn't sense other elements—except for the opposing dark element. Recently however, it seemed like I could sense elements even without deliberately trying to sense them. Just like when the demon wolf with the fire element tried to sneakily attack me, I was able to sense it beforehand.

“Could it be that I've been using too much magic recently, especially necromancy, causing my body's holy element to weaken?”

If this were the case, that would be bad. I'm the Sun Knight. My holy element can only be strong and can't be weak. It looks like I need to start being more careful. I can't continue to randomly use magic that doesn't belong to the holy element.

At first, since I'd slept for so many days, I thought I would come out, search around, and exercise my muscles at the same time. However, if I couldn't use my magic at whim, I think it'd be safer for me to go back to sleep... Right when I turned around, a strong “wind” aura appeared immediately behind me.

I turned my head to look. Next to the originally completely empty underbrush, there actually stood a person who was wearing light, black armor and holding a pair of rapiers in his hands. The dark aura from this person's body was formidable enough to rival that of a death knight's.

However, he was undoubtedly a living person. Could he be...? I blanked out for a moment before I blurted out, “A dark knight of the Shadow God?”

But I thought some more. He knew magic for Instant Teleportation. How

would a knight know magic? I could not help but question him, “You know how to teleport. Are you really a dark knight?”

The dark knight also blanked out for a moment before he blurted, “Such a strong aura of holiness! Are you really an assassin?”

Realizing that both of us doubted each other’s identities, we were immediately at a loss for words. After falling silent for a while, the dark knight coldly asked, “You’re a pursuer?”

Even if I wanted to deny him, I couldn’t. In the vicinity, except for the fugitive in front of my eyes, there was only our group of pursuers. There wasn’t anyone else around, so I also coldly told him, “If you’re a fugitive, then I’m a pursuer.”

Although we were fugitive and pursuer, we stood rigidly without throwing any punches for a long time. I didn’t want to fight with him because the manner he held his swords felt pretty much as imposing as Judgment and Roland’s. I don’t make it a habit to seek death when I have nothing to do.

I think he probably didn’t want to fight with me either, because the amount of holy aura on me was excessive enough to drown out his dark aura. He probably doesn’t make it a habit to seek death when he has nothing to do either.

If the two of us were to start fighting, the probability that I would bombard him to death with my holy light, and the probability that he would hack me to death with his swords, was around fifty-fifty. Because I have the principle of not striking when I don’t have the assurance of a hundred percent victory, I decided to let him go this once!

“I don’t want to fight with you,” I said bluntly.

Having heard what I said, the dark knight wrinkled his brow. Most likely to convey his goodwill, he put his weapons away, but he still lingered without leaving. The two of us coldly glared at each other—smack!

I coldly glared at my palm. This mosquito was sure brave, even daring to fly haphazardly around in front of me while I was wearing Dragon’s Saint

Brigandine! Does it not know that right now my entire body is pitch black, so I don't have the problem of worrying about destroying my white gloves?!

I used my finger to flick off the specimen on my hand. When I turned my head to look, the dark knight happened to look at me with an astonished face. Without any cheer, I said, "What are you looking at? Haven't you ever seen someone kill a mosquito?"

The dark knight smiled, and with a joking tone, said, "I often see people kill mosquitoes, but this is the first time I've seen an assassin kill a mosquito."

Well, I'm sorry to say, you still haven't seen an assassin kill a mosquito, because I'm a holy knight, not an assassin.

I yawned. "Since we're not going to fight, I'm going back to sleep."

"Wait a moment!"

My face fell. It looked like he wasn't willing to let me go. Too bad, since I'd wanted to go back and shout out loud: the fugitive is nearby; let us go catch him quickly. Once we caught him, found the princess, and finished attending the wedding, I would then have been able to return to the Holy Temple to be a church hermit. Hallelujah!

With his brow wrinkled, he looked at me and said somewhat hesitantly, "The princess came with me willingly."

When I heard this, my heart jumped, but on the surface I still answered coldly, "Every rapist always says the female seduced him."

The dark knight's face fell, and then he added another alarming declaration, "We eloped!"

Bastard!

For the most part, I believed him for no other reason than the fact that this dark knight was truly damn tall, handsome, and striking. He belonged to the type where "the moment a man sees him, he will want to kill him to decrease his rival in love by one."

He was exceptionally suited to be a dark knight, because a dark knight is precisely someone who is cold-hearted and regards everyone else as an enemy... When someone is as handsome as he is, he must have regarded all the men around him as enemies to have lived to his age.

“If you eloped, then why did you leave behind that letter?”

I diligently continued to struggle and didn't accept this “truth” too quickly... With this handsome a kidnapper, I believed that even if the princess had truly been kidnapped, after associating with this handsome guy all day and night for two weeks, the situation most probably would have turned into elopement.

The dark knight blanked out and asked in puzzlement, “What letter?”

“...”

I'd just discovered that the situation was even wilder than I had imagined. When I wanted to ask for clarification, I heard a burst of rustling noises drift over from behind. I abruptly shut my mouth. Evidently, the dark knight heard it too.

He glanced at me, took out a magic scroll from his possession, spoke the words, “Instant Teleportation,” got completely surrounded by a whirlwind, and then disappeared from his former place with a “swoosh.”

“So he used a magic scroll for Instant Teleportation. I knew there couldn't be that many strange people in this world who don't match up with their occupations...”

I muttered this while I dispelled Dragon's Saint Brigandine. I gathered a little bit of holy light and stood in my spot to wait.

“Sun!”

Leaf was the first to jump out from the thicket. He looked up and down to take measure of me. Once he saw that I was fine, he breathed a sigh of relief, but still asked in concern, “Are...are you all right?”

“I'm all right,” I said simply.

After that, Mike, Ann, and Austin all arrived as well. I saw that they all

looked at me with eyes full of misgivings. I calmly opened my mouth to explain, “I encountered a dark knight.”

When I said that, I paid attention to all of their reactions. Mike suspiciously blurted, “A dark knight? What’s a guy from the Cathedral of the Shadow God doing in our territory?”

Austin wrinkled his brow, looking like he was deep in thought.

Ann’s expression momentarily became panicked, but she proved herself a princess. She regained her composure within a split second and even gave me a concerned look.

As I always did, I gave Ann a smile. This smile clearly relieved her. She didn’t reveal any more frantic looks.

Leaf asked doubtfully, “Could it be that this dark knight kidnapped the princess?”

I smiled brightly at Leaf who opened his eyes wide, looking just like an elementary student who didn’t know what he had done wrong. I quickly pondered to myself, weighing all my possibilities, before I decided to stick to acting stupid. I answered, “Sun doesn’t know.”

Mike actually roared lowly in an agitated and indignant way, “It must be him! Where is he now?”

“He used a scroll for Instant Teleportation to flee. I’m afraid he is already quite a distance away from us,” I answered truthfully.

Having heard what I said, Mike practically reached his boiling point and kept yelling that he was going to chase after the kidnapper right now. His fists were probably itching, given how he hadn’t seriously fought for two weeks, I thought.

Austin promptly pulled Mike back and began his earnest father-to-son instruction, saying things like how the distance was unclear; how if we were to chase after him now, we might not be able to catch up with him; how we hadn’t tidied up any of our camping equipment; how if we didn’t catch up with him, we’d have a hard time continuing our chase...

Once we returned to the campsite, under Mike's insistence, we decided to set out two hours earlier the next day. After that, except for Mike—who decided to stay on watch until morning, everyone else squeezed into their tents to continue sleeping. But, who knew if there was anyone who was able to fall asleep after tonight's happenings.

Leaf and I were just such a two-person group who couldn't fall asleep. The moment Leaf squeezed into the tent, he stared at me as if he wanted to ask something. I quickly used both of my hands to cover his mouth, not letting him speak. He opened his eyes wide to stare at me.

I pondered for a moment, and then gathered holy light to my finger. I then used a line of light to sketch out words.

"I think we've been tricked by the queen and Princess Ann."

After Leaf saw this line of words, he tried with great effort to copy me by using holy light on his finger, sketching out words... However, what he had sketched was lopsided and askew. It took me a lot of trouble to recognize that he had written, "What do you mean?"

I thought for a bit and sketched more words, "I am only certain that Ann led us in a roundabout way."

As for the business with the letter, only having the words of the dark knight was still too subjective, so I withheld from mentioning it for now.

Leaf furrowed his brow and sketched, "What should we do then?"

I thought for a moment, and then sketched, "The two of us cannot separate. As for the rest, let's continue maintaining our current status. You only need to continue carrying me on your back when we make haste!"

Leaf very earnestly drew six glowing dots, "....."

After around an hour, Mike began yelling and roaring, waking everyone up from bed. I didn't care too much, since I couldn't fall asleep anyway, but Leaf was startled awake. When he climbed up from bed, his face was

full of exhaustion.

Seeing this situation I felt a pang of guilt, so when it came time to climb onto Leaf's back, I even wavered for a tiny moment. Thankfully, I didn't have too much of a conscience, so I was able to ignore that pang of guilt and continued to climb onto Leaf's back.

Once Mike saw our actions, he immediately yelled angrily, "Elmy, stop wasting time carrying him. He's useless anyway. Use your full speed to accompany us in chasing the kidnapper."

Leaf immediately refuted, "No. If it were earlier, leaving Sun behind would have been fine."

Hey...

"But now that we know that the enemy is a dark knight with the dark element, we must bring Sun along with us. Only he is able to counter the opponent's dark element."

Mike laughed coldly. "After meeting us, what doesn't become dark? Corpses belong to the dark element, don't they?"

After hearing this, even Leaf was stunned into silence for a moment. With a team assembled like ours, it could be said that if a god blocked us, we'd slay the god; if a demon blocked us, we'd slay the demon... However, on the road, there were only worthless demonic beasts and unscrupulous adventurer teams, so there wasn't a single worthwhile battle. Leaf, Austin, and I hadn't even lifted a single finger. The moment we had met the enemies face-to-face, they were all trampled to dust by Mike and Ann.

Also, we'd already made haste for two weeks at inhuman speeds, and had already entered the depths of the forest, but our situation still hadn't changed. Mike still used his fists to solve everything, never once drawing his sword. Ann still used her feet to answer all of the men who opened their mouths to assail her, and only used her two single-handed axes to dissect dinner. Leaf's only job was to carry me; not a single arrow was missing from his quiver.

Leaf hesitated a bit before he turned his head to ask me, "Sun, it's only

for a day. Can you run along with us?”

Earlier, I had sensed the existence of a wind mage next to the dark knight. Mages versed with the wind element are experts in the Spell of Flight and the Spell of Instant Teleportation. That was probably why even though our speed was already this quick, we still couldn't catch up. Since we couldn't catch up, why must I struggle so hard to catch up?

Unhurriedly, I opened my mouth to say, “In order not to burden everyone's speed, please do not let Sun concern you. Sun will soon catch up later.”

“Sun?” Leaf looked at me in great astonishment.

I waved to stop him from speaking, and smiled as I said, “Sun's heart is already set. Brother Leaf, please do not stop Sun again. Sun has the God of Light's blessing.”

Leaf hesitated for a moment, and then spoke somewhat grudgingly, “Okay then. You be careful, Sun.”

“Let's hurry,” Mike urged relentlessly.

I gazed at everyone's departing backs. Leaf turned his head again and again, throwing worried looks at me, but the thicket was dense and their advance was very fast, so it didn't take long for them to disappear from my sight.

By this time, I murmured to myself, “All right, I heard that there's a small, isolated forest town around here. Inside...there should be alcohol to drink, right?”

It had almost been a month since I had any liquor. As a guy who has a wine cellar for a basement underneath his room, my craving was strong enough to want to directly pluck fruits off a tree and use the yeast within my luggage to brew wine.

What? You're asking me why I've brought yeast?

Eh...

Sometimes, between wine merchants, you can use your own yeast to trade for different yeast. Do you understand?

What? Aren't I a holy knight? Since when have I become a wine merchant?

Of course I'm still a holy knight. It's just that people should make early plans for retirement! I'm already twenty-three this year. I retire at age forty, but no matter how much I save, my retirement fund will be miniscule. If I want to spend my later years in luxury, of course I need to think of a secondary profession. Besides, my skill at wine brewing is already great. If I don't develop and promote it more, how would I be able to face all the drunkards under the sky?

Chapter 5: Fifth Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “The Mandatory Mentor for an Adventure – A Wise Man”

My memory was, as expected, a gift from the God of Light. Although I had only seen the map of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid once, I had already memorized roughly all of the locations of interest. If the queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid had known about this, she probably wouldn't have dared to put that detailed map in front of me even at the expense of her own life.

After walking for half a day, I made it to a small town named Forest Leaf without making any wrong turns. This town was, as expected, special because it was completely surrounded by a forest. Only this patch of a place was grassland with a river flowing through it. Without the river, there would definitely be no way for it to have developed into a town.

Even so, this kind of place deep inside the forest was not suited for supporting a large population. Importing goods from the outside was also difficult.

I guessed that the reason there was a town there at all was probably that there were too many adventurer teams that needed to replenish their supplies while passing through the forest. For merchants, as long as there were enough benefits, never mind forests, they'd even dare to charge into a dragon's lair!

Just up ahead was a trading post for magical beasts and their products. Although magical beasts were dangerous, they had a lot of market value. From skin and meat to blood, horns, and the like, they all had their own uses. They were also an adventurer team's main source of income.

After I cautiously used a cloth to wrap up the sun crest on my sleeves, I walked into Forest Leaf. Though the town was not big, the buildings were situated fairly chaotically. After walking in, I was momentarily puzzled as to where I should go to find the tavern.

I stopped an adventurer, and putting on a friendly smile, I asked, “Dear brother, may I ask which direction the tavern is in?”

The adventurer looked at me up and down once, and mumbled a few sentences, “Where did a knight this handsome come from? I really ought to... to be one love rival less.” After a pause he said, “See that alley on the left? Go in from there, walk past two weapon shops, and turn right. After you walk past a general store, turn right again. Then, after walking past two wells, you’ll meet a crossroad. Pick the road in the middle. After walking past a bread store, turn left, then walk straight ahead to the end and you’ll reach the place. Did you get that?”

“Got it.” Smiling, I repeated, “Go into that alley on the left, go past two weapon shops, turn right, walk past the general store and then turn right. Then, after walking past two wells, there’s a crossroad. Choose the road right in the middle, and then walk past a bread store, turn left and walk straight ahead to the end.”

The adventurer was deeply shocked. “My goodness! You can really remember all that?”

I smiled at the adventurer, and the person showed a somewhat frantic expression. Then, I walked into the alley on the left. Hmph! If I can even remember a map that is bigger than five tables put together, how can a mere few small turns faze me?

I followed the road that the helpful person had mentioned, but couldn’t see the two wells no matter how hard I looked... Then I abruptly remembered that at the side of this town, there was a river, so there was completely no need to dig a well for water.

Extremely annoyed, I grumbled, “I really shouldn’t have asked a guy for directions. What well—he probably wanted to dig a well to bury me, to be one love rival less!”

Looks like the only choice I have is to find someone else to ask directions from.

I was just about to go back to look for the owner of the general store to ask for directions when a person whose whole body was enveloped by a

cloak blocked the way just a few steps in front of me. My face fell.

Unexpectedly, it was someone who had a dark element... A necromancer? But the element composition seemed to be a bit different.

Before I regained my balance, the other party spoke up. With a gentle tone, he said, "What intense light element! Even me, someone who doesn't have the ability to sense elements can actually feel the incandescence. How unbelievable! Is this the light of the current Sun Knight?"

My face became pale. Who could have thought that this stranger could actually know that I'm the Sun Knight? Moreover, "the current"? That sounds a little strange...

I was still wildly guessing at who this person in front of my eyes could be, but I needn't have tried so hard, for the mysterious person was slowly undoing his cloak. His cloak dropped to the floor, revealing the true identity of the one under it. He had... a skin color that even the afternoon sunlight was unable to illuminate!

"A dark elf! No wonder no matter how I tried, I couldn't seem to determine what type of occupation a person with this kind of element belonged to!" I couldn't help but release a gasp, and then I grew even warier and said, "It had not occurred to me that within my lifetime, I'd ever actually be able to see a dark elf, a notorious race that lives underground! What kind of sinister plan did you come up to the surface for?"

What lay unspoken was: Damn! Recently I've really been ridden with bad luck. Touring around in the night leads to an encounter with a dark knight, and walking along an alley I get stopped by a dark elf. Looks like next time I go to the toilet, there might be a possibility of stepping on a dragon... Knock on wood, knock on wood! I don't actually mean that. Oh God of Light! Please don't ever take that seriously!

Well, I don't think I have any choice but to explain what kind of creature a dark elf is, or else everyone would probably be completely unable to understand just how unlucky I was.

In this world, there isn't just the human race, even though the majority

of what everyone usually sees is humans. At the most, one might see some dwarves at the blacksmithing stores. There are hardly any differences between the appearance of dwarves and humans, except that even if a dwarf is an adult male, they would be only two-thirds the height of a human. Their most distinctive feature, however, is that male dwarves always seem to have long beards full of lice, and are exceptionally good at metal smelting regardless of gender.

Elves are another race known by humans. Their reputation is widely spread and practically everyone knows that elves are a proud but extremely kind race. However, almost no one has seen one. This is because they only reside at the periphery of the continent, in the distant depths of the forests. Such places are not where ordinary people are capable of entering.

In addition, there are other races that practically lie in between beasts and humans. For example, gnomes are small creatures that have green skin from head to toe and tend to gather in large numbers. Orcs are a race that appears to have a combined body of humans and beasts.

Although these races are slightly civilized since they have a simple language and are able to use fire and weapons, their lifestyle is not much different from a pack of wolves. Generally speaking, they are rarely included in the rankings of the main races.

Dark elves though are different, for they are definitely one of the main races. Their appearances are very similar to elves, having a slender figure and pointed ears. However, elves are white-skinned, while dark elves have a skin color similar to that of coal and have a head of white hair and red eyes.

Unlike the elves who reside in the forest, they live in the depths of the underground, and have an extreme hatred for sunlight. They almost never come up to the surface and even in a hundred years, you wouldn't hear someone say that they had seen a dark elf above ground. However, the most important thing about them is their racial characteristics. They are a race that is notoriously evil, and dark elves ranging from an eight-month old infant to an eight-hundred year old dark elf on his death bed all

conform to the stereotype of an evil guy.

Besides being evil, they have another important feature: all their citizens are soldiers, making them a terrifying race with unrivalled battle abilities. Their numbers are not high, but regardless of their gender or age, they all rank at elite levels in combat. It is said that as long as there is even one group of dark elves, a town that has an entire military garrison defending it can still be destroyed in a single night.

Thankfully, they loathe the sunlight and hence rarely come up to the surface. If they ever deigned to come up, they would most likely go to create trouble for the elves anyways, due to an ancient feud between the two races.

And even as I say all this, right now, in front of me, stood an evil dark elf who was at least one hundred and eight thousand miles away from home.

He actually revealed an expression of appreciation, and said in a tone of praise, "You are only the second human who has managed to remain this calm upon discovering my race."

"Oh? Then I really wish to meet the first."

As I answered, I pondered over whether to change into Dragon's Saint Brigandine. However, I had heard that the speed of a dark elf was peculiarly fast. If I were to be killed off in the middle of changing clothes, losing my life would be a small matter...

"Sun Knight's naked body found in dark alley!" *

What kind of perverted, sexual associations would be caused by this kind of headline was another matter, however, for the main problem lay in how this was definitely not an elegant way of dying. If my teacher were to find out that the way I died was so embarrassing and perverted, I shudder to think of what kind of consequences would lay ahead... I believe that everyone here already knows what they would be.

Rather than being repeatedly sent to heaven by my teacher... What were you thinking about? Tsk tsk, you're so perverted!

I am saying, rather than having to be revived by him after dying, and

then die elegantly again for him to see, I think I'll wear my Sun Knight uniform neatly and meet death elegantly right now.

“You look so serious. Are you pondering over how to kill me off?” the dark elf said with a faint, slightly bitter smile.

No, I'm only considering what kind of pose and expression to use while dying would be the most elegant. A small alley is already not a suitable place for dying elegantly, which is why I must turn the tides by working on the pose and expression!

Seeing that I hadn't replied, the dark elf's expression became even more saddened. But that did not eliminate the fact that he may have been putting on an act, for rumor has it that his race was deceitful in many ways. “Before you attack, I still have a friend that I want you to meet,” he said.

A dark elf's friend? Yay, it looks like I'm really going to die...

Another person wearing a cloak emerged from the corner. Judging by his height, he was probably male. Without saying anything, he immediately took off his cloak. However, he was not a dark elf, but a handsome man with blond hair and blue eyes. His age was about thirty or so, and on his face there was a gentle smile.

Although this person had an appearance that looked very trustworthy, when I saw him, my pupils abruptly dilated, my whole body became rigid, my hands and legs became icy, my heart pumped violently, and waves of spasms came over my stomach and intestines...

“Why...”

The dark elf turned his head to the blond-haired male, not knowing whether to laugh or to cry, saying, “Neo, when your student saw me, this evil dark elf that shouldn't be anywhere on the surface, he was so calm that his face didn't even change. But when he saw you, it's-it's like...”

The handsome knight with blond hair and blue eyes flashed an open smile, and continued the conversation. “It's just that he has finally reunited with his most respected teacher whom he hasn't seen for a long

time, and is feeling very touched. Child, it's been three years since I last saw you. Hurry up and come forward a few steps so that your teacher can take a good look at you."

I retreated a few steps, and even started to pray for death.

God of Light! You're really too horrible! I would rather step onto a dragon's tail than meet... "my teacher."

Ah!

At that moment, my teacher turned his head toward his good friend, smiling as he said, "This child sure is shy, right?"

The dark elf smiled wryly and replied, "On the contrary, I don't really feel that way. In fact, I feel that he looks like he has seen the living likeness of a dragon... Ah! 'Seeing a dragon,' that kind of feeling describes this in the most-fitting way!"

You're wrong! Even a dragon isn't as scary as my teacher!

My teacher turned his head, still smiling. "My dear Aldrizzt, the joke that you made sure is interesting. However, don't go overboard with your jokes. Look, my student has been frightened."

Aldrizzt gave a faint smile. "There is no doubt that he is scared, however, as for whom he is scared of, I'm afraid that is open to question."

"Perhaps it's because your skin is too black, that's why he got scared! As you know, the Sun Knight's skin color has always been as white as snow."

"For your student, it might be so. But for you, at most you look like a loaf of bread that has been badly baked," Aldrizzt couldn't help but retort.

My teacher's eyebrows rose. He sighed and said, "Better than looking like a basin of water that a warrior washed his foot in... But don't be upset, my friend! A trivial problem of skin color cannot hurt our friendship."

"Friendship?" Aldrizzt said in shock. "So we actually had something like that... Eh! Neo, your student seems to be leaving."

"Hahaha, Aldrizzt, don't joke around anymore. Being my student, he would definitely not dare to 'ignore me,' 'not greet me,' and 'leave without

permission.”

I froze in my tracks, feeling my own face twitch several times. In the end, my face hardened with the resolve one had before slaying a dragon, and I turned around to walk back to the vicinity of my teacher. At the same time, I obediently started to greet him. “My dear teacher, under the illumination of the God of Light, how have you been recent—?”

My teacher’s face grew serious, and he lowered his voice. Using a commanding tone, he said, “Put the God of Light back into your heart, and then tell me what are you doing in an adventurer team?”

I immediately told him about it in full detail.

After finishing my story, my teacher was still muttering to himself irresolutely. In contrast, it was the dark elf Aldrizzt who criticized me, his expression cold. “As a member of a team, leaving the team on your own initiative is wrong!”

I glanced once at the dark elf. Actually, I want to retort that despite being a dark elf you don’t seem even the slightest bit of evil, and that is what’s wrong! Until I can properly figure out what kind of relationship you have with my teacher however, I don’t intend to offend you.

Suddenly my teacher smiled in understanding. “You left the team because you wanted to investigate me and Aldrizzt, right?” he asked. “A dark element and a light element creature walking together, and always maintaining a distance not too far or too near your team is really extremely suspicious.”

As expected of my teacher, he does really understand me. I’m afraid that if I so much as release a fart, he would know what I ate for lunch.

I nodded and answered, “I had already sensed you at the rim of the forest, but at the time I didn’t really pay attention to it. However, afterwards, when you two were circling around the forest but always keeping a set distance away from us, I became a bit nervous. But I was unable to tell my teammates about it, for it would reveal that I have the ability to sense elements. So instead I could only find an excuse to leave the team to scout a while.”

At this point, an astounded expression flickered over Aldrizzt's face.

My teacher nodded, and turned his head to Aldrizzt while wearing an expression of pride. "I already told you this much earlier; tailing is not something that you can hide from my student," he said.

"That is really amazing." Aldrizzt turned and said to me, "I'm really sorry. I was wrong to criticize you. I take back my words."

I glared at this dark elf. Could you be a bit more dedicated to your job, and show some evil behavior? Right now, doesn't this harmless personality that wouldn't hurt a fly that you're showing totally contradict the description of dark elves that I gave earlier?

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Aldrizzt asked, a little puzzled.

I looked up and down at Aldrizzt, and then asked with suspicion, "Are you really a dark elf? Could you be an elf who has sunbathed too much, and became burnt?"

Aldrizzt was stunned.

It was my teacher who started laughing. As he laughed, he slapped the dark elf's back and bellowed, "Aldrizzt, oh Aldrizzt! I guessed correctly again, didn't I? I already told you, even if you were a dark elf so notorious that everyone was yelling to kill you, so long as you don't attack him, this child of mine would not unsheathe his weapon, even if he were leaning against you with your arms side-by-side... Though regardless of whether or not he is holding a weapon, he's still equally weak."

Once Aldrizzt heard that, his gaze toward me softened a lot, and he even smiled an extremely friendly smile.

My teacher's mood was extremely good. He slapped my back, and said, "Child, it's rare to be able to see you. So come drink a cup with your teacher! Your teacher has many stories of adventures to tell you, and also wants to ask you about matters in the Holy Temple."

When he finished his words, my teacher turned his head to Aldrizzt, and laughed as he said, "This child of mine has even better capacity for liquor than me! You'll definitely like him. Today you guys can drink to your

heart's content!"

"Oh?" Aldrizzt seemed to be exhilarated.

Hearing that, I took in a sharp breath, my gaze shifting non-stop as I pondered which escape route I was least likely to be caught attempting... There!

"Uh... Neo, your student is climbing the wall."

"...Come back! We will pay the money for the liquor!"

I heaved a sigh of relief and jumped off the wall. With sincerity that couldn't be more earnest, I said, "No problem, my dear teacher. It is said that the Sun Knight would be drunk within three cups, but since my teacher has requested it, your student will follow you, even into the depths of hell."

Facing Aldrizzt's gaze that was full of smiles, my teacher was a little embarrassed as he said, "Getting you to fish money out from your pocket is even harder than sending you down to hell. I really don't know how your money grubbing personality developed."

It was obviously taught by you...

"Go and change into Aldrizzt's clothes, and then we'll go drinking," my teacher continued. "You're definitely not to say that you're the Sun Knight, for the image of the Sun Knight blacking out after three cups definitely must not be broken!"

Finding it a bit strange, I asked, "Okay, but why can't I change into your clothes, teacher?"

"That's because my clothes are a knight's uniform, but no matter how we look at you, you don't look like a knight. You can fool the ignorant common people, but in a place like the tavern where experts hide around, you better be another profession! Too bad neither of us have any cleric uniforms, or else when you wear it, the three of us would look like a complete team comprising of a knight, an archer doubling as an assassin, and a cleric! There would definitely be endless missions given to us! Such a pity..."

F*** you! I am a knight!

My teacher glanced at me. “Don’t go cursing your teacher inside your heart, otherwise later you’ll pay the money for the liquor.”

I almost knelt down and begged for forgiveness. “I’m sorry. As your student I should not have gone and cursed my teacher in my heart...”

Aldrizzt rolled his eyes. This eye roll contrasted greatly with his skin that was as dark as charcoal, and thus appeared particularly white. Anyone on the receiving end would feel pissed off upon seeing it. Aldrizzt couldn’t help but say, “Sun Knight and former Sun Knight, when you guys talk, could the two of you not be more vulgar than me, a dark elf?”

“Though under the illumination of the God of Light for so many years, there is still darkness hidden inside my child’s heart. As his teacher, one’s heart is pained, and this one can’t help but embed the God of Light’s radiance in this one’s words, praying that this one may chase away the darkness inside my child’s heart, and return him to the path of radiance.”

“The God of Light’s benevolence envelops the whole world, his radiance shining in the air and illuminating all of the living in the world. However, your student has darkness hidden in his heart, and has directed this darkness to his teacher. This is really a sin that even a thousand deaths would not suffice! Now that his teacher is holding the God of Light’s radiance to reprimand his student, your student is naturally pleased to accept, and looks forward to the rebirth of himself.”

“...I’m sorry, this time I was in the wrong. Please go back to being vulgar!”

*

Following that, we opened the doors of the tavern. Once we walked in, all the waitresses in the tavern that could see the door looked toward us, and were happily shouting words like “Neo, ” “Neo, you’re back, ” “Neo, I missed you so much.” My teacher also used his gaze to reply to the waitresses one by one. If I didn’t mention which of the previous Twelve Holy Knights my teacher was, I bet that everyone would assume that he was actually the previous Storm Knight.

In comparison, Aldrizzt wasn't that popular. Although he had his whole body wrapped tightly, quite a few of people sent him looks filled with hostility. It was obvious that they knew about his race.

I looked at Aldrizzt's attire, and I immediately understood how. Even though he wrapped his whole body inside the cloak, he would still have to reach his hand out when he ate or drank liquor. Just a glimpse of that charcoal-black hand would be enough to let people know that something was fishy.

If he weren't a dark elf of the legends, then he would have to be a reanimated, burnt corpse, and neither of those were a good thing.

Although the public was very unfriendly to Aldrizzt, the hostility that the "men" held toward my teacher also seemed pretty intense, and I didn't seem to be very popular either...

Because the public's hostility toward us was very obvious, we chose a corner seat that was farthest away from the rest of the room's occupants.

Afterward, my teacher happily ordered dozens and dozens of the strongest liquor and another bunch of dishes to go with the wine. Since it couldn't be helped, the waitresses served them one after another.

Aldrizzt seemed to be a bit worried as he said, "Neo, we better not get drunk."

My teacher turned his head around, and asked funnily, "Drunk? With you and me drinking one dozen, how could we become drunk?"

"But you ordered two dozen..."

My teacher said without any hesitation, "Of course. If not, my student will say that I'm stingy."

Aldrizzt lifted his head up from his cloak, looking at me with vague bewilderment. I'm not sure if I had interpreted incorrectly, but I kept feeling that his bewilderment also contained pleasant surprise... Looks like Aldrizzt is also a drink fiend. I'm afraid that what this three-man team of ours does best isn't slaying demonic beasts, but rather slaying bottles of liquor in the tavern.

Once the liquor arrived, I, the drink fiend above all other drink fiends, immediately opened the bottles with both hands, and started guzzling ruthlessly. After my left hand had finished pouring, I changed to my right... After a minute, I took out my handkerchief, and wiped away the liquor foam at the corners of my mouth. Hmm, even though this liquor isn't as strong as Leaf Bud City's Drunk-in-One, the alcohol level is not bad.

Once I lifted my head upward, I saw that Aldrizzt was staring blankly at me, and my teacher went into a thigh-slapping loud laughter... He wasn't slapping his own thigh though, but rather the thighs of a waitress who was currently serving the dishes.

Seeing Aldrizzt's face, I opened yet another bottle of liquor, and then I raised the bottle and said, "A toast to you."

Aldrizzt was stunned as he asked suspiciously, "You're toasting me for what?"

Even though I was not drunk, I was feeling a little tipsy. Seeing the whole tavern look at Aldrizzt with hatred, I used a provoking look to glare at them one by one, and then purposely raised my voice to provoke them, "I toast to you for sitting here!"

"Well said, my good child. Let's have a toast to Aldrizzt for sitting there!" My teacher also raised his liquor bottle high.

Aldrizzt's expression was extremely serious. He slowly pulled off his cloak, revealing his thick white hair and black skin. He raised his liquor bottle high, saying, "Then I shall toast back in return. I toast to you guys for sitting in front of me!"

When he finished, the three of us drank our liquor with our heads tilted upward. Once I lowered my head, I saw a bottle of liquor flying toward the back of Aldrizzt's head. Before I could make a sound to warn him, I saw the flash of a shadow. My teacher had actually used his leg to kick the bottle, and the bottle had not been kicked open. It flew back to the person who had thrown it, and the bottle of liquor crashed into smithereens on that person, dripping the liquor down his whole head.

That person was a warrior, a heavily muscled warrior, with a giant hammer lying beside his feet. With his head dripping with liquor and the veins in his face throbbing wildly, he had evidently taken offense.

“Ha!” My teacher jumped to stand at Aldrizzt’s back, and then he turned his head back, smiling as he said, “That’s good, I hate warriors the most.”

Under the influence of the alcohol, and thinking about how Mike and Ann had looked down on me during the entire journey, I too stood up as I returned the smile.

“Like teacher, like student. Teacher, I also hate warriors the most!”

At this moment, Aldrizzt stood up and shouted, “Neo, Grisia, don’t get into a conflict because of me!”

My teacher and I simultaneously turned around and rolled our eyes at him. Who is doing it for you?

After receiving both of our supercilious looks, Aldrizzt seemed to be a little embarrassed. Looking at us, and then looking at the enraged warrior as well as the dangerous atmosphere that seemed ready to erupt any moment in the tavern, he said a little helplessly, “Do you need my help?”

“Drink your liquor.” My teacher answered.

“Eat your food.” I replied.

Aldrizzt sat down, and I wasn’t sure if he was angry. He turned his body around, his back facing the entire tavern, and started eating his food and drinking his liquor for real.

As the hammer-wielding warrior approached us, my teacher, still showing an attitude of calmness within the chaos, said, “Child, your swordsmanship is not good. It will be better for you to go drink liquor with Aldrizzt!”

“Teacher, what I am wearing now is not a knight’s uniform.” As I answered, I gathered water element, and then I solidified the water on my hands into ice.

“Oh, that’s true.”

Once my teacher finished his words, he drew his sword and blocked the warrior's hammer that was heading toward me. It produced an extremely huge resounding sound of metal, which made my ears hurt. With a slip of my hand, the ice chunk I was holding that was as big as a casserole dish was tossed onto the warrior, just in time to reward him with refreshing joy!

The warrior flew backward and crashed into a table, breaking it into pieces. His fall seemed to have been quite heavy, but he was indeed a warrior with thick skin and meat. He howled a few times at random, and then he climbed back up. With both his eyes bloodshot, he looked left and right and grabbed a table to throw it at us.

The table flew toward my teacher, but he didn't even blink once.

At this moment, I extended one hand, and executed the Shield of Earth, which is a technique to solidify holy light into a shield used to block attacks... This technique is actually Earth Knight's special ability, which I had secretly learned.

The table crashed into the Shield of Earth, and shattered into many pieces in front of my teacher. However, because there was a holy shield blocking him, not even a single splinter fell onto his body.

With both eyes red, the warrior roared, "These actions of yours, do you want to protect that black-skinned fellow? Don't tell me that you aren't aware that dark elves are an evil race?"

My teacher coldly replied, "You want to find faults to pick on, go ahead. By coming up with a bunch of excuses, you've proven that you're even less proper than a dark elf. If you want to fight, bring it on! I'll let you witness the powers of the strongest...knight in history!"

Thank goodness! I wiped off the cold sweat that had formed. Fortunately, my teacher remembered to take out the word "Sun".

At this point, the people of the tavern stood up one by one, and shouted, "What knight, anything mixing around with a dark elf is certainly not anything good!"

“Scram out of here along with the dark elf!”

“Leave Forest Leaf Town!”

Seeing that the crowd was standing on his side, the warrior’s confidence had evidently become greater. With all his might, he roared, “You evil thing, along with the dark elf, scram!”

“Oh? Evil thing?” My teacher muttered to himself for a moment, and then he said with a smile, “Interesting, this is the first time that I have been called that. In order to fit this new title...then, shall I become more evil? Hehe... Hahahaha! Just you alone? You’re not even qualified to start a fight with me. My student! Come to the front here and beat up this dog!”

When he finished, he handsomely flung his mantle, and walked behind me. He sat down calmly and started eating and drinking together with Aldrizzt.

Te-Teacher... Acting as the Sun Knight for twenty years wasn’t enough for you? Now you want to switch to acting as a villain? I didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry, but seeing the fact that my teacher was happy right now, it was better to just follow his instructions obediently.

“Yes sir!”

As my shout ended, I didn’t even recite any incantations as I performed my magic... Actually, it was just that I didn’t have enough time to recite. Evidently, the whole tavern had taken me as a mage, and almost the whole continent knows that the best way to kill a mage is having his enemies chop him into mincemeat before he can complete his incantation to execute his magic.

Thus, the speed that everyone came swooping at me was so fast, it reminded me of a groom pouncing on his bride on their wedding night. I wanted to put on an act of reciting an incantation to pretend at being a mage for fun, but because of them, I wasn’t able to. Che !

With my left hand executing the Shield of Earth, and after confirming that the various weapons of all sorts in front of me wouldn’t land on my head, I performed a variety of mismatched magic with my right hand.

What wind blades, fireballs, and ice bolts I could manage to produce, I threw randomly. Even if I didn't manage to hit the target that I was aiming for, it didn't matter, for before my eyes, there were people everywhere. No matter how or where I threw my spells, I was bound to hit someone. With each spell, there was an anguished wail accompanying it, which felt extremely satisfying.

Behind my back, there even came a sigh from Aldrizzt. "Your student is really enjoying himself. Clearly an intermediate spell could defeat all of the opponents, but instead, he uses minor spells to stir up trouble like this."

My teacher nearly spit out the liquor in his mouth, and after he chokingly laughed a few times, he explained, "You misunderstand, Aldrizzt. That is because he only knows minor spells. Don't forget, my student isn't an actual mage. Even so, with the Shield of Earth added to his list of skills, no one can beat him. This 'Apprentice Mage' is actually even more headache-inducing than a mage, or even a master mage."

"Why doesn't he learn intermediate spells?" Aldrizzt's voice was full of curiosity. "Judging from his ability, he should be more than ready to learn intermediate spells."

"Oh, for the whole fight till now, have you heard my student recite any incantations?"

"No."

"He is not a mage, and is unable to get the actual magic incantation. Thus, he actually doesn't even know half of an actual incantation. At most, he would put on an act of reciting, 'A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.' And even he wouldn't be able to use an intermediate spell without using an incantation."

With amazement, Aldrizzt shouted, "He doesn't know any magic incantations? Then how did he manage to learn magic in the first place?"

My teacher said mysteriously, "For this, I'll have to talk about a certain day when I was teaching him swordsmanship and he practiced it for the whole day. Because of extreme fatigue, I called for a break, and he took the

chance to go wander the streets during the break.”

“He was tired but he still went to wander the streets?”

“No, I was the one who was tired. My heart had received too many blows, and was tired...”

“...Please continue.”

“And then he came back. The next day, I taught him horsemanship, and rode for the whole day...”

“Tired again?”

“Yes, I was so tired from being driven mad by rage. I roared to him, ‘You tell me, why do I have to teach you so painstakingly, you idiot! What uses could possibly come out of you? I can’t stand it anymore, I want to replace you!’ In the end, that child thought for a while, and then released a wind blade to fan me. He even went to the kitchen to take a kebab, and then used a fireball to roast it for me to eat. Last of all, he even made an ice bolt and smeared jam on it, as an after-meal dessert... I asked him how he managed to learn that, and he said that the day before while he was wandering the streets, he saw a group of beautiful mages that bullies were trying to take liberties with. They were so angry that they joined efforts and used wind blades, fireballs, and ice bolts to drive the other party away.”

“Therefore, because of the fanning, roasted kebab, and after-meal dessert, you decided to keep this student?”

“Ye—NO! Of course not! Aldrizzt, aren’t you seeing me too superficially?”

Aldrizzt went into a burst of suppressed laughter.

My teacher’s voice, however, became somewhat angry. “Those people were three beautiful mages, and each of them used magic of different elements. He alone actually managed to use magic of three kinds of elements, and that was not even including the light element that he already knew. With that kind of inconceivable potential, do you think I could replace him?”

“Yes, yes, of course you couldn’t replace him.”

“Your voice sounds like you’re not sincere at all.”

“I am a dark elf that specializes in conspiracies and tricks! The fact that I haven’t played a trick on you is good enough. What else do you want to demand from me? I’m unable to even find the word ‘sincerity’ in the language of the dark elves!”

With a “humph,” my teacher shut up.

Hearing that they had finally finished their conversation, I immediately butted in, “My dear teacher...”

My teacher coldly snorted. “If there’s nothing, you won’t add ‘my dear’ in it. Say it! What do you want?”

There are none who know the student better than the teacher. I laughed dryly twice, and said, “Regarding the compensation for damage of this tavern...”

Before I finished my words, my teacher had already replied snappily, “In the three years that I haven’t seen you, you have become stingier and stingier! As long as you are walking together with us, I won’t let you pay a single cent. In the future, stop asking me about monetary matters. Each time you ask, I will make you recall how the title of the strongest Sun Knight in history came about.”

“Yes sir.”

I put my heart at ease and even smiled a little evilly. Maintaining the Shield of Earth, I started gathering large amounts of “water” element. I filled the air of the whole tavern with water element, and on the other side, I also started gathering lightning...

By the time the crowd started to feel their hair on end and realized that something was wrong and then started to chop at my Shield of Earth even harder, I finally shouted, “Web of Lightning!” Afterward, I released a whole chain of lightning. The lightning followed the water vapor in the air of the tavern and scattered all around. Immediately wretched cries rose in all directions.

Web of Lightning is actually just as the name implies. It is magic that is formed by two kinds of elementary magic, water and lightning. An elementary level added on to another elementary level will form intermediate magic. This made me feel, toward the mysteries of magic, kind of...disillusioned.

“Intermediate magic! And it is magic that simultaneously uses two different elements,” Aldrizzt said, amazed. “Neo, looks like your information that you have regarding your own student is now inadequate.”

When my teacher heard this, not only was he not angry, but he even asked me in high spirits after I sat down, “Child, how did you learn that intermediate spell?”

I said honestly, “After you had left your office, teacher, there was one time I wore a cloak, hiding my identity to wander the streets. On the streets, I saw a—”

Before I could even finish my words, my teacher had already waved his hand in impatience. “Forget it, forget it. You probably saw another beautiful mage again. It doesn’t matter even if I don’t listen!”

I felt extremely wronged as I said, “Teacher, this time you’re wrong. The one I saw was an old mage! I had to spend an unknown amount of my patience before could I see that old mage, with his face full of wrinkles, slowly finish his incantation and use his magic. At long last, I managed to secretly learn this intermediate spell.”

At this moment, the tavern owner, though he had a feeble appearance, walked toward us nervously. Following that, he asked while shivering, “Sir Knights, regarding the damaged items...”

My teacher lazily looked at the situation behind us. It was only to the extent of broken tables, smashed-up chairs, flooded water on the ground, and cracks in the windows and doors. After he threw the tavern owner a few glistening gold coins, the owner was just short of saying with a smile, “Continue, please continue to wreck the place!”

Afterward, the three of us sat beside the tavern’s only clean and tidy table, and continued drinking our liquor, eating our food, and chatting.

I also conveniently explained to my teacher the kidnapping of Princess Alice, as well as the details of meeting the dark knight. Although my teacher was retired, he had still been the Sun Knight for twenty years. His experience was incomparable to mine. Maybe if my teacher listened to my story once, he'd immediately know what the core of the problem was.

Once I reached the part where the dark knight said that he had eloped with the princess, but at the same time, he didn't know anything about the letter, Aldrizzt said in disagreement, "How could you believe in a kidnapper's words?"

I straightforwardly said, "Because he looked extremely handsome."

"How handsome?" my teacher asked with a serious face.

I too, replied seriously, "The kind of handsomeness that, when men see him, would make them want to kill him and then chop his corpse apart."

Once these words came out, Aldrizzt was stunned. However, my teacher nodded his head in understanding, saying, "Then it is as was stated, an elopement."

Aldrizzt couldn't help but shake his head, saying, "This is a little too arbitrary."

My teacher patted the dark elf's back, and just like an old man talking to an ignorant child, he said, "Trust me, you're still young, and have not had enough life experience."

Aldrizzt burst into laughter. "I'm already one hundred and thirty-six years old."

"Dark elves can live from five hundred up till eight hundred years old. Therefore, converting that to a human's age, you're only twenty plus. Perhaps you're even younger than my student."

Aldrizzt rolled his eyes at my teacher from under the cloak, and said mockingly, "Life experience and converting should have no relation right? I have long since experienced life for a hundred and thirty-six years."

My teacher gave a faint smile as he said, "Yet you're still a child. That

sure makes me envious!”

Aldrizzt looked at my teacher, not quite understanding.

My teacher guzzled a mouthful of liquor, and then extended his hand to wipe off the foam at the side of his mouth. He really had the boldness and unruliness of an adventurer, and there was a large difference between now and before, when he was still being the Sun Knight. He patted my back. “Child, do continue your story.”

I nodded my head. “However, I actually felt it to be a bit strange. The queen forced Leaf and me into participating, because she obviously knew that the kidnapper was a dark knight. To warriors, it is a very intractable problem. Only with our participation could it be assured that we could retrieve the princess. However, on the other hand, Ann brought us on a detour. Evidently, she doesn’t want to let us find the kidnapper. Right now, I really cannot understand whether they want us to find Princess Alice or not.”

My teacher gave a faint smile, as though he didn’t think that this was very peculiar. He explained, “That’s simple. It’s because the queen of Moon Orchid and Princess Ann have taken different standpoints.”

“Different standpoints?” I didn’t understand. Being mother and daughter but taking different standpoints?

My teacher smiled faintly again and explained, “As the ruler of a country, the queen of Moon Orchid would definitely want to retrieve Princess Alice, so as to wed her to the Son of the God of War and achieve her aim of consolidating the influence of the Monastery of the God of War through political marriage. However, Princess Ann isn’t a ruler of a country, and Princess Alice is her sister. If she knew that her sister didn’t love the Son of the God of War, and had someone else that she loved, she would more or less stand on the side of her sister.”

“I see.” Suddenly I exclaimed in realization, “So the queen had no other motives, and really wanted to retrieve Princess Alice! The queen, so as to find a reason not to send her soldiers out to find the princess, most likely forged that letter that the ‘kidnapper’ left. And so, she let our adventurer

group look for her in secret. After all, her daughter eloping with someone isn't something that can be told to the whole world. Princess Ann, on the other hand, purposely entered the group and misled us. This would give Princess Alice enough time to escape with her lover."

My teacher nodded his head in praise, and then added, "And she couldn't completely mislead you guys, for that would most probably raise your suspicions to the fact that she had collaborated with Princess Alice. If that happened, there was a high possibility that the queen would intervene from her side to retrieve Princess Alice."

"Thus, we had always been chasing them, not too far or too near," I continued. "Occasionally we even met with the kidnapper. Unfortunately, the one who had met the kidnapper was me, and I did not have the ability to restrain him, so he managed to escape again."

Such a good plan by Ann! When we return to the palace, I, the only person who had met the kidnapper, yet was unable to retain him, would definitely become the target of the public's criticism.

She does really hate me a lot! Otherwise, wouldn't letting Austin see Mr. Dark Knight have been better? A cleric not having the ability to retain the enemy is normal, and no one would say that he is wrong... But she just had to choose me.

At this point, my teacher's face darkened, as he reminded me, "Child, you said that, when you met the dark knight, you were wearing assassin's clothes?"

My body shook, and my facial expression froze. This is bad! If the dark knight were to tell Princess Alice and Ann that the one he met was not the Sun Knight, but an assassin that was full of light element... Those two women would know that something was wrong even if they used their knees to think.

"Think of a way to cover it!" My teacher's tone was already a little dissatisfied.

"I've got it, I will seal up their mouths... When there's a need to, eliminating them is imperative!" I replied grimly.

Aldrizzt weakly gave a forced smile as he said, "You two, 'righteous' Sun Knight and former Sun Knight, could you not discuss the topic of elimination in front of an 'evil' dark elf? Such a situation that violates conventional reasoning tempts my weak-willed heart."

My teacher and I shrugged our shoulders, and for the sake of the dark elf's heart, we did not continue to discuss topics that were even less like what a Sun Knight should say.

My teacher changed the conversation topic and said, "Child, roughly which direction is the journey headed in so far?"

I thought for a while before answering, "Although we have been curving here and there in our journey, we seem to be heading southwest."

"Southwest, is it?" My teacher muttered to himself for a moment, and then revealed the Sun-Style's incomparably radiant smile. "We have a mission that just happens to also be in the south. How about you journey together with Aldrizzt and me, and complete a mission together with us in passing? Okay?"

"Not okay..."

My teacher smiled gently. "What did you say? As the 'Strongest Sun Knight in History,' your teacher just now became hard of hearing, and didn't hear you clearly!"

"Extremely okay!"

After I finished speaking, I ruthlessly guzzled down a whole bottle of liquor. Since I can't refuse, then I can only take this chance to drink a little more free liquor as a form of compensation.

My teacher laughed and said, "Also, you better not curse me inside your heart. If the mission is successful, I'll give you three-tenths of the reward. The three of us can do extremely difficult missions, and for difficult missions, the reward is naturally not at all small."

Hearing that, I immediately put down the bottle of liquor. I couldn't be more sincere as I said, "How can you say that? Teacher, as your student, Grisia will definitely serve you without sparing an ounce of effort till the

very last second of his life!”

“Then I won’t give you any reward.”

I instantly changed my words, “However, a little reward would always boost one’s morale greatly!”

“Then I’ll give you one tenth.”

Hurriedly, I explained, “Morale is also spilt into a few degrees. If the reward is higher (by one tenth), one’s morale would naturally become higher! When one’s morale is high, a holy knight that originally ‘only knows’ Minor Heal can even use Moderate Heal! If the reward were to be higher (by one tenth), then the morale becomes even higher. Perhaps even Advanced Heal could be used! If the reward were to be raised again (by one tenth)—”

“There’s no need to raise it higher,” my teacher coldly interrupted me. “I actually lean more toward putting my sword against someone’s neck to let them witness exactly how valiant the strongest Sun Knight in history is. I guarantee you that morale will rise so high that even Ultimate Heal can be performed.”

My mouth snapped shut. Okay, three tenths of the reward is better than nothing. It’s not worthwhile to compete with the title of “History’s Strongest” for raising the reward by one tenth.

Aldrizzt seemed to have an incessant headache as he said, “This pair of teacher and student... Can either of you leave some sort of good image of the Sun Knight for others to long for?”

Chapter 6: Sixth Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “The Road Every Adventure Must Travel – An Underground Cavern”

I slowly opened my eyes, and was not quite able to make out where I was. Afterward, the stabbing pain in my brain, like a drum being hit, reminded me... I had been drunk.

I actually got drunk? Just how much liquor did my teacher order later on? Looks like I totally didn't have to risk my life to bargain for another one tenth of the reward with the strongest Sun Knight in history... Just by drinking liquor, I probably had already drunk away one tenth of the reward!

I tried to take a look around, wanting to figure out where I was. Who knew that with this one look, I would immediately open my mouth wide...

“Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

Under my legs, there was nothing but air, and the distance between my legs and the ground was at least twenty meters! Why was I even taller than the tower of the Holy Temple?

I continued to wail, “Ahhh! God of Light! I don't want to grow that tall, I will never dare to drink liquor in secret anymore...”

“What are you yelling about? Don't scare people so early in the morning.” This was my teacher's voice.

“Actually, it is already noon now.” That was Aldrizzt's murmur.

When I turned my head to look, my teacher was also floating in mid-air. He had the appearance of having just woken up and was currently stretching... How I really admire my teacher! Even if we are now in mid-air, and there is absolutely no support under our feet, he, the old man, can still stretch in such an elegant manner. Indeed worthy of the former Sun Knight that had been elegant for twenty years.

After I took a closer look, I realized there were not just two people in the

air. There was also another fellow whose whole body was hidden by a cloak. That must be Aldrizzt.

His body was currently radiating a very strong wind element.

“You can actually cast the Spell of Flight?!” I was stunned, for I thought that since Aldrizzt is a dark elemental creature, learning dark elemental magic should be extremely easy for him, but other elements probably shouldn’t be as easy.

“I didn’t know how to at first.” The cloaked person turned his head around, and as expected, it was Aldrizzt’s face that looked back at me. With a very helpless expression, he said, “However, Neo said that wind elemental magic is very helpful for travelling, and kept forcing me to learn it. Only after spending a lot of effort did I manage to learn two spells of wind elemental magic – Teleportation and Spell of Flight.”

I felt like I could identify with him. I comforted him, saying, “Yeah, my teacher always likes to force people to learn some very strange stuff. Once you’re used to it, it’ll be fine.”

“It’s been hard on you.” Aldrizzt looked at me, full of sympathy.

“Never mind, I have already escaped from the abyss of suffering. Subsequently, it’ll be hard on you...”

“The two of you, are you treating me as a dead person?” asked my teacher coldly.

Aldrizzt and I suppressed our laughs, and then shut our mouths.

However, I couldn’t help but immediately open my mouth again to ask, “Teacher, where are we going?”

My teacher glanced over and questioned back in suspicion, “Did you drink so much that you forgot about the mission that I mentioned to you before?”

“Of course not.”

My teacher nodded his head and explained, “Right now, we are going to carry out the mission. If we use the Spell of Flight, we can save a lot of

time. Also, you would not return to your team too late.”

I thought about it for a moment, and indeed, if the mission didn't take too much time, then this might even be faster than hurrying back to Leaf's side on my own.

After settling the problem of transportation, I delved in deeper and asked, “What's the briefing of the mission?”

My teacher gave me a faint smile. “You don't have to worry. This is a very simple mission. For you, it will be especially easy.”

“Oh, hehe!” I gave a fake laugh along with my teacher. When my teacher had first started teaching me to how to fall down elegantly, he had also carried such a relaxed and gentle tone... I looked toward Aldrizzt, and his face looked like he had already thrown all caution to the wind.

I had already started considering the options. Between following my teacher, and jumping down from a twenty meter height and then being hunted down by the strongest Sun Knight in history, which one would have a higher rate of survival?

Hmm, neither seems to be very high...

*

After flying for a whole day and night, I was just about to give praise to Aldrizzt's strength as to how he can actually fly for such a long time when he landed on the ground, and then very happily announced, “Now my strength has been exhausted, so what happens next is up to you guys.”

You despicable and shameless dark elf...

After silently cursing Aldrizzt for quite a while, I turned my body around to take a look. To my back was a dark cave around which not even a single blade of grass grew within a hundred feet. The whole cave was taking in and sending out large quantities of the dark element, rather like a living thing that was afraid that it was not dark enough. There was also a series of screams and howls coming from the inside, and even the sound of bones rubbing together...

My teacher drew his sword, and cheerily said, “The mission is to clear the undead creatures inside this cavern once and for all.”

Hearing that, I said with a blank face, “Teacher, this is a land of darkness.”

“I know that.”

“Teacher, the definition of a land of darkness is that for some unknown reason, this kind of land will endlessly spawn the dark element. Coincidentally, this place probably used to be a battlefield or cemetery, and that’s why the dead buried underneath number as many as the stars in the sky, and will arise as undead creatures endlessly.”

“I know that! What are you being so wordy about? In the three years that I haven’t seen you, the extent of your wordiness has increased yet again.” My teacher’s face filled with impatience.

Don’t be angry, don’t be angry. Even if I were to be angry, I wouldn’t be able to defeat him anyway... I tried hard to take several deep breaths, and squeezed out a smile, saying, “Since you know that, then you should know that even if the undead creatures inside this kind of land of darkness were cleared, after two days, it will still be packed full of undead creatures! Therefore, it’s impossible to clear it once and for all.”

My teacher revealed a smile, replying, “Of course I know that, otherwise, why would I bring you here?”

Just now, I should have chosen the option of jumping down the high altitude of twenty meters and then being hunted down by my teacher! I deeply regretted it, but I still forced myself to say, “...Teacher, no matter how powerful my holy light ability is, it’s still impossible to completely purify the dark element in this cavern.”

“With the addition of the Divine Sun Sword and me, put your all into it and give it a try!”

Though my teacher’s tone of speaking was not agitated and his expression was calm, I knew that the calmer my teacher was, the stronger his determination was. It must be done!

“Teacher, why must you purify this place?” I felt curiosity growing in my heart, and couldn’t help but open my mouth to ask, “There are so many lands of darkness in this world, why must it be this one?”

My teacher gave a faint smile and explained, “Do you know the reason this cavern spawns undead creatures endlessly, yet it doesn’t affect the surroundings?”

I shook my head. Indeed, I didn’t know.

“That’s because in the past, there was a regiment of powerful mages that used an extremely strong water element gem, ‘Eternal Tranquility,’ to set a boundary around the cave so as to prevent the undead creatures from walking out of a one hundred foot circumference from the cave.”

So I see. I nodded my head to indicate my understanding. The lands of darkness have always been a source of headache for all of the kingdoms, and each kingdom would employ every method to prevent the damage caused by the land of darkness. Of those methods, cooperating with a mage or a cleric to create a boundary that can seal away those dark creatures is the simplest and the fastest.

My teacher gave a faint smile, and with a calm expression, he gave a declaration that was rather like an explosion, “I want that ‘Eternal Tranquility.’”

I was stunned. So it was like this, my teacher wants that “Eternal Tranquility,” but once he takes the gem, the boundaries around the cave will immediately fall apart. At that time, undead creatures will swarm out from this cave to hurt other creatures, especially humans...

However, I believe that my teacher would definitely not allow this kind of outcome to happen. As such, he would first have to purify this cave, so that when he takes the gem, it would not cause any kind of damage.

Once I thought about this, my face fell as I looked at my teacher, carrying a strand of hope. “Must you have that gem? There aren’t any replacements?”

My teacher indifferently said, “Unless you can find a gem that is equally

powerful. However, I have inquired around for a good time, and only 'Eternal Tranquillity' is the most suitable."

I muttered to myself, "Even if there were a gem more powerful than the 'Eternal Tranquillity,' I'm afraid that the method to obtain it would only be more difficult, otherwise it would have already been taken away by others."

It looked like no matter what, I would have to accompany my teacher this time. I turned my head to look at the dark cave, just hoping this wouldn't end up being my burial spot...

However, I felt that just barging in would not be a sensible act, so I promptly asked the leader of the team, "Teacher, do you have a plan?"

My teacher instantly answered, "Yes."

Looking at my teacher brimming with self-confidence, I was momentarily filled with boundless hope. I awaited expectantly as I asked, "Then, what are the details of the plan?"

My teacher mysteriously held up his forefinger, and then pointed toward the cavern, saying, "Fight all the way into the deepest, innermost part of the caverns, rest one day as we wait for your holy light ability to recover to the maximum, execute the purification, take away 'Eternal Tranquillity,' and the mission is accomplished!"

In a flash, my face became expressionless. If this can be called a plan, then, "Find the enemy, defeat the enemy, rescue the princess, go back to the kingdom and get married" would be a knight's complete adventure plan for rescuing a princess since ancient times, and even after a thousand years there wouldn't be any need to change a single word.

"This is actually relatively good." At this moment, Aldrizzt serenely started speaking. "You don't know about last time, under what kind of circumstances we had to barge into a dragon's lair to steal a crown..."

"What kind of circumstances?" I immediately asked, for right now I needed to know about more tragic circumstances. This way, I would be able to feel that the current circumstances were quite blissful, and then I

could confront them happily.

With tears in his eyes, Aldrizzt lamented, “The cleric didn’t sleep the night before due to visiting a prostitute, and his amount of holy light was less than one quarter of his usual. The warrior’s sword was broken and was sent for repairs, but he had not retrieved it yet. While scouting, the rogue absconded with the money after opening a treasure chest. While the mage was cooking, he accidentally burned half of a magic scroll. The holy knight had drunk too much liquor, and was still hung over...”

At this point, I suddenly felt that something was wrong. I asked, “Wait a moment, who was the mage who was so stupid that he burnt a magic scroll?”

“That was me.” Aldrizzt lowered his head guiltily.

“And the hung over holy knight?” I felt anything but reassured.

“That was me.” My teacher finished his answer and glanced over. Full of threat, he said, “Forming a team with the strongest Sun Knight in history, you don’t have any problems with that, do you? Ah?”

“No, of course not!” Sincerely, I said, “However, teacher, your hangover...”

My teacher sighed and then waved his hand impatiently. “I didn’t drink that much last night.”

I’m relieved.

“So I’m only a little hung over.”

“...”

Oh God of Light! Mike, Austin, Ann and dearest Leaf, you guys are the world’s best adventuring comrades. I really have been wrong, please come and save me! Hurry up and come here to take me back into your team. It’s alright even if you want me to be a cleric!

Unfortunately, my relationship with Leaf wasn’t so great that our thoughts were inter-linked, and thus in the end he didn’t come to save me. I could only follow my teacher and step into a cave that was about as dark as my future...

Once we stepped into the cave, unexpectedly, there stood rows of densely packed white skeletons along each side. These skeletons were probably made from fresh corpses, which were provided by adventurers who had come here adventuring and accidentally settled down instead. As the corpses were relatively fresh, there was even quite a bit of “stuff” clinging onto the surface of the skeletons. Also, they had not become completely rotten, so the effect of scaring others was also enhanced. Other than the visual assault, I felt that my sense of smell had also received irreparable damage.

My teacher held his nose as he said, “Why don’t you hurry up and blow them away! I’m dying from the stench!”

I let out an “oh” sound, and casually sent out an explosion of holy light. Following that, what was heard were the sounds of bones scattering on the ground. Once the holy light had faded away, the skeletons that had been standing in rows had already turned into a fine powder that covered the whole floor, as if laid out as a “white carpet” to welcome our arrival.

After that, although my teacher said he was still a little hung over, when we encountered more skeletons, he cut out a path with one strike of his blade as usual. Sometimes, he even accidentally used too much strength, and helped to widen the cave. Although at that moment I was a little worried that the roof would cave in, after carefully thinking about it, even if it were to cave in, my teacher would still be able to carve a new cave from scratch, so there was nothing to worry about.

As for Aldrizzt, though he had joyously announced that he had no more strength left when he had landed, when the skeleton that I had “accidentally” missed and didn’t manage to stop came charging at him, he glanced at it with disdain. Then, in the manner of using a sledgehammer to crack a nut, he used an advanced dark magic, “Hell’s Fire,” to roast him crisply.

As the range of Hell’s Fire was too wide, the fire accidentally spread, causing a large amount of skeletons to be consumed, as the fire could not be contained once it broke out.

At this moment, I used my Wind Blade...to help fan myself. How hot!

However, I had started to understand my teacher and Aldrizzt's strength. There was a good reason they were able to barge into a dragon's lair under such chaotic circumstances and still return alive.

At this instant, Aldrizzt gave me an especially supercilious look. He said unhappily, "Aren't you a little lax?"

Before I could speak, my teacher explained, "Aldrizzt, you have to treat him as a cleric."

"Oh!" Aldrizzt gave a gasp of sudden realization, and then spoke to me, full of apologies. "Sorry, in times like these clerics are indeed supposed to stay at the back and enjoy the cool air. However, could you give me a little bit of Wind Blade? It is indeed a little bit hot."

"Sure." I used a weak Wind Blade to chop him, and then reminded him, "Next time don't use that kind of magic in an airtight space. Letting it harm others is fine, but don't end up harming our own team too."

"Yeah!" My teacher started fanning himself with his shoulder plate.

"Yes, yes. I'm really sorry to have made everyone feel hot." Aldrizzt admitted his mistake with much bravery. This dark elf actually knew how to rectify his mistakes!

After that, the fire seemed to be impossible to extinguish within a short time...because the undead creatures in the depths of the cave kept charging into it non-stop to become fuel... So, with that, the three of us could only sit down and start preparing lunch, using the readily available "fire" to roast our meat.

"Using a fire that is fuelled by corpses to roast meat doesn't seem very appropriate, does it?" Aldrizzt stared at the cooked meat with a bit of disgust. Worried, he said, "Not to mention that it's even fire from dark magic, so it might even be harmful to the human body."

"Even if it is harmful to the human body, it is also none of your concern!" I said confidently, "You're not a human."

Aldrizzt thought about it for a while, and said, "That's true." After that, he became relieved and also started eating the meat.

After we had eaten and drunk our fill, the fire had also become smaller. Like this, we casually walked across a pile of ashes, and then continued to head further inside. Due to the cave system being accessible from all directions, we had seriously no idea where to go. Thus, we adopted my teacher's method – head in the direction where the monsters are stronger, and you can't go wrong.

We fought from the lowest leveled skeletons to the even more foul-smelling ghouls. That is a kind of corpse that is half rotten, and has a lot of rotten meat clinging on to its body. Its movement is slow, but acute poison lies on its body. One would get poisoned with just a touch, and if there were no cleric on the team or no antidote to detoxify oneself, then one can just start digging his or her own grave.

However, getting poisoned by touching a ghoul is irrelevant because it's so putrid that I'm about to be killed by their stench even standing ten meters away. If I were near enough to touch them, I would definitely cut off my own nose, let alone still care about getting poisoned!

"My goodness! You bunch of putrid dead people's remains, hurry up and go to the God of Light to repent for not bathing!"

I held my nose with one hand, and with the other used Wind Blade to fan away the stench as though my life depended on it, and then my body shone with boundless radiance, illuminating the whole cavern as though the sun were rising. Once the holy light had faded away, the entire cave finally became clean, and even the air seemed have a fresh and cool smell.

I put down the hand that was holding my nose, and said in satisfaction, "Holy light is, as expected, the most effective method to sterilize and deodorize."

Afterward, we continued to meet mutated corpses, decaying hellhounds, and corpses that could suck human blood. I have heard that the public has given this kind of monster a nice-sounding name called vampire. Also, we met eye demons that had the appearance of a giant eyeball, shadow ghosts

that were black from head to toe...

In conclusion, if there were only one of the monsters with physical forms, it would be chopped into half by my teacher once it showed itself. If the monsters with physical forms were in a large group, then I could witness Aldrizzt's various kinds of dark magic, and at the same time faintly felt that I had secretly learnt a few techniques. If it were a monster with no physical form, such as shadow ghosts, it would be sterilized by my holy light.

Mid-way, we had even encountered another team that was adventuring here... The five of them had been covered by a giant skeleton warrior, and it was only after my teacher had chopped that skeleton warrior to death with one strike and it had fallen to the ground with a "boom" did we see those five people.

They were a standard adventurer team, comprised of a warrior, an archer, a rogue, a warpriest, and one that was less commonly seen, a druid. This kind of person is an expert in morphing into various kinds of animals, and is a type of druid specializing in healing and detoxification.

The moment we saw them, Aldrizzt had immediately pulled up the hood of his cloak, and covered himself completely.

The five of them stared blankly at my teacher. My teacher was also a little stunned, and then he revealed the "Sun-Style" radiant smile, and with a gentle and elegant attitude that made people have a favorable impression of him in their hearts, he said, "My apologies, my eyes went bad momentarily, and I actually kill-stole your monster. Please treat this skeleton warrior as one that you have defeated, and all of the loot on his body belongs to you guys."

The party of five all stared blankly at my teacher. The expression that the two females within the group, the archer and the warpriest, revealed was roughly called "love at first sight." The warrior's expression was called "crazed worshipping." The rogue stared at the prized sword in my teacher's hand and the extraordinary armor and accessories on his body, and his expression could roughly be described as "eyes glistening." The

druid was a lot more normal. He slightly frowned and showed a wary stance.

Looks like in this adventurer team, the druid should be the actual leader, while in name, it's probably the warrior that is standing in the front!

"You guys are a team? A knight, an assassin and a mage?" The druid sized up the three of us with furrowed brows.

"No, he is a cleric," said my teacher as he pointed at me, and continued. "I myself am a holy knight."

"Cleric?" The druid said with a hint of suspicion, "But he's wearing assassin clothes."

My teacher had a trustworthy smile, and said, "Oh, that's because his cleric clothes accidentally got burnt while roasting meat, so he could only change into assassin clothes."

At this moment, I walked in front, and my hands released holy light to sterilize the skeleton warrior on the floor. It turned into a pile of white bone ashes, leaving only the pile of loot from his body, like armor, precious swords and such.

I nodded my head with satisfaction, but when I turned my head, what I saw was that all five of the other party were staring at me, stunned.

At this moment, Aldrizt quickly gave a reminder into my ear, "You didn't recite an incantation."

Damn it! I forgot.

After seeing this move of mine, even the druid nodded his head blankly, totally giving no thought as to why a cleric would actually put on an assassin's clothes in a team without an assassin.

However, what I was wearing wasn't assassins' clothing either, but the clothes that Aldrizt had been wearing under his mage's robes. Nevertheless, because it had two special traits of being black and a bit more skin-tight, it really did seem like an assassin's garbs.

At this moment, the druid gave a glance at the skeleton warrior as

though he couldn't bear to part with it, and then told us, "This skeleton warrior belongs to you guys. In fact, if you guys hadn't come, I'm afraid we wouldn't be able to walk out of this cave."

Hearing that, I sized up the other party. As expected, they had a battered and exhausted appearance.

I reminded out of good will, "Then you guys can walk out now. We have already disposed of the monsters behind us, so there's not much danger along the way."

The druid gave a bitter smile as he said, "This is impossible. The monsters here only take three days to completely respawn, so I'm afraid that the route would already be filled with monsters again. Moreover, we are not as prepared as when we first came in, so I'm afraid we won't be able to get out."

At this moment, the warrior was very upset as he said, "I'm sorry, it's all because I brought you guys too far inside."

His comrades started comforting him, "We don't blame you. No one could have expected that we would suddenly encounter a skeleton warrior and hellhounds, otherwise we definitely would not have had any problems."

Seeing their looks of wanting to die, I couldn't help but interrupt them, saying, "But we have just finished slaying the monsters outside, so they haven't had enough time to respawn yet."

The other team was stunned. The warrior couldn't help but open his mouth to ask, "You-you guys, how long did you take to reach this place?"

My teacher was silent without a word and Aldrizzt was pretending not to care, so I could only think hard about how much time it would take an average adventurer team to reach here. I tested cautiously, "About three..."

"What? Three days?" The other party was given a big shock, and exclaimed, "We have five people, but we spent a week."

"..." Actually, I wanted to say three hours. However, in reality, we only spent thirty minutes. Thank goodness I didn't say it clearly...

“If you guys had only spent three days, then the monsters along the way really might not have completely respawned yet!” The other party revealed an exhilarated expression.

“Yup! You guys should hurry and pick up the skeleton warrior’s loot on the floor, and then go out. Don’t worry, nothing will happen to us.” My teacher waved to them, and even reminded in “good will,” “Better run out, otherwise if the monsters respawn, that would be bad.”

I stared at my teacher’s indecent behavior speechlessly. As a matter of fact, the other party had three days’ time. Even if they crawled out, they’d still make it in time.

However, when the other party heard my teacher’s words, they immediately picked up the loot and after saying a few words of thanks to us, they left in a hurry.

Seeing the other party run swiftly in the direction of the entrance, as though they would never dare to come to this place ever again in their lifetime, I muttered to myself in disbelief, “We were actually this strong?”

Hearing that, my teacher gave a laugh, and a little teasingly said, “Who do you think you are? Who am I again? Aldrizzt is a mage of what age?”

“Though truthfully, this team of ours can’t be compared to your last team.”

Aldrizzt pondered as he listed, “The warriors are the Son of the God of War and Princess Ann, the hero among the women, who is equally famous in terms of fighting prowess. The archer is one of the Twelve Holy Knights, and in addition, there’s a warpriest who can buff warriors. The healing cleric is nicknamed the Sun Knight with the strongest holy magic in history... Even if you guys name the team ‘Dragon Slaying Adventurers’ Team,’ it would be true not just in name but also in ability.”

Hearing that, I suddenly felt relieved. At first, I was still a little worried as to the matter of my leaving the group, but once I heard that our team actually had the tyrannical strength to slay a dragon, then no matter what happens, there shouldn’t be any danger!

At this moment, my teacher's face abruptly sank as he chided, "But affairs of life are never absolute, child, and you never know when a stronger group will appear in front of you."

I bowed my head to receive his advice, but I didn't quite agree within my heart. Don't tell me that in this world, there is something that is even more frightening than a dragon?

My teacher probably also knew that he was thinking too much, but for some reason, he still furrowed his brows, saying, "Let's go! We'll hurry and finish our business here, so that you can go back to your group. I keep having this uneasy feeling... No matter what, it's never good to leave the group for too long. Had we not definitely needed you for this, I would not have delayed your going back."

I nodded my head, but in my heart, I wasn't really anxious at all. That was because I already knew that Princess Ann was trying to delay time in order to let Princess Alice's elopement become successful. Even if I went back, she would only lead me on a wild goose chase! Thus, I wasn't really in a hurry to go back.

Furthermore, I actually felt that I didn't want to break up an affectionate couple. When I had met the dark knight that was so handsome that people would want to beat him to death, he had after all not laid a hand on me, and was still a considerably reasonable fellow. Therefore, I wasn't that keen on forcefully separating him and the princess.

At this time, my teacher sighed. "Let's go! We'll talk again after things are done."

I nodded my head, and obediently followed my teacher.

*

Following that, we spent about three days' time circling around in the cave, searching for "Eternal Tranquility."

The three days went by pretty happily. Aldrizzt would always have an endless amount of stories to tell me. He talked about his homeland, the adventures he had after leaving his homeland. However, when it came to

the story about himself, he wasn't very keen on telling me, but that was okay, for everyone had their own secrets.

I, on the other hand, told him about the things that happened in the Holy Temple, and he would always listen enthusiastically. When we talked about the things that happened in the recent years, even my teacher couldn't help but laugh heartily upon hearing them.

When I mentioned Roland, I cautiously observed my teacher's expression, fearing that he would criticize me for fooling around and want me to barbeque Roland.

Who knew that when I finished my words, it was actually Aldrizzt who started laughing. "No wonder you hold not even the slightest prejudice toward an evil dark elf such as me. That's because you had already made friends with a Death Knight, and what's a trivial dark elf compared to that?"

My teacher, on the other hand, helplessly said, "You truly hold no regard for the law."

"Teacher, you won't reveal the matter of Roland, right?" I asked, a little nervous.

My teacher was silent for a while, and stared directly at me. "You need to promise me not to let him leave the Holy Temple. Also, before you retire at age forty, destroy him."

I was just about to protest against the matter of having to destroy Roland, but my teacher said forcefully, "Living for another ten or so years should be enough for him. If you do not want to let him die at the hands of your student, then kill him before you lose the God of Light's favor. Otherwise, when you pass the Divine Sun Sword to your successor, you might not have enough strength to kill him."

I was silent for quite a while, but in the end, I still nodded my head. Though in my heart I had a secret feeling that at that time, I still might not be able to do it... However, something that would happen over ten years from now should be left to the future me of ten years later to worry about!

“This child, you are just too soft-hearted. As long as people don’t offend you, no matter how much of a potential threat the opponent is, you would not do a thing.”

My teacher gave a sigh, and as he patted my shoulder, he said, “This personality of yours can’t be considered to be bad, though. If it weren’t for this personality of yours, Aldrizzt wouldn’t treat you as a friend this quickly. However, this personality of yours is also very dangerous. I worry that there will be a day when you’ll pay the price because of this.”

I lowered my head, and pretended to listen to his advice seriously. My teacher indeed hasn’t changed at all; he still cannot resist tutoring me even after his retirement.

“Child.”

My teacher called me, and I lifted my head to look at him. However, he started stroking my head as though I were a little kid, and said, “No matter what happens, don’t forget that teacher is always here.”

“Count me in as well, then.” Aldrizzt said indifferently.

Hearing my teacher and Aldrizzt’s words, I felt warmth in my heart. However, I couldn’t help but complain, “You still dare to say that! Teacher, once you had retired, you disappeared without a trace. Before, when the king, princess, and I were having a dispute, if you had been there, they would definitely have obediently followed your words, and I wouldn’t have needed to be overwrought.”

Upon hearing my words, my teacher immediately whacked my head, scolding, “You brat, you’re this big already. Are you telling me to stay at your side to be your nanny? As for that kind of trivial matter, go settle it yourself!”

“If that kind of matter is considered trivial, then in what kind of situation could I look for my teacher? Don’t tell me that I can only look for you when we are going to slay a dragon...”

As I rubbed my head and complained softly, there came my teacher’s rolling of his eyes and Aldrizzt’s muffled laughter. Seeing the situation, I

myself started laughing. If we really had to slay a dragon, then the Holy Temple would definitely mobilize a large amount of people. At that time, with the Twelve Holy Knights by my side, and with their strength, I wouldn't need to look for my teacher anymore.

We continued on with our journey while we chatted. Right now, the primary person who sent the monsters flying away was my teacher. Aldrizzt and I were responsible for chatting at the back.

“Neo sure is strong! Even within my clansmen who specialize in fighting, there isn't anyone who is this strong.”

Inside my heart, I had the same feeling as I said, “Yeah. My teacher is, after all, the strongest Sun Knight in history. He is already this strong now, so when my teacher still had the favor of the God of Light, you can imagine how rampant he was back then...”

“Whether or not he has the God of Light's favor shouldn't be that important, right?” Aldrizzt said with indifference. “Even with the favor of the God of Light, it's not like Neo's swordsmanship would become better, right?”

“Oh...” I looked at Aldrizzt. He doesn't seem to like raising the topic of religion? “His swordsmanship definitely would not become any better. However, there are a few benefits to being the representative of the God of Light.”

This topic seemed to make Aldrizzt a little disgusted. He said, “The benefit of strengthening one's holy element doesn't seem enough to me for people to place their faith in God.”

I tilted my head and thought for a while, then raised what was, in my opinion, the strongest example. “I am the thirty-eighth generation Sun Knight, and none of the thirty-seven Sun Knights preceding me died during their period in office.”

Aldrizzt had an extremely strange expression on his face as he asked with disbelief, “The Sun Knight is undying?”

“Of course not.” I rolled my eyes at him. I told him unhappily, “It's just

that it's very hard for a Sun Knight to die. That's because the holy light inside our bodies is too abundant, and our resilience is simply too strong. As long as we do not receive a mortal wound, we practically couldn't die."

At this moment, my teacher, who was at the front, started laughing. As he killed the monsters, he said, "It is rumored that the tenth generation Sun Knight was pierced through the heart once by a sword, but he still managed to survive in the end."

Aldrizzt started shaking his head in disbelief.

I smiled as I continued, "Thus, with my teacher's current strength, if you add on that incredibly strong resilience, how strong do you think he would be..."

I suddenly cut off my words.

Aldrizzt looked at me a little strangely. "Grisia?"

I took in a deep breath and pointed in front, saying, "I think we have found our target. Over there, at the very end of the fork in the road, there's an extremely strong water element!"

Hearing that, my teacher attacked the monster before him with a swing of his blade, sending it flying away in pieces. Afterward, he stood poised in a stance before he brandished his sword, and paused like that for three seconds. Then, with a swing of his sword...

My blond hair and Aldrizzt's white hair were swept into a mad dance by the air currents cast by the sword. Both of us stared expressionlessly at that fork in the road that looked as though a magic scroll had detonated there. The whole road went "boom, boom, boom," and then let out a loud "bang" that would give people tinnitus. Last of all came a burst of smoke that lingered long afterward...

My teacher was in a pleasant mood as he turned around and told us, "Okay, the monsters have all been cleared. Child, after we have gone in and you have rested enough, let's conduct the purification. As your teacher, I will guard at the tunnel entrance and not allow any monsters to go in to disturb you."

Aldrizzt turned his head to look at me, and in a harsh tone, said, “I really feel that Neo doesn’t need the God of Light’s favor, and there isn’t anything that can kill him.”

“You’re right.” I couldn’t have agreed with him more.

Chapter 7: Seventh Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “A Must for Every Adventure – Sacrifice”

I slowly opened my eyes, only to feel that this situation felt rather familiar... I almost thought that I had gotten so drunk that I had passed out again and was lying in a room at an inn, but then I remembered that I hadn't had anything alcoholic to drink.

With my memories returning, I mumbled to myself, “That's right, I fainted because I used up all my holy light performing the purification.”

My eyes began to focus, and the feeling in my body gradually came back. I immediately deduced that I had been dumped in the forest and not in an inn. That was because the sun was blinding my eyes and my whole body was sore from sleeping on the hard ground!

I crawled to my feet with my back aching terribly and looked around me. Excellent! This is a perfectly normal part of the forest. I was surrounded by trees and the ground was covered in dirt. Thankfully I was not in a grand palace, or on a snow-white floor... That would have made me think I had returned to the embrace of the God of Light.

But, where are Teacher and Aldrizzt?

Still in pain, I stood up and noticed a piece of paper float to the ground from my body. I picked it up and recognized Teacher's handwriting with one glance. Teacher's handwriting was just as elegant as himself, extravagant yet precise, just like a pleasing work of art. The only drawback was that... it was so beautiful it was nearly illegible.

Teacher's script has become even more graceful after three years... Was this word “student” or “kebab”? Since the message was meant for me, it should be “student,” right?

Then again, if the purification had failed and Teacher did not obtain the “Eternal Tranquility,” then this word could very well be “kebab”... Teacher

could have been so angry that he left a note saying he was going to turn me into a human kebab, and had gone to find firewood for the subsequent barbecue.

I don't care! I took the word to be "student" and continued reading.

Dear student,

The purification was a complete success and the land of darkness has become just a normal mountain cave. The "Eternal Tranquility" was also successfully obtained and is now hanging around your neck.

Astounded, I looked down. Indeed, I was wearing a necklace made of an azure gem tied securely to a black string... Why on earth is Teacher making me carry the Eternal Tranquility around? Could this gem be dangerous?

I immediately continued reading the letter.

Don't worry, this gem is perfectly harmless.

... Teacher understands me so well.

It's just that this gem emanates too much power, so if Teacher carries it, I will be constantly annoyed by swarms of mages seeking it. After careful consideration, I have determined that only your strong light element can conceal its strong water element. Hence, I place this gem in your temporary safekeeping. To prevent mages from learning of its existence, never take it off. If they do, things will get problematic for you.

Severe Warning: DO NOT SELL THE GEM! I will look for you when I need it. If it is lost, you are dead.

Your dearest teacher.

And he still dares to say this gem is perfectly harmless... Although the gem itself won't explode, the mages it attracts specialize in blowing people up.

I really wanted to cry but no tears came out. I dared not defy Teacher, so I had no choice but to stuff the "Eternal Tranquility" under my clothes to hide it from the view of potential thieves.

After putting away the gem and the letter, I inspected my surroundings only to find that I was nowhere near the cave. I did not know where Teacher had taken me to and I was surrounded by trees, so how was I supposed to return to Leaf now?

My only option now was to sense the elements. I sighed. It was hard to believe that such a shocking and extraordinary ability, when in my possession, would be most useful when I get lost.

As I did not know how far away Leaf was, I extended my senses to the maximum. After a short while, I found him. The party was not too far away; so I could reach them in half a day's journey. This was quite surprising. Aldrizzt had probably used the Spell of Flight to transport me quite a distance while I was unconscious.

What I sensed after that was even more shocking. The dark element was very strong near Leaf and the others... Had they actually caught up with the dark knight?

Although I knew that no dark knight could defeat the Son of the God of War, I still had a bad feeling about it. Everybody's elements were unusually weak, a sign that they had used up a lot of strength. Only battling could consume so much of a warrior's strength.

In particular, Leaf's element of light was being depleted too quickly. This was not the speed one would lose power while using holy light...

A shiver ran down my spine. I put my hand in front of my chest and shouted, "Dragon's Saint Brigandine, as the descendent of the dragon, I command you, Activate!"

After putting on Dragon's Saint Brigandine, I sprinted towards Leaf and the others with the speed of the wind.

My sense of foreboding grew stronger when I sensed that Leaf was losing more and more light element. This spurred me on, and I leapt over one clump of bushes after another. My heart was beating so frantically that I felt like it would burst any second. My stitches throbbed so badly that I became numb to them. I took one deep breath after another, because if I did not do this, I could not continue doing such a vigorous

activity...

Hurry to Leaf's side! Hurry!

*

Wearing Dragon's Saint Brigandine, I finished half a day's journey in two hours of running. Before approaching Leaf and company, I removed Dragon's Saint Brigandine. Then I jumped out of the bushes and although my eyes immediately understood the situation, my heart still sank...

It was a large clearing long bereft of trees, surrounded by forest debris. The ground was charred and covered with potholes. It was obvious that a very intense battle had taken place here.

Mike was covered in wounds, his armor scratched and dented. He could barely even stand, and had to lean on a broken tree trunk for support. He seemed to be in a daze.

Ann sat on the ground, also staring blankly.

Austin was doing his best to cast Heal even though it was not in his area of expertise. The person he was trying to heal was Leaf... Leaf lay on his back, his bow beside him. But he was not holding the bow.

At this point, Mike and Austin noticed me. They raised their heads and looked at me with pale faces. Austin opened his mouth, but did not say anything. It was as if he no longer knew what to say.

As I walked over, I shifted my focus to Leaf's face. His eyes were closed, and he was clearly unconscious.

"Leaf?" I called gently.

He did not respond, but the three around him did. Ann choked, then collapsed to the ground, trying her best to suppress her sobs.

Why is she crying? There's no reason to cry...

I walked to Leaf's side and sensed that the light element in his body was flowing away bit by bit, gradually being replaced by the dark element.

Suddenly, common sense dawned on me.

The dark element could only encroach upon a holy knight when he had been corrupted, or after he was dead.

Leaf! A sharp pain ran throughout my body, as if my whole body were disintegrating starting with my heart...

Unable to look at Leaf anymore, I turned around, strode towards Mike, and grabbed him by the shoulders. I even felt like I could crush his shoulder armor. I said, trembling, "How could Leaf die? With you, the Son of the God of War, in the front lines, how could an archer in the back row die?"

If, if I find out that you had purposely let Leaf die, I will never forgive you!

Mike's face became even paler after I spoke. Flustered, he said, "We caught up with that dark knight and fought with them for a day and a night, and still could not defeat them... In the end, they bypassed us and only killed Elmy."

Austin shouted hurriedly, "Sun Knight, calm down. They—"

Although he said to calm down, Austin's voice trembled as he said, "When they departed, they left us a message for you ..."

I glared angrily at Austin, but could not ignore the numerous wounds all over his body. It was clear that the three of them had been in a tough fight. In fact, there were fewer wounds on Leaf than there were on Mike and Ann.

After Austin had taken several deep breaths, he said, "They said that even if you caught up with them, you could not possibly defeat them after you had used Resurrection. So, please do not go after them."

The color drained from my face. So, the only reason they killed Leaf was to delay me.

Although Mike and the others lost, they were strong enough that the enemy would also be heavily injured. If I went after them, I might really catch up... Wait! I hesitated for a moment. Why would the enemy fear me when I presented myself as a weakling?

I shook my head violently. I was too confused now to think clearly. No matter what, they would never have dared to kill Leaf if I could not use Resurrection.

Judging by that dark knight's strength, he must be a very important person in the Cathedral of the Shadow God. He actually dared to kill the Leaf Knight of the Church of the God of Light. If Leaf really remained dead, an all-out war between the Church of the God of Light and the Cathedral of the Shadow God would inevitably begin.

By now, I had already lost my will. I started to wonder... Why did Resurrection cause another crisis? Last time it nearly killed Adair, while this time it actually directly caused Leaf's death.

Is Resurrection...saving people, or killing them?

Once people know that they can be resurrected, do they begin to disregard life?

At this moment, Ann, who had been quiet for a long time, suddenly jumped up and screamed, "You have absolutely no reason to blame Mike. Where were you when we were fighting so hard? Where were you? Tell me!"

I let go of Mike and staggered two steps backward. Although I left them to act as a scout, I did not return immediately upon clarifying the situation. Instead, I hung out with Teacher and Aldrizzt for a few days.

"I thought that there would be no problem...With the combined strength of the Son of the God of War, a warpriest, and Leaf's archery, there is no way you would lose to a mere dark knight and a wind mage. How could you lose? How?"

I muttered to myself; making excuses, searching for a reason. If I did not do this, the first person I would kill as revenge for Leaf's death would most probably be... myself!

"They had a strong helper, an incredibly powerful one....." Austin began to hyperventilate, as if just by recalling that person, he had to consume an infinite amount of energy. He said weakly, "It was a shadowpriest."

“A shadowpriest.” The words struck my brain like lightning, and I understood instantly.

While clerics were specialists in healing and warpriests experts in supporting their allies, shadowpriests focused on offensive magic. Their attack style was very similar to that of necromancers. It could even be said that shadowpriests were evolved versions of necromancers. That is, necromancers with the aid of the Shadow God.

Luckily, shadowpriests were very, very few in number. They were so rare that even the Cathedral of the Shadow God dared not let them wander outside, so great would be their loss if even one died.

Austin murmured to himself, “That shadowpriest was unbelievably strong. How could the shadowpriest be so powerful? How...”

Mike said grimly, “That dark knight was also very strong. Maybe he was the representative of the Shadow God!”

I glanced at the Son of the God of War. He was indeed not involved in politics. He did not even know that the representative of the Shadow God was not a dark knight. But even if he weren't the representative, that dark knight was definitely an important person in the Cathedral of the Shadow God. Otherwise, it would be impossible for him to fight against the Son of the God of War for a day and a night.

But all those questions were unimportant... for now.

I took a deep breath and told the three of them, “I'm going to cast Resurrection.”

All three people stood there in a daze. Austin asked politely, “Do we have to leave?”

I shook my head and said, “No. I need your protection. Do not let anything get near me, not even a falling leaf!”

“Right!”

The three of them nodded resolutely. Among them, Austin's eyes were unusually bright. But there was nothing weird about that, because any

priest would have that expression on their face when they knew they were going to witness the execution of a top-level holy spell like Resurrection. If there were clerics of Light here, they would already be screaming and shouting in excitement.

I asked meticulously, "How long has Leaf been dead?"

"Approximately two hours," Austin replied accurately.

I nodded. I had ample time to cast the spell. I drew a large circle where Leaf lay, then turned to face the three of them. I said, "From now onwards, no matter what I do, do not talk to me. Also, don't ever let anything enter this circle."

All three of them nodded seriously once more. They stood up at the same time and formed a triangle outside the circle, using their actions to express their determination.

Seeing this, I relaxed. With these three people around, unless the dark knight and shadowpriest attacked again... I hesitated. Could this be their plan? Were they waiting for an opportunity to annihilate us while Leaf was being revived?

I examined Leaf. The cause of death was a thin blade that had pierced his heart. The wound was very small and precise. I was a little relieved by this. A shadowpriest should know that the more a corpse was damaged, the harder it would be to revive it. If their real intention had been to annihilate us, they would not have killed Leaf using such a precise wound.

Although I still had many misgivings, I no longer had the luxury of fretting over them. I unsheathed the Divine Sun Sword from my waist and, using the sword as a writing utensil, drew the magic circle used for resurrection.

After drawing the circle, I looked at Leaf in silence. Although he died a violent death, he appeared to be at peace. Other than the fact that his face was rather pale, one could not tell that he would never open his eyes again.

In fact, the edges of his lips were curled into a faint smile...

He had always been happy-go-lucky, so much that one could say he was resigned to whatever fate was drawn for him. Although the Leaf Knight was supposed to have this kind of personality, which member of the Twelve Holy Knights was not a hypocrite? Earth is neither honest nor sincere, and since when have I ever been a benevolent philanthropist?

“Speaking of Earth... As children, whenever we had an argument, you would always be the mediator. You would run to-and-fro between the two of us, using your smile to contradict our frowns, until we were willing to talk to each other once more.”

“There was one time when we would not reconcile no matter what. In the end, you stood between us and bawled your eyes out. You cried so miserably that even Judgment turned up and glared at Earth and me dangerously. Because of that, we had to forget about our argument and work together to console you and beg you to stop crying.”

I kept recalling past events, right to the very beginning...

“I remember the first time I saw you, you had a smile on your face. I may be able to smile more brilliantly than you, appearing more trustworthy. I may be able to smile a hundred times more attractively than you, but I could never smile as sincerely as you. Your smile was like that of a comfortable breeze...”

I remained silent for quite some time before saying, “Actually, I really hate your smile. Your smile feels like it is mocking me, mocking how fake my smile is. Isn't it ironic how people think I am a kind person, when the genuinely good person is you?”

“So, I loved to bully you. Even now I am bullying you... But you always refused to get angry. Is it so difficult to yell at me even once? In the end, the only rebellious thing you ever did was driving nails into voodoo dolls!”

I growled uncontrollably, “Why must you be so kind! You idiot!”

I kept recollecting the past, remembering... until my face was wet with tears. Drop by drop, my tears fell on the ground beside Leaf's feet. I cried until I had no other wish than to see Leaf open his eyes again.

Leaf, I will not let you die. I will also not let you revive with any flaws! I will never let you be revived as anything less than perfect! Never!

I closed my eyes and resisted the urge to cry. I raised my head to look at the sky, the untouchable sun and the unseen God of Light.

Slowly, I opened my mouth. Every word and every sentence I said was clear and distinct.

“Oh God of Light! Please listen to my repentance, and listen to my stupidity. I declared that the holy knights were the most important to the Sun Knight. I declared that all the holy knights were mine, and that nobody is allowed to harm them. However, I abandoned Elmairy Leaf when he was in danger. I failed to fulfill my responsibilities as a comrade, and I was not beside him...”

I took a deep breath and prayed, “All this is my fault. No words can express my deep sin. I am willing to pay any price. I only beg you not to take Elmairy Leaf back to your side.”

“Oh God of Light! I swear to you, I am willing to pay any price to see Elmairy Leaf open his eyes once more. Please use the blood in my left arm to move his left arm. Please use the blood in my right arm to move his right arm...”

I pressed the sharp edge of the Divine Sun Sword to my left arm, letting my blood flow along the blade, finally dripping onto Leaf’s left arm. Next was his right arm, both legs...

Only when Leaf’s entire body was covered in my blood did I begin the next step of the ritual... I ran the Divine Sun Sword through the fatal wound in his heart.

Then, I knelt down and looked to the sky with both arms raised, praying to the faraway, unseen God of Light...

Please return a complete and perfect Leaf to me. For that, I can pay any price.

Please return a complete Leaf to me.

Return him to me!

I bowed my head down and slowly gripped the Divine Sun Sword. Holy light radiated from my body and concentrated on the sword. From the Divine Sun Sword, the holy light spread throughout Leaf's body, chasing away the dark element that had gathered inside his body. At last, Leaf's body was filled with so much holy light that he could barely be seen through the sphere of light.

I did my best and maintained this position for a long, long time...

To preserve my consciousness for the following ritual, I ended the transfer of holy light while I still had some left. I stood up and slowly removed the Divine Sun Sword. As I pulled the sword out, the fatal sword wound was healed by the remaining holy light.

Finally, when the Divine Sun Sword had left Leaf's body, I tossed it aside. Without delay, I slammed the holy light in my palm onto the part of Leaf's chest where his heart was.

At this moment, Leaf inhaled sharply and his body arched like a bow. His body convulsed repeatedly as he coughed violently. From his expression, I could tell that he was in great pain.

Seeing this, I heaved a sigh of relief. I nearly cried. At least, Leaf had revived.

After coughing for a while, Leaf summoned enough energy to face me and say, "S-Sun..."

I stared at Leaf. Good, he appeared to be sound and his voice seemed normal. From his general appearance, nothing seemed to be missing.

That's great...

My vision turned black, and my consciousness faded. My last sensation before I fainted was of falling to the side...

*

"Sun..."

When I regained consciousness, my first impression was that someone

was calling my name. That person helped me up. I turned my head to see who it was, but everything was pitch black. Maybe I hadn't opened my eyes?

I blinked. No, my eyes were definitely open.

"Sun?"

I heard Leaf's voice. It was very close... I turned my head to face him, but could not see him through the darkness. Damn! How was I supposed to confirm if Leaf had any side effects from being revived?

I frowned and felt around for the source of the voice with my hands. I touched Leaf's face. It did not feel any different from a normal person's face. I sighed with relief. At least, there was nothing wrong with the most important part, his face.

"Sun..."

At this moment, Leaf's voice trembled as he said, "Your eyes..."

I was stunned for a moment. Only then did I remember, my eyes...

Some time passed, during which, Leaf gasped many times and even cast Heal on me repeatedly. At last, I heard the sounds of choking. It was obvious he was so panicky he no longer knew what to do...

Finally, I smiled as I told him, "I'm fine now. When I woke up, my vision blacked out temporarily. I was probably just too tired. Sorry for scaring you."

On hearing my words, Leaf started breathing more rapidly. He asked anxiously, "Sun, tell me how many fingers I'm holding up?"

I was silent for a while.

Almost bursting into tears, Leaf said, "Sun..."

I snickered and laughed. "Hahaha! It's two. Look how anxious you are. I really was too tired just now, so my vision blacked out for a moment."

Leaf spaced out for a moment, then shouted uncontrollably, "You! You nearly scared me to death! Haven't you repented your sins? I thought you

would never bully me again.”

So he heard it... Damn! Embarrassment turned into anger, and I said, “I did repent, but I never said that I would not do it again!”

Leaf sniffed as he yelled, “You really are... Did you know how worried I was? I’m really mad at you.”

Good! This ought to count as a roar of anger, right? Deep down, I was overjoyed. After so many years, the “Make Leaf Angry” plan had finally borne fruit! This was so touching.

“Okay, that’s enough! Let’s stop playing and chase the dark knight who dared to kill you. Mike and the rest of you, please come here quickly. I will heal your wounds!”

I picked up the Divine Sun Sword and laughed boisterously as I stood up, planning to walk toward Mike and the rest. However, I did not notice the pothole next to my feet. I missed my footing and stumbled two steps forward. If I had not been gripping my sword tightly, I would have fallen down.

There was silence all around.

I quickly straightened and smiled as I said, “Why are you guys so quiet? Performing Resurrection is very tiring. My legs gave way, that’s all.”

“Sun...”

Leaf interrupted me and choked, “Sun, you can’t see anymore, right? Don’t lie to me. And don’t chase that dark knight’s group just to let them slash at your eyes so that you can hide that fact. I know what you are thinking. Don’t do that, please...”

I fell silent for a while, and then I forced a smile and said, “What nonsense are you spouting? I saw that you were holding up two fingers! How could a blind person see that? You are really dumb, Leaf.”

Leaf suddenly grabbed my hands and squeezed them tightly. He sniveled and begged, “Please...”

I said plainly, “I am not blind, Leaf. You are thinking too much.”

“Cut the crap.” At this point, Mike growled impatiently, “Sun, how many fingers is this?”

I paused for a moment, and then replied, “One.”

Mike asked again, “What about this?”

“Do you take me for an idiot?!” Upset, I said, “Neither of your hands are even raised!”

Mike muttered a few phrases under his breath. He then said, “Elmy, stop crying. He really isn’t blind!”

Leaf sounded confused as he said, “I don’t understand.....”

I reassured him, “You were just revived, so it can’t be helped if your mind is a little disoriented. Don’t think too hard and sleep as much as you can first. Don’t worry, if you do not want us to chase the dark knight, then we won’t. This is just as well, since you need a good rest and I am also worn out from performing Resurrection. Let us return to the nearby Forest Leaf Town to rest.”

I did not hear Leaf’s response, so I asked him, “Is that okay?”

However, the three of them remained silent. I could not figure out what was going on, yet did not dare to open my mouth recklessly. After a while, Leaf said gently, “Sun, I just nodded.”

I spoke plainly, “My apologies, I didn’t notice. I ran here like mad, and then performed Resurrection, so I am very tired. I only want to rest. Stop imagining things, otherwise I will worry whether or not Resurrection had any side effects, such as hallucination, for example.”

Leaf fell silent for a while. He then said, “Okay, let us rest before deciding what to do. Let me carry you to town!”

“No.” I said wearily, “You were just revived. Don’t force yourself to do anything. You are more in need of rest than I am.”

At this moment, Mike interrupted, “I’ll carry you. Let Ann carry Leaf.”

Upon hearing this, my impression of Mike improved significantly. I nodded in appreciation and cast Minor Heal on both Mike and Ann.

Although it did not make much of a difference, and Austin was still heavily injured, I was powerless to do more.

After crawling on Mike's back, I slept like a log. On the way to town, I woke up a few times but was so dizzy I fell asleep again soon after.

At last, we reached Forest Leaf Town. I finally got off the rock-hard back and lay on a soft bed. I had a vague impression of Leaf and the others asking me something, but I hadn't heard clearly. Offhandedly, I told them to decide for themselves, then rolled over and ignored them. Only when I was so hungry that I could not bear it did I call for them. I was comfortably fed. After that, I lay down again and slept.

Chapter 8: Eighth Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “The Must-Have Plot Point for Every Adventure – King vs King”

When I opened my eyes again, the first thought that I had was... Why have I been opening my eyes after fainting so often these days?

“I knew it. Who said a groomsman wouldn’t have to escape for his life... When I return home, I’m definitely going to ask the Pope for compensation!”

I crawled up with a sour expression, mostly because I hadn’t eaten and my stomach was killing me. Even though I knew that I could call for someone, I hadn’t moved for so long that my body was already starting to feel stiff. I feared that if I kept going on like this, I would no longer be a pig, but could instead be buried and rest in peace.

I walked to the door, but just as I was about to push it open, I heard some shouting right outside. I stopped and quietly pressed my ear to the door. Immediately, I recognized Leaf and Ann’s voices. They seemed to be arguing... Unbelievable, to think that Leaf could actually argue with someone?

Leaf lowered his voice and growled, “What is with you and Princess Alice? Princess Alice actually attacked us that day, and your reaction was very strange as well.”

Ack! Oh, how my heart beats in fright. Who knew that Leaf could yell at someone, and a princess at that? Is he planning on changing his profession as a good guy?

“None of this is any of your business!” Ann’s shriek was even louder than Leaf’s.

“None of my business?” Leaf’s voice started to shake, and it seemed like he was about to snap. “How can you say that it’s none of my business when Sun has been unconscious for so long because of you guys?!”

Ann retorted, "I bet he's only asleep!"

Slap!

Ann's voice sounded like she was stunned. "You, you hit me..."

Yet Leaf's voice was cold. "Don't insult Sun. Next time, it won't be just a slap. I will directly challenge you to a duel. I don't care even if you are a princess, Princess Ann."

I was so surprised that my mouth stretched to form an "O"... Did Leaf just... slap the princess? Oh my God of Light! Please don't tell me that the side effect of the resurrection has turned him into a bad guy?

Doesn't this mean I can't make fun of him anymore in the future? God of Light, you are really too cruel! Bullying Leaf was one of the few delights of my life, yet You actually have the heart to deprive me of that!

"I'm sorry Leaf, I didn't mean it." Ann choked with sobs and said while blowing her nose, "I didn't know that my sister Alice would attack us, and that they would even go as far as to kill you. I just wanted to help her elope with her beloved. I never wanted to hurt you and Sun, you have to believe me."

Both parties stayed silent for some time, broken only by the sound of Ann's sobs. Finally, Leaf sighed and then said, "I understand, and I'm sorry for hitting you earlier. I was just too worried about Sun, so I acted impulsively for a moment. Please forgive me."

He forgave her so easily. Looks like Leaf's still a nice guy! I'm sorry, God of Light, I misunderstood you.

At this, Ann stammered, "Le-Leaf, actually, I have a magic device for tracking my sister. It can be used to teleport someone to my sister's side just once... I'm sorry! Don't scold me!"

Silence fell for a good while outside, and then Leaf stammered, "It's too dangerous to go after them. Mike and Austin have gone for reinforcements. After Sun and I leave, tell them and let them decide."

"Why should I wait until after you and Sun leave? Are you not coming

with us?” Ann’s voice sounded very desperate.

“No!” Leaf said with unusual steel in his voice. “We must not let Sun know about this, promise me!”

“Why? If you don’t tell me, then I won’t promise you.”

“You don’t know him... ugh! Your sister and her companion shouldn’t have killed me. If we let Sun know that there’s a way to find Alice, he won’t let them off the hook. Your sister will be in danger too, so you have to promise me, you cannot mention this matter to Sun before we leave.”

Ann said somewhat dubiously, “We couldn’t even beat them, so someone as weak as Sun... I mean, he’s not that strong, right? Leaf, don’t get angry. I’m not deliberately making fun of him!”

“He’s not that strong, haha!”

Leaf said very helplessly, “If that were the case, then why would our third shared rule be, ‘No matter how pathetic the Sun Knight looks, never ruffle his feathers?’”

Having heard all this, I thought for a bit and then walked back to lie on my bed. Then, rubbing my eyes and acting as if I had just gotten up, I yelled, “Leaf? Leaf! I’m dying of hunger!”

Leaf pushed open the door and exclaimed happily, “Sun, you’re awake?”

“Awake enough to feel hungry, what do you think?” I said moodily.

Leaf chuckled and asked cheerfully, “How does eating some congee sound?”

I quickly replied, “No, I want to eat meat.”

“But you just woke up, and if you eat something hard to digest, I’m afraid...”

I rolled my eyes and couldn’t help saying, “Leaf, save it, you are not Judgment. And besides, you are a good guy, so I’m not afraid of you. If I say I want meat, then I’m having meat.”

Leaf stayed silent for a bit and finally said anxiously, “Fine, I will tell the

kitchen to chop up the meat into little pieces to make meat soup for you.”

Leaf wasted no time and came back in the blink of an eye, carrying the soup. As I was feasting on the soup, Leaf explained the situation to me, even though I had actually overheard everything already. Basically, Mike and Austin had left to ask for backup, and since I was unconscious, Leaf and Ann had stayed behind to protect me.

Leaf said, “Sun, I also asked them to contact the Church of the God of Light, so I think the Church will be sending someone over.”

I hope that that someone isn’t Judgment. I nodded at Leaf and swallowed the last bit of meat soup.

With the sweet aroma of the meat soup gone, I vaguely smelt some kind of foul smell. Wait, it can’t be... I lowered my head to smell myself and almost died from the odor. I had turned into [Supreme Stinky Knight](#).

I frowned and exclaimed, “Leaf, I smell awful! Buy a set of new clothes for me. Also... Princess Ann.”

When Ann, who had been standing quietly, heard me calling her, she paused before asking, “What?”

“Can you please get me a bucket of hot water?” I asked insipidly.

Ann did not answer, but Leaf immediately said warmly, “Sorry for the inconvenience, Ann. I will go buy some clothes for Sun.”

At this time, Ann finally answered, albeit in a grudging tone of voice. “Fine!”

I ordered Leaf, “They have to be white, and also, get the seamstresses to sew on the Sun emblem too. Didn’t you say that someone from the Church is coming? I can’t bear to look disrespectful in front of everyone.”

Leaf hesitated and then said with a nod, “Okay.”

Leaf left to buy my clothes. Not a moment later, Ann came in with a bucket of hot water, and set it down with a thud. With a dissatisfied tone, she said, “Here! I will leave now.”

“Wait.” I felt the water and said dully, “The water’s too hot.”

Ann was probably either feeling guilty, or she was doing this for Leaf's sake. Either way, although she was unhappy, she was still completely obedient and knelt down to feel the water upon hearing my words.

I smirked, and summoned the water element...

Instantly, the bucket of bath water combined together with the water element I summoned, wrapping onto Ann's body like a chain. She froze momentarily and then started to struggle right after, trying to break free of those water chains. However, water has no form, so all she could do was pass through the streams of water with her fists. Finally, I froze all the water all at once, with Ann stuck in the middle of those icicles, unable to move.

"Impossible! How can a basic freezing spell trap me?" Ann shrieked while she struggled ferociously. However, the ice around her body showed no signs of breaking.

I replied with a smile, "According to my knowledge of magic, a basic level spell plus a basic level spell is equal to an intermediate level spell, so I repeated the same freezing spell over and over again five times. I wonder, what level of magic is it now? But no matter what, that ice is no more fragile than the sword on your body, so you'll just hurt yourself if you keep on struggling."

After saying this, I smiled and reached my hand inside Ann's clothes...

"Y-you!" Ann's voice sounded like she was close to tears as she shouted, "Stop right now or I will yell!"

Hearing that, I casually used Whirlwind, letting the wind spiral along the walls in order to block off all sound. I whispered to Ann, "Hah! Go ahead, but too bad, even if you scream until your voice becomes hoarse, no one will hear you."

Her voice shook heavily as she spoke, "L-Leaf is going to be back soon. He won't let you do this!"

I answered nonchalantly, "He has to wait for them to sew on the Sun emblem, so he's not going to be back for a while."

“So you planned this in advance!” Ann screamed. “You despicable bastard!”

Why do all princesses like to call me a despicable bastard?

I ignored her screams, and took out a flat box a little smaller than the palm of my hand from her secret pocket. A fragrant smell overflowed as I opened it, and when I touched the inside of the box, it felt like some kind of ointment. Maybe it was some kind of perfume cream for girls.

Immediately, Ann stopped crying, and she sounded utterly astonished as she spoke, “How did you know...”

She suddenly stopped, and I finished the sentence for her, “How did I know that this is the magical object that you used to track Princess Alice, right?”

“You, you...” Ann sounded frightened and distressed, “So you have been hiding your abilities all this time.”

I sneered. Of course. No matter what, I am still the Sun Knight, so I couldn't really be completely useless, right?

“You are too scary.” Ann's voice shook as she continued, “You concealed your swordsmanship stance and footwork so well, and even pretended that you can't even run a mile without panting to death. Acting just like someone who can't use a sword, someone with terrible stamina...so all of this was just a farce!”

Ann laughed and said calmly, “But, you won't be able to activate this magical object, heh, heh... Ack!”

I used a Wind Blade to slice open Ann's skin, letting her blood drip inside the box.

“H-how did you know...?” Ann's voice sounded like she was about to cry again.

I rolled my eyes. Pink had almost as many magical devices as she did lollipops, and I had basically rolled about in those since I was small, so a small device like this could hardly stump me.

As Ann's blood dripped down, I heard the sound of a click. The bottom of the box flipped open to reveal a hidden compartment. There was a very tiny magic circle inside. I touched it, noting that it was very detailed and was probably very rare. Still, Pink had loads of these kinds of things in her house.

Then, I raised my head and said to Ann, "These chains will shatter in half an hour after I leave. If you don't want some stranger to take advantage of you, then I suggest you don't scream and attract people over! If you do attract a bad guy, then you'll just have to suffer through it! Also, when Leaf comes back, tell him that I will exact justice for him."

Without waiting for Ann to answer, I injected the wind element into the magic circle, which expanded all of a sudden and engulfed my entire body, taking me to where Princess Alice was.

*

When I felt that I had teleported to the destination, I immediately yelled, "Dragon's Saint Brigandine! In the name of the descendants of Dragons, I command thee, activate!"

"[Sister?](#)"

It was a woman's voice. She wore robe-like clothes, and the wind element around her body was surging. This had to be Princess Alice, and she was even a wind mage.

She was very close to me, just two steps away, so I hurriedly stepped forward and grabbed her, yelling, "Don't move!"

Apparently, she was not very obedient, immediately wanting to counter with wind magic. Unfortunately for her, I interfered with her magic. Although I didn't know advanced magic, even Aldrizzt, that hundred-year old mage, had bluntly said that he couldn't compare with me over the ability of gathering elements.

She gasped in surprise, "Y-you are not an assassin, you are a mage!"

"No to both. I am a holy knight." I said coldly, "Are you blind? Can't you see the shining Divine Sun Sword in my hands? I am the Sun Knight!"

After saying all that in one breath, I had to admit that I'd been wanting to scream for a long time, "I am a holy knight! Not a cleric, but a holy knight, holy knight, holy knight (insert a hundred more echoes)!"

Now that I had actually said it, it felt so good that if the situation had allowed it, I might have been overcome with the impulse to cry!

"The Sun Knight? How is that possible?" Alice asked with a shaky voice.

"Alice!"

Just then, the dark knight hurriedly rushed over. The amount of light element overflowing from me must have grabbed his attention. He quickly sprinted our way at lightning speed.

"Hold it right there!"

I firmly grabbed the princess, pressing the Divine Sun Sword tightly against her neck. I then coldly addressed the dark knight, "You don't care about this woman's life anymore?"

The dark knight's footsteps slowed, but didn't stop. I pressed the Divine Sun Sword a bit tighter against the princess's neck, causing her to gasp.

"Stop!" the dark knight finally stilled, and yelled out, "You can't hurt her, she's a princess!"

I laughed for a good while, and pressed my blade even harder against the princess's neck, though she restrained herself from making any noise this time. "Are you sure?" I asked mockingly.

The dark knight said with a shaky voice, "You are a knight, and you're even the Sun Knight whom the entire continent knows. You wouldn't hurt a woman. That would ruin your reputation. You wouldn't do that..."

I laughed and asked, "Then, do you know what 'the whole continent knows' the Sun Knight hates the most?"

"Undead creatures," he answered reflexively.

I barked out, "Wrong! What the Sun Knight hates the most is seeing his holy knights get killed!"

After yelling, I collected my agitated feelings and said calmly, "From this moment onwards, I warn you, if you dare to move, I will cut off this woman's hand. And the more you move, the more bits of her I get to chop off."

Both Alice and the dark knight didn't budge an inch, nor utter a word. Maybe I had scared them or something, but that didn't matter. I then summoned a large amount of water element and froze it into a dozen or so icicles which floated around the dark knight's proximity. Sure enough, he did not move even a single hair despite all this.

Instead, it was the Princess Alice in my arms who started to scream, "You despicable bastard! Eagle, don't listen to him! He wouldn't dare!"

Now I became certain that every princess in the world only had one way of insulting others, and that was calling them a despicable bastard. There was no other insult.

With a neutral tone, I said to the dark knight, "I forgot to tell you, but activating your battle aura also counts as moving."

After I spoke, more than ten icicles flew toward his torso and limbs, causing a succession of cracking sounds, but he didn't move an inch even under heavy attack. He forced himself to withstand the attacks without moving, which in turn caused his injuries to worsen. I heard the sound of several bones shattering.

"Eagle..." Alice almost fainted, her legs no longer supporting her. The only thing that kept her upright was me.

"You can move now," I said indifferently.

At this time, the dark knight finally slipped to the ground slowly. I then launched the largest icicle and smashed it into his back ruthlessly.

"Umph!" He tried to stifle a groan.

What a proud knight. I admired him somewhat, as I was sure that that last blow had probably broken a lot of his ribs, but he didn't so much as cry out.

I let go of Princess Alice and warned her leisurely, “Don’t even think about using magic on me, or I will help disinfect and sterilize your dark knight using Hell’s Fire. I guarantee you that he’ll be so clean that there won’t even be any ashes left over after that.”

Alice shoved me hard and immediately ran to her dark knight’s side, crying out loud when she saw his injuries. Although the dark knight was wounded gravely and was most likely in a semi-unconscious state, he still quietly soothed the princess. All I heard was, “I am fine, don’t cry,” over and over.

At this, I couldn’t help but start chuckling. We had wanted to save her, but I don’t think that they thought of this quest the same way we did. This is too absurd. What do they mean when they say that knights save princesses... the princess might not necessarily even want to be saved! To her, we were actually the bad guys trying to tear her and her lover apart, right?

“You made one mistake,” I said coldly, “and that was killing Leaf! If you hadn’t killed him, I might have considered not separating you. However, at this point I don’t plan to break you two up. You can go to hell together!”

Silence fell before Alice murmured to herself, “You are going to kill us? How can this be...”

“Why not?” I smirked, “The second you killed the Leaf Knight, you should have known that the Sun Knight would chase you to the ends of the world for revenge!”

Hearing this, she exclaimed in alarm, “I am a princess!”

“Oh, really?” I questioned in a soft, gentle tone. “But I don’t see any princesses. I only see a kidnapper and his accomplice.”

Alice’s breathing turned ragged, and she shook as she replied, “Sun Knight, if you kill me, my mother will not let you or the Church of the God of Light get away with it!”

Unconcerned, I retorted, “Oh? But I’m an assassin, and I see no Sun Knight. Do you?”

Alice sobbed, and tried to carry the nearly unconscious dark knight, as if wanting to escape with him.

However, her strength wasn't anywhere close to being enough to move a man, especially when the man was wearing armor. Still, she refused to give up, and tried to drag him to safety with all her might.

Seeing them like this, my heart's berserker state diminished by half, and I found it difficult to proceed with the tortures I had in my mind a second ago. Had I known this earlier, I never would have wounded that dark knight so much. If he had had the strength to retaliate, then I probably could have held onto my fury, but now I couldn't even do that.

With my enthusiasm waning, I said, "Fine, I will give you a slightly less painful death."

I gathered the dark element, planning to use what Aldrizzt had once used, "Encroaching Death," as it could kill someone silently and painlessly...

"Sun, stop!" A shout came from the sky.

At the same time, I felt the dark element I had summoned in my hands being dispelled.

I raised my head. The opponent was wearing a cloak-like garment, and even though their leaking dark aura wasn't strong, they gave me a sense of deep mystery. That aura, I had felt it only on one other person before... No! I shouldn't say person. She hadn't been a person for a long time.

Clenching my fists, I squeezed my words through my teeth, "Pink, so when you said that you moved, you meant that you moved to the Cathedral of the Shadow God?"

Chapter 9: Ninth Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “Bring the Princess Back to the Castle”

That person fell silent for a while, but did not deny the name I had shouted or the words I had spoken. Then, softly, she said, “Sun, release that girl. I was the one who killed Leaf. You should come at me instead.”

I coldly replied, “The weapon that killed Leaf was the rapier of a dark knight.”

“I told him to do it,” she admitted frankly, and further explained, “If we hadn’t killed him, we wouldn’t have been able to escape your pursuit.”

Upon hearing that, I said, through gritted teeth, “I thought you understood me.”

Pink let out a peal of laughter that tinkled like silver bells, and responded, “It’s because I understand you so well that I killed Leaf. Even if you had known that Resurrection could’ve been used within eight hours of death, during which you could have probably healed the Son of the God of War and company, brought them with you to defeat us, and then resurrect Leaf, you definitely wouldn’t have done so. In your eyes, there is nothing more important than your fellow holy knights, not even a princess.”

“Then you should know,” I burst out furiously, “that anyone who kills my holy knights must die!”

Pink fell silent for a long time, and then said, in a sincere tone, “Don’t fight me, Sun. You should know what I am. I can’t die. It’s pointless even if you kill this body.”

Indeed, I knew that Pink was a lich.

I have mentioned witches before, and one could almost say that a lich is an advanced version of a [witch](#), an evil creature that humans transform themselves into for various reasons. However, a witch can still die, while a lich is more or less immortal. Liches abandon their own flesh, place their

“life” in a safe place, and then control various kinds of objects to use as a body.

Compared to a witch, a lich is incomparably stronger. In the first place, to be able to successfully complete the ceremony for transforming into a lich, one had to have been an extremely powerful mage or cleric even before one’s rebirth as a lich. On top of that, they achieved immortality upon dying. One could say that becoming his or her enemy is the most unwise course of action, because nobody would want to have to face off with a powerful lich who knows nothing of death.

Even if I killed Pink, the most I would accomplish would be the destruction of her current body, and she could simply search for a new one.

I took a deep breath, and said, “Then, on account of our former friendship, I will just kill the dark knight.”

Looking slightly embarrassed, Pink said, “Don’t kill him either, Sun. He is the ‘Silent Eagle,’ meaning he is the head among the Dark Knights of the Cathedral of the Shadow God. As the Sun Knight of the Church of the God of Light, you must have heard of this title before.”

I had indeed heard of it before. Although the Silent Eagle was not the spokesperson for the Cathedral of the Shadow God, he was the de facto administrator of affairs... Bastard! Shouldn’t administrators be really busy? Why did he have the free time to come accost a princess?

Pink continued, “If you kill him, your problems will only increase. Even though the Cathedral of the Shadow God may not necessarily be stronger than the Church of the God of Light, they are an extremely vengeful lot. When the time comes, they may not be able to kill you, but they will definitely find a chance to kill one of the Twelve Holy Knights in retribution. You wouldn’t want to see another one of the Twelve Holy Knights lose their life, right?”

I responded indifferently, “You keep going on about ‘them’ and ‘theirs.’ Are you saying that you’re not a member of the Cathedral of the Shadow God?”

Pink snorted and answered with disdain, “Who would count themselves among their own servants?”

Upon hearing that, I furrowed my brows, not really understanding the meaning behind Pink’s words. However, I had the feeling that I was very close to coming upon a great secret of the Cathedral of the Shadow God. Yet I had no desire to tread these dangerous waters; as Pink had already said, the Cathedral of the Shadow God was a vengeful lot, and knowing their secret was not necessarily a good thing.

After a few moments of consideration, I turned around and gave the dark knight a kick. He let out a moan as he regained consciousness. I asked him, “Your name?”

The dark knight raised his head and glanced first at Pink, who was floating in midair, before directing his gaze at me. After a while, he replied, “I don’t have a name. The moment I became the Silent Eagle, I no longer had a name. As the one who defeated me, perhaps you would be willing to give me a name?”

I was stunned. Defeated him? Threatening him with a hostage also counts?

This dark knight of the Cathedral of the Shadow God is so strange... I laughed grimly and then said, “Then you will be called Awaitsun! I won’t kill you now, but eventually I’ll have you pay the price for daring to stab a blade into the chest of one of the Twelve Holy Knights... Just you wait! The Cathedral of the Shadow God may be vindictive, but this Sun Knight is ten times more vengeful!”

“Awaitsun... Alright, from now on I will be called Awaitsun.” Awaitsun nodded and actually accepted the name I gave him.

I ignored this odd dark knight and spoke toward the sky, “Pink, will you return to Leaf Bud City?”

“I will have to return sooner or later,” Pink replied with unexpected honesty. “I have matters to take care of there, so I must go back.”

I nodded my head and then abruptly infused a large amount of holy light

into the Divine Sun Sword and shot it straight into the sky, where it unerringly pierced through the petite figure floating in midair.

Pink gave a suppressed gasp, and, in a pained voice, she muttered, “Sun, you...”

I coolly said to her, “I’m tired of looking at a little girl. Go change into another body and then come back.”

Her body slowly began to dissolve into ashes, and with a bitter smile she said, “A body that is to be used for a long time has to undergo very long and extensive treatment...You really are vengeful.”

I nodded and said, “It’s fine as long as you know. Next time you will learn to be more obedient. In any case, do not touch my holy knights.”

Pink muttered, “If I had known that you would catch up with us, I would never have ruffled your feathers... After all the trouble I went through, what did I gain in the end? Where am I supposed to go to find a body now? Sigh... Awaitsun, you’ve really caused me a lot of grief this time around!”

“My deepest apologies,” Awaitsun responded, and despite the injuries that covered his body, he still proceeded to kneel and bow his head to the ground.

This surprised me greatly. It seemed like Pink’s standing in the Cathedral of the Shadow God was very high after all.

Pink waved away his apologies with surprising generosity, saying, “Oh well, never mind that, give the princess to Sun. You can return to the Cathedral of the Shadow God and honorably ask the queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid for the princess’ hand in marriage. After everything that’s happened, I doubt that the Son of the God of War will still want to marry your Alice.”

“But...” Awaitsun said with some concern.

Pink interrupted him, “Don’t worry, after knowing that you and I were the ones who killed Leaf, he will not kill the princess. Even though that guy looks nothing like a knight, deep, deep down he still has at least that

wee bit of knighthood... Right? At least, I would think so.”

With that, Pink completely dissolved into ashes.

I rolled my eyes at the spot where she had disappeared. If you're going to die, hurry up and get on with it! Who knew you had so much rubbish to spout...and you, a lich, the most evil of all creatures, even went out of your way to remind this Sun Knight about observing knighthood! Is there no longer any differentiation between good and evil in this world?!

At this point, Awaitsun stood in front of Alice's body and actually kneeled before me, begging, “Sir, please don't kill Alice. It was I who killed the Leaf Knight. Everything was my doing.”

“No!” Alice immediately rushed before Awaitsun, used her slim body to shield him, and pleaded, “Please don't kill him. Kill me instead. Everything was my fault; I shouldn't have run away from home. I beg of you, don't kill Eagle!”

Awaitsun immediately wrapped his arms around the princess, determined to protect her, but she struggled desperately to free herself. In a tortured voice, he shouted, “Alice! Don't be like this.”

“Eagle!” Alice cried tearfully, “I can't go on if you die. Even if you protect me, it'll be useless.”

“Alice...” said Awaitsun, his voice racked by sobs. Before the power of love, even an emotionless dark knight could shed tears.

Finding myself faced with these two, who had sobbed themselves into a sorry mess, I was a bit flabbergasted. Never in my life had I imagined I'd be hearing these lines, which sounded as though they'd been plucked straight out of some ultra-classic romance drama. And why did I feel like I was the big bad villain, bent on ripping apart tragic lovers with brute force?

Are you kidding me? I'm the knight who came to rescue the princess, remember?!

My lord, the three hours of transformation are up. Do you wish to provide more blood to maintain the transformation?

I answered Dragon's Saint Brigandine rather weakly, "No. In one month, I've already transformed three times. If this goes on any longer, I really will have anemia. That said, even if I were to continue my transformation, this sniveling duo makes it rather impossible for anyone to muster a killing intent."

After coming out of my transformation, the first thing I did was threaten other people.

"The two of you are forbidden to reveal my real identity. You are also prohibited from speaking about my assassin's disguise, or else..."

Alice was probably already frightened to death of me. She tightly hugged her beloved and wildly shouted, "I'll do anything as long as you don't kill Eagle!"

Before hearing the dark knight's answer, I took a moment to sense my surroundings and realized that the dark element emanating from his body was draining away very quickly. It appeared that his wounds were in a really serious condition. If I let him go like this, there is a very good chance he will die on his way back, heh...

I performed Ultimate Heal and healed most of the dark knight's injuries.

Probably because they were shocked by my kindness, Awaitsun and Alice kept silent. Taking care to maintain an air of mystery about me, I said unconcernedly, "Scram. I will escort your princess back to her mother's side without harming a single hair on her head."

Awaitsun hesitated, reluctant to leave. Very cautiously, he asked, "If I had moved back then, would you really have cut off the princess' hand?"

"I would have. Otherwise, you would have done the same to me," I promptly responded.

Awaitsun fell silent and seemed like he had no intention of leaving.

I continued, "However, after using the princess to incapacitate you and then beating you to a pulp, I would have rejoined her hand with the rest of her arm."

At this, Awaitsun gave a long sigh and said, “I believe you, [sir](#).”

There’s nothing wrong with believing me, but what’s with the “sir?” Why are you showing me so much respect? A bit overwhelmed, I wondered, This guy isn’t putting me up on a pedestal to venerate as some kind of lifetime enemy or something, is he?

Awaitsun said to the princess, “Alice, wait for me, for I will definitely go to request your hand in marriage.”

In a tone suggesting that she had been deeply wronged, Alice replied, “But didn’t you say that the Silent Eagle could never marry? We eloped because the Cathedral would not allow you to propose marriage...”

Awaitsun gave a laugh and said, “Since ‘that person’ has already told me to propose to you, no one in the Cathedral will dare to say otherwise.”

That person? Is he referring to Pink? I furrowed my brow again. Who exactly is Pink, anyway?

Afterward, the two young lovers expressed their undying passion for one another, even bidding each other [the whole eighteen miles worth of farewells](#), yet still they would not part. Their antics really made me want to go over and give each of them a nice slice of the sword and send them off to the highest lovers’ heaven of till-death-do-us-part.

I viciously growled, “Awaitsun, if you don’t hurry and go heal the rest of your injuries, you’ll lose so much blood that you won’t even last long enough to propose marriage.”

With that, Alice hurriedly urged her beloved to go, and only then did Awaitsun finally leave.

Alice continued to watch the back of her beloved, and only after what felt like centuries was she willing to turn around to tentatively ask, “Are we going to fly back now?”

“You think I can fly?” I demanded in an ill-humored tone. I sized Alice up and asked, “What level mage are you?”

“Advanced,” Alice answered timidly.

It seemed as though she had already taken me to be some sort of terrible ferocious beast. Her personality was also vastly different from Ann's. Even if Ann was frightened by me, she would sooner confront me head on, ax in hand, than remain cowering in fear.

I smiled faintly. "Very good. Then, before Leaf and the rest arrive, you will teach me everything you know about wind magic."

"Teach you?" Alice asked, shocked. "What do I know that I can teach you? Your magic is much more powerful than mine!"

I couldn't very well say that, in fact, other than the dark magic Aldrizzt had taught me, I didn't know a single incantation, could I? Besides, I couldn't be sure that she wouldn't sneak up on me while I wasn't paying attention and use her magic to blast me to heaven.

I mulled things over, and, taking note of the fact that she was scared witless of me, deliberately adopted a most unpleasant demeanor and bellowed, "What are you asking so many questions for? I'm telling you to teach, so that's exactly what you'll do!"

Trembling, Alice squeaked a small "Yes." She sounded for all the world like a pathetic stepdaughter being abused by her stepmother.

But I don't want to be an evil stepmother, I thought with dismay. How did a knight rescuing a princess turn into a stepmother abusing her stepdaughter?

I'm a holy knight, not a stepmother!

Alice sobbed as she pleaded, "P-please don't get angry, I will properly teach you, I won't ask about anything, I won't ask any questions ever again, sob sob...Eagle! I'm so scared..."

I am a holy knight. I came to rescue the princess, not to abuse the princess!

"Eagle...sob! Come save me..."

"Don't cry!" I growled menacingly.

"Sob!" Alice finally shut up, and promptly fainted dead away.

In the days that followed, the princess and I were confronted with some serious problems...

Even though Awaitsun had left a tent, neither the Sun Knight nor the princess could pitch a tent.

Even though Awaitsun had left wood, neither the Sun Knight nor the princess could set up a barbecue rack.

Even though Awaitsun had left game, neither the Sun Knight nor the princess knew how to cook anything except to burn everything to a crisp. Thus I found myself beseeching the heavens, my heart sighing with infinite regret. If I had known this was going to happen, I would have taken Awaitsun along with us. What was I supposed to do with this princess, this utterly useless thing who had nothing to offer but a pretty face?

“Awaitsun is so much better than you. He knows how to pitch a tent, start a fire, and grill delicious meat for me to eat!”

Alice was so hungry that she even forgot to be afraid of me as she cried and wailed, “You’re just a useless knight with a pretty face... No, Awaitsun is a hundred times better looking than you! Wahhhh~ You’re good for nothing, and you’re not even good looking! I want to go back to Awaitsun’s side... Awaitsun!”

“It’s he who’s too ridiculously handsome. It’s not that I’m not good looking!”

I was just as hungry as she was, and this did nothing to help my mood. I joined in with her shouting and yelled, “Like you’re one to talk! Why is your Spell of Flight so lame? Aldrizzt can fly all day and night, yet you have to rest a whole day after flying for only three hours! Not to mention, you fly so slowly; it’s no wonder we’re still not back yet!”

In a voice that was an octave above mine, Alice screamed, “I don’t even know who this Aldrizzt is! In the first place, advanced mages can only fly for three hours, and this is just how the speed was to begin with anyway!”

Waaaah! Awaitsun! I'm being bullied by a bad guy, so why haven't you come to save me yet?!"

This pisses me off!

I snarled at her, "Shut up! I'm warning you, I forbid you from telling anyone I can use magic when we get back."

And then I violated my status as a knight and began to employ large amounts of magical power.

It's raining, and we can't pitch a tent? Fine. I'll use magic to blast a cave directly into the mountainside to sleep in.

We're hungry, and we can't set up a barbecue rack? No problem. I'll gather the wind element, and levitate the meat to roast directly above the fire.

The meat will burn? No worries. I'll set the meat a bit further away and have it bake slowly. Sooner or later it will be cooked thoroughly, and without being burnt!

Alice sat inside the cave nibbling on the roast meat while vaguely saying, "I'm sorry, I was wrong. You are somewhat useful, although still not good-looking."

As I savagely wolfed down the meat, I gritted my teeth and said, "It's your aesthetic sense that's messed up! You've been staring at Awaitsun for too long, so your perception of beauty is all worn out. You'd better be careful; if you keep staring at him like that, soon you won't even be able to look at your own reflection."

Alice was so shocked that she dropped her meat onto the floor, and she screamed in panic, "Nonsense! I'm the kingdom's most beautiful lady, even if I haven't put on any make up in the last few days... I'm still very beautiful, right? Right?" As the last few words left her mouth, she was so overcome with worry that she sounded as though she was on the verge of tears.

I fell silent for a bit, and hearing her begin to choke up, I comforted her by saying, "Yes, yes, you're still very beautiful!"

Upon hearing my words, she allowed a small smile through her tears and in a sudden reversal of roles even began to reassure me, saying, “Alright, you’re also very handsome. At least the color of your eyes is very beautiful, not losing to Awaitsun’s, and you have such nice skin...”

At this, she actually touched my face and cried out in surprise, “So soft and smooth! How do you maintain it... No wait, you’re a guy, don’t tell me it’s natural? How nice!”

At lightning speed, I recited, “Fermented milk dripped into ten drops of lemon juice, squeezed into an extract made from a total of thirty roses plus the juice of ten lavender flowers, and, lastly, mixed in a bit of flour – apply it to the entire body, steam for an hour, and do it at least once a week.”

“...Tell me again when we get back. Right now I don’t have anything to write it down with.”

I proposed, “If you properly play the part of a rescued princess and do not reveal my true colors to anyone, when the time comes I can tell you all of the secret recipes of skin care and whitening that I have. I guarantee that when Awaitsun comes to propose, your skin will be as white and smooth as a baby’s.”

Alice very excitedly answered, “Deal!”

*

The rain continued to pour down intermittently in the following few days. Because I wasn’t sure that I could find another stretch of mountainside within the forest to blast a cave out of, I figured we might as well stay in this one and wait for rescue to arrive. Sure enough, before the weather had even cleared, I sensed that Leaf and the others were already nearby.

Among the company, three had extraordinarily high holy element levels. One was Leaf, the other two... One of them had a high water element level, so it was probably Ice. The other had a high metal element level, but also had earth element, so it probably wasn’t Metal. This elemental composition belonged to... the Stone Knight!

One of the Twelve Holy Knights, he belonged to the cruel, cold-hearted faction and was famous for his stubbornness, which was as tough and unyielding as a rock. It was said that to crack his skull was a simple matter, but to break his stubbornness would be more difficult than overthrowing the Church of the God of Light.


...At least, as far as the whole continent knew, anyways. However, this generation's Stone Knight was slightly different... He was actually quite an amiable person and very easy to get along with.

I'd heard that the previous Stone Knight had taught him for three years, but had been unable to make the young Stone Knight more stubborn. Discouraged, the former planned to give up on him, and have the back-up knight take his place. (Not all of the Twelve Holy Knights were foolish to the point that they forgot to choose a back-up knight.)

But, other than the fact that he refused to become more stubborn, this young Stone Knight hadn't done anything wrong. It was difficult to find a reason convincing enough to have him replaced, and so the whole controversy dragged on for a good six months, until the day of adjudication that would decide whether he stayed or left...

My teacher, then the Sun Knight, walked into the adjudication meeting and lightly sighed, "Even if he's forced to leave the Holy Temple, he still refuses to become a stubborn person? To think that there's such a person who would so stubbornly refuse to become stubborn... Sigh! What a stubborn child indeed!"

From what I heard from my teacher, after he said those words, the hundreds of people present at the adjudication were all overcome by the same expression, which was said to be one of the rarest spectacles under the heavens.

I asked my teacher what, exactly, that expression was. He thought for a while, and then wrote the character “”, and told me to imagine hundreds of people before me, all wearing such an expression. After picturing the scene in my mind, I was of the same opinion that this was indeed one of the rarest spectacles under the heavens.

After this the young Stone Knight stayed, and never again did anyone propose to replace him.

After thinking about it for a while, I understood why Judgment had sent Stone.

Among the cruel, cold-hearted faction, the Stone Knight was the only one adept at handling diplomacy. Even though the Storm Knight of the good, warm-hearted faction was better, if he were to leave the Holy Temple, there would be a very good chance that the place would have to cease half of its activities altogether. Thus, Stone had been dispatched instead, so he could help Leaf resolve the diplomatic problems between the palace and the Monastery of the God of War.

If Leaf were allowed to handle diplomacy, he wouldn't be able to do anything besides agreeing to any and all demands.

As for the reason why Ice was here, that was even easier to understand. Ice was very strong, and if we really came to blows with the Kingdom of Moon Orchid and the Monastery of the God of War and had to flee, having Ice with us would significantly raise our chances of getting out alive...

“Sun!”

Leaf rushed into the cave, grabbed my shoulders, and began to shake me violently. “Sun! Sun! Are you all right? You're okay? That's wonderful! Oh, oh! Princess Alice is also unharmed... Thank goodness!”

He sounded as though he was dangerously close to choking up.

This made me suddenly feel rather guilty. It appeared as though he had been worrying about a lot of things ever since we'd set out on our journey... He truly was the mother of the good, warm-hearted faction...

“Don't cry, I'm perfectly fine,” I assured him. “Look, the princess has been rescued too.”

Leaf tearfully said, “But, your eyes...”

I rolled my eyes and brusquely said, “My eyes are fine. You worry too

much, Mama Leaf.”

“Knight-Captain Sun, I trust you have been well since our last meeting.”

I turned my head toward the cave entrance in the direction of the voice that belonged to the Stone Knight. Behind him followed the Ice Knight, who, in contrast, remained completely silent, as usual.

I donned a Sun-style smile, and gracefully answered, “May the radiance of the God of Light always shine upon you, Brother Stone.”

Stone stared at me fixedly, and then he asked, “Sun, how many fingers am I holding up?”

“...With the God of Light as my witness, the answer is zero, like the contents of your brain!” I responded peevishly. It seemed as though Leaf had already related to them the whole tearful tale, which had definitely been about me being “blinded,” or something to that effect.

“Indeed, that is correct,” Stone replied with a guffaw. He said to Leaf, “Leaf, you worry too much. Sun is just fine.”

After a very long while, Leaf finally responded with “mm,” but I didn’t know whether or not he really believed that my eyes were fine.

Not long after, Mike, Ann, and Austin also arrived, and behind them an entire line of warriors followed. The moment they entered, Ann cried out, “Alice!” and then ran to her sister’s side and anxiously shouted, “Did this despicable, shameless lowlife do anything to you? Did he hit you? Did he try to [eat your tofu](#)?”

“Ann, what nonsense are you spouting?” Alice said reproachfully. “It’s thanks to the Sun Knight, who saved me from the evil miscreants and has been painstakingly taking care of me ever since, that I was able to escape from a dangerous situation. He is a noble knight; you shouldn’t insult him.”

Silence fell over the scene. With extreme difficulty, Ann repeated, “Sun is a—a noble knight?”

The whitewashing effects of the recipes for skin care and whitening

were quite astonishing to behold; they instantly elevated me from a despicable, shameless lowlife to a knight of noble spirit.

“Yes.” Alice stood up, and in a slightly imperious tone, called, “Servants!”

At her summons, the ten or so people standing at the cave entrance immediately filed in. It appeared as though some of the attendants from the palace had also come. They marched to the princess’ side and proceeded to present her with towels, drape a clean cloak over her shoulders, and even arrange her hair.

Throughout Alice’s entire makeover session, Mike did not utter a single word. Yet I could understand very well why he had not. When I’d eavesdropped on Ann and Leaf’s conversation, I had learned that Alice had once attacked them. If I were Mike, I probably wouldn’t have a pleasant expression on my face either.

In an extremely courteous manner, the Stone Knight asked me, “Knight-Captain Sun, we’ve only just arrived and are therefore unclear about the current situation. Could you perhaps share any thoughts you have concerning the way things presently stand?”

Without hesitation I replied, “We can discuss that after we return.”

Stone remarked, “Knight-Captain Sun always [hits the nail right on the head](#) with his words. I trust no one holds any objections?”

This doesn’t have anything to do with ‘hitting the nail on the head.’ I only want to take a bath... How it stinks! By that point, I smelled so disgusting that I had begun to hate the God of Light for not taking away my nose as payment at the time!

Returning to the palace proved to be a much easier task, because among those who came were the mages of the royal household. They had brought with them a magic circle that could provide instant teleportation, and this magic circle had already been set to connect to another magic circle within the palace. By infusing enough of the wind element, we could instantly teleport back to the palace.

After returning to the palace, it was essential to make myself presentable before going to meet the queen, so taking a bath was not an issue. However, after taking a bath and eating some food, I felt refreshed and content, and the soft bed seemed to earnestly beckon me...

Even though I knew I still had to report to the queen on everything that had happened, I was unable to resist the temptation... I crawled into bed, feeling as though I hadn't fully slept in a month, and immediately began to drift out of consciousness...

“Sun...”

In the midst of my daze I thought I heard someone calling me, and I immediately grumbled, “Oh, what do you want? I'm so tired, keep it down...”

After a while, that person said, “Never mind, go ahead and sleep.”

A few days later, I received the queen's commendation.

The reason for the commendation was for having performed the deed of rescuing the princess, and the reward was a completely useless knight medal of honor. At the same time, Princess Alice was withholding the medal, and she wanted me to bring the recipes for skin care and whitening in exchange... Does she take me for an idiot? What use is that medal to me?

I refuse to go exchange. I'll wait for her to come begging me to swap, hmph!

However, that afternoon I was informed that the medal had been carved from precious stones and was worth a fortune... Therefore, I had no choice but to go ask the princess to complete the exchange.

The Son of the God of War cancelled his engagement with Princess Alice.

Although the queen actively tried to prevent the engagement from being cancelled by switching the bride and having Ann marry Mike instead, the two had looked at each other with the same disgusted expression and simultaneously declared, “If I have to marry him/her, then it will be my

turn to find someone to elope with.”

The queen had looked very troubled, but right at that time the little princess of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid, who was barely ten years old, bounced up before her mother, the queen, and, using an incomparably cute voice, announced that “after she grew up she wanted to be Brother God of War’s bride.” Thus the problem was easily solved.

Mike and the little princess went ahead and got engaged, and the marriage was set for when the little princess turned sixteen years of age.

Among the masses there inevitably spawned rumors along the lines of “the Son of the God of War is actually a pedophile.” However, being able to switch for a bride that was ten years younger than oneself was completely worth the accusations of pedophilia. At least Mike himself was deeply engrossed in planning the education of his future wife.

*

It appeared that Resurrection had indeed left behind certain after-effects.

After Leaf noticed, at a glance, that a fly flying more than ten meters away had tiny holes in its wings, he discovered that things had become quite serious.

After undergoing repeated experiments (namely, I forced him to count the number of flies crawling on a pile of dog poop more than thirty meters away), it was ultimately confirmed that he possessed super-human eyesight.

As an archer, having super-human eyesight was the same as possessing super powers... Simply put, his extraordinary skill with the bow and arrow had become even more unbelievable.

On a related note, when I pointed out the pile of dog poop that was thirty meters away and had him count the number of flies, he was finally led to believe that I was not blind.

*

At long last, we had finally returned to the Church of the God of Light.

Chapter 10: Tenth Requirement of Rescuing a Princess: “Develop a Romantic Relationship with the Princess”

Ah, the Church of the God of Light! Ah, my Holy Temple! The moment I saw the grand and magnificent Church of the God of Light, my heart was unspeakably touched. I felt like a wanderer who had finally returned to his hometown and leapt into his mother’s arms after several decades of traveling...

Finally, I have returned! Returned to my wonderful life as a church hermit!

Although I maintained my elegant demeanor, the moment I jumped off the carriage I could not help but walk faster and faster in order to see the room I had said goodbye to for more than a month. However, I noticed many people gathered at the Holy Temple’s plaza as I was passing by. I frowned as I sensed two familiar people in the crowd.

Roland and his vice-captain, Tyler.

Even though both of them were completely surrounded by the crowd, I could hear constant sounds of swords clashing. I was stunned for a moment before becoming furious. How dare they hurt one another inside the Holy Temple!

I shoved my way through the crowd. At first, the gathered holy knights turned around impatiently. However, the instant they saw that it was me, they immediately jumped aside in shock to let me through.

I squeezed my way to the center of the crowd and indeed saw the two people fighting with swords. Their strokes were amazingly fast and merciless. Suddenly, I was afraid that if I stopped them a second too late one of them could be badly injured.

“Both of you stop this!”

I immediately shouted at the two of them. When I saw that both of them had indeed stopped fighting, I felt a little relieved. I then hollered angrily

at the most familiar person in the crowd watching the fight. “Adair, why didn’t you stop them?”

Adair was stunned for a moment. He then quickly ran to my side and explained in a low voice, “Captain, it’s all right. Knight-Captain Hell was just exchanging blows with his vice-captain. For the past month, they have been sparring at this time every day. Sometimes, Knight-Captain Judgment will also join the fight.”

Once I heard that, I immediately looked at Roland and his vice-captain, Tyler. The two of them had already stopped the match and were both looking at me. They didn’t look like they were going to kill each other at all...Oh no! It seems I misunderstood, and I could not help but laugh at myself. Leaf’s death appears to have made my nerves too tense. No matter what, this place is still the Holy Temple’s plaza, which is always full of people. Could one of the Twelve Holy Knights or a vice-captain really die here?

Even if Adair did not stop them, Judgment would not possibly allow something like that to happen.

At this point, Adair whispered into my ear, explaining, “Captain, actually, Knight-Captain Hell promised Tyler that if Tyler defeated him, he would give the position of captain away to him. But after ten days of sparring, Tyler conceded defeat wholeheartedly. Now, Knight-Captain Hell is just instructing Tyler and the other members of the Hell Knight Platoon on their swordsmanship.”

I asked softly, “Has the problem really been solved?”

“Yes.” Adair nodded and said, “Now, if anyone dares to question Knight-Captain Hell’s authenticity, Tyler would be the first person to jump out to defend him.”

Extremely satisfied, I nodded and said, “Help me explain my actions. I want to go back to my room and apply a facial mask.”

“Captain?” Puzzled, Adair looked at me.

“...I mean, I want to return to my room to rest.” After suddenly realizing that I had spoken the truth, I quickly came up with another excuse.

“Yes sir, thank you for your hard work.”

I turned around and left. When I had walked far away, I vaguely heard Adair giving the crowd a one sentence explanation, “Nothing happened just now, understood?”

The crowd replied in unison, “Understood.”

Adair really deserves to be my vice-captain. He has the same style as his captain, being too lazy to even come up with a reason.

“Grisia!”

I turned my head around and said to Roland, who had chased after me, “Are you getting used to life in the Holy Temple?”

“I’m used to it, but is it really okay for me to continue living like this?” Roland caught up with me and slowed down to walk alongside me. With a little hesitation, he said, “If my identity is revealed, you...”

Annoyed, I rolled my eyes and said, “Do you still not understand even after living in the Holy Temple for more than a month? If Judgment and I work together, even if we pointed at an apple and called it a tomato, then from then onwards apples would be called tomatoes.”

Roland frowned and did not speak.

“Don’t worry, even if your identity was exposed, the worst that could happen is that you will need to be burned to death.” I purposely said, “If that happens, as long as you are willing to be burnt to death, then nothing bad will happen to me. So, are you willing to promise me that if you are ever exposed, you will let me tie you to a stake and burn you to death?”

“Yes.” Roland immediately nodded resolutely.

I smiled. As long as he could solve the problem by sacrificing himself, Roland would not worry. He was most afraid of implicating others, so this was the best way to convince him not to be worried. Judgment would not be so easily fooled. If he were the one being deceived, he would probably continue asking, “Then are you willing to swear to the God of Light that you would really burn me to death if the time comes?”

“Okay, Knight-Captain Hell, you should continue educating your vice-captain. Sun is tired and wishes to rest.”

“Sure.” Roland nodded his head cautiously. He said sternly, “Grisia... No! Sun, I swear to you, I will definitely do my best to fulfill my responsibilities as Hell Knight.”

On hearing this, I heaved another sigh of relief. The problem involving Roland has been solved, so it looks like I have many more relaxing days to look forward to!

*

A few days later, the Kingdom of Moon Orchid dispatched another secret emissary here. This time, even His Majesty, the king of my country, was shocked. He was particularly concerned about whether the Church of the God of Light had a secret agreement with the Kingdom of Moon Orchid.

Under the attentive gaze of the Twelve Holy Knights and Elijah, the knight specially sent by the king, the emissary from the Kingdom of Moon Orchid pulled out a stack of letters while grinning widely and said, “My country’s Princess Ann wishes to pass these items to Leaf Knight of the Church of the God of Light.”

Everyone glanced at the letters that were smeared with perfume and stacked as high as the pile of work documents in Storm’s arms.

One by one, the Twelve Holy Knights began to smile derisively.

Elijah scratched his head, and the serious expression he originally had disappeared without a trace.

Leaf bowed his head as he accepted the letters. At this point, the emissary from the Kingdom of Moon Orchid was still unwilling to leave. He said to Leaf, “Princess Ann ordered me to return only when I have your reply.”

By now, Leaf’s jaw was almost at his chest. He answered in a very small voice, “Okay.”

Then, with everyone watching, he fished out a few dozen letters from his shirt pocket (there was no perfume smeared on those letters, but that was probably because Leaf was simply too poor to afford perfume) and gave them to the emissary from the Kingdom of Moon Orchid.

After the satisfied emissary from the Kingdom of Moon Orchid had left carrying the few dozen letters, Blaze was the first to leap onto Leaf's back and pound it, bellowing, "Leaf, you little brat, you're actually dating a princess!"

"Dear God of Light! The good guy, Leaf, actually became the first among the Twelve Holy Knights to win a princess's heart!"

In reality, Elijah was the first to win a princess's heart, I refuted silently.

Earth Knight said bitterly, "The world has changed; princesses even fall in love with good guys now!"

Two streams of tears running down his face, Moon Knight swore to the symbol of the God of Light, "I want to be a good guy too!"

On hearing this, I felt deeply wronged.

I'm a good guy too! I'm even the leader of the Twelve Holy Knights, I look more handsome than Leaf, and my pay is higher than his! So, why do all the princesses in the whole world only know how to call me 'despicable?'

Boo hoo , I-I...had no choice but to give myself a small source of comfort by going to the corridor specially meant for church hermits to search for a window with a good view of the beautiful female clerics in the Sanctuary of Light next door.

Damn it! I want to be a church hermit for the rest of my life! I wailed in my heart.

At this moment, Knight-Captain Judgment walked toward me, leaned on the same windowsill, and stared at the corridor in the Sanctuary of Light next door. After a long time, he finally opened his mouth and said, "The Sanctuary of Light is having a day off today."

“I know that.”

“Then what are you looking at?”

“I’m looking at empty space and feeling miserable...”

Both of us looked at the empty corridor in the Sanctuary of Light for quite some time before Judgment opened his mouth and said, “Previously, when Leaf requested aid from the Holy Temple, he said that there seemed to be something wrong with your eyes.”

My heart skipped a beat. I shrugged and said, “He was too nervous. Do I look like a blind man at all? A blind man going to look at beautiful girls – what a joke.”

Judgment said plainly, “Then tell me, what color is that bird on the windowsill?”

I was silent for a moment before replying cautiously, “It’s white.”

There was a long silence. Judgment finally sighed faintly, “...Grisia, do you still intend to continue hiding this from me?”

Sure enough, there is no deceiving Judgment... I smiled a forced smile.

In the beginning, I used the excuse of being weak to lie down in Forest Leaf Town for several days. It looked like I was resting, but I was actually desperately practicing my ability to “sense the elements.” I didn’t sleep much during those ten days, so I thought that I had trained until my ability became flawless. Even when I went to seek revenge, Princess Alice, Awaitsun and Pink did not realize I was blind.

After that, on the way back to the Holy Temple, my sensing ability improved even further. I could even pick out the fine details of an object by piecing different elements together... What? This statement is too complex and you don’t understand it? Sigh! To put it simply, I could even tell how many buttons there are on a shirt.

In the end, I could tell, roughly, what a person’s face looked like and sense what expression a person had on his face... I nearly convinced myself that I wasn’t blind.

But no matter what, I could not sense “color.” Also, I could not differentiate between beauty and ugliness. In the mountain cave, when Alice asked me whether she was beautiful or not, I really didn’t know how pretty or not she was. In my mind, her features were made up of a combination of many elements and no longer had anything to do with “beauty” or “ugliness.”

Judgment frowned and said, “You didn’t tell me that Resurrection exacted such a high price from the caster.”

“There was no need to pay such a high price.” I said plainly, “It’s just that when I was performing Resurrection, I prayed to the God of Light, saying that I was willing to ‘pay any price’ for Leaf’s complete revival. You should know that I am always careful, so I would never gamble on that 25% chance. I cannot afford to gamble on it!”

Judgment fell silent for quite some time before saying, “Since that is so, you should stop blaming yourself for Leaf’s death. Every time you look at Leaf, you have an apologetic expression on your face.”

I sighed and said solemnly, “I will never leave any comrade behind again, never!”

Judgment said plainly, “I will also warn them that even if they have to jump off a cliff and die without a complete corpse, they must not die in front of you. Otherwise, who knows what you will come back missing next time.”

“...” I thought silently to myself. Even if they jumped off a cliff, as long as there is half a head left, I could probably revive them. It all depends on what price I will need to pay.

Judgment sighed and said, “You cannot save everybody, Grisia. I hope you understand this.”

“I understand.” Probably...

“Besides being unable to see color, does being blind have any other effect on you?” Judgment asked meticulously.

I tilted my head to the side and thought about it. I probably don’t have to mention the point about beauty and ugliness, do I? I answered honestly,

“At first, there were some problems, but after practicing my elemental sensing, I no longer have any issues. I can now “see” more things than before and my field of vision is almost three hundred and sixty degrees. Still, I cannot see color.”

“Speaking of which...” I could not help but ask curiously, “Just what color is that bird on the windowsill?”

Judgment was silent for a moment. He then replied, “You were right, it is white.”

“You tricked me,” I said expressionlessly.

“Yes, I tricked you.”

Judgment nodded and admitted to his deception without feeling any guilt. He then added, “If you dare to hide anything from me again, regardless of how confidential the matter is, I will expose you in front of all the Twelve Holy Knights. Right now you should first think about how to apologize to Knight-Captain Hell, because I am going to tell him that you are blind. That will make him pay more attention to your safety.”

I wanted to cry but no tears came out. I pleaded, “Nooo! If you do that, then Roland will follow me around all day. He doesn’t even need to sleep, go to the toilet, or eat... Dear God of Light! I really don’t want to be stalked by a man all day! I would definitely go crazy!”

“Hey, hey! Judgment, don’t go away! Listen to me, as long as you don’t tell Roland, I’ll do anything you say. Lesus? Judgment...”

Extra: Third Shared Rule of the Twelve Holy Knights: “No Matter How Weak the Sun Knight Looks, Never Ruffle His Feathers.”

“AHHH!”

In the middle of the night, within the palace of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid, there came a shriek from Princess Alice’s room.

Princess Ann and a bunch of knights hurriedly barged into Princess Alice’s room, but all they saw was Alice kneeling in front of her full-length mirror, her face hidden in her hands and her head hanging low. Upon hearing that someone had entered her room, she agitatedly shrieked, “Get out! All of you, get out!”

The knights looked at each other in dismay, but they saw that there were no other people in the bedroom. They then looked at Princess Ann, who nodded her head, indicating that the knights could leave.

Ann walked to her sister’s side. “Sis, what’s wrong? Were you frightened by a cockroach?” she asked cautiously.

Alice only shook her head, not saying a single word.

Seeing her sister in such a state, Ann was so worried that she was starting to become agitated. She said promptly, “I’ll go look for someone to help...”

“Don’t go!” Alice hastily stopped her sister.

Ann stopped in her tracks. Doing this is not okay, doing that is also not okay. I really don’t know what my sister wants me to do. “Sis, your behavior is worrying me greatly. No matter what, you should at least tell me what I ought to do!” she said helplessly.

Hearing that, Alice slowly lowered her hands. When she lifted her head, she immediately saw her sister’s shocked expression, and began to cry

with a sob.

Ann revealed an odd expression, and unable to make heads or tails of the situation, she asked, “Sis, why has your face... become so much darker? Wasn’t it fine during the day?”

Alice sobbed, “I just finished applying a mask to my face. When I looked in the mirror, I realized that I had actually become this dark. That’s why I screamed. My skin...”

So it was as small a problem as turning darker. Although she is a little dark, it’s not a big deal! Ann didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry as she said, “I’ve already told you not to take such delight in applying masks to your face. Look! Now you’ve run into a problem.”

“How is this possible? I did everything according to what was written in the recipe!”

Alice promptly produced the skin-whitening recipe that the Sun Knight had given her for her sister to see. “Runny mud, egg yolk, valerian root, earth that has been scorched, newly gathered sand, green pepper, ebony wood, fresh water plants, olives, radishes, lavender, expired milk. After stir-frying it quickly with a strong fire, fix on face for three hours.”

Ann looked at that so-called recipe, at first feeling that the recipe’s ingredients couldn’t be any weirder, and not believing that her sister actually dared to apply that to her face. After even closer inspection, the expression on her face became even stranger as she asked her sister tactfully, “Sis, where did you get this recipe of yours?”

Alice immediately replied, “The Sun Knight gave it to me! His skin is really very good, so white and tender. It’s not possible for there to be a problem!”

As expected... Ann gave a forced smile and said, “Sis, have you tried looking at the first letter of each line?”

Once Alice heard that, she immediately lowered her head to read the recipe. She read the letters out loud, “R-E-V-E-N-G-E F-O-R L-E-A-F. Revenge for Leaf! Ahhh!”

The lich's body had been destroyed, Awaitsun had nearly been beaten to death, but to think he wouldn't even let her off either...

Alice's shriek echoed in the palace for over three days.

"Sun Knight! You despicable, shameless, narrow-minded, villainous bastard!"

*

One day, with his heart filled with sweetness, Leaf read the love letter that Ann had dispatched an envoy to deliver.

Dear Leaf,

The third shared rule of the Twelve Holy Knights that you talked about last time, "No matter how weak the Sun Knight looks, never ruffle his feathers," has never made more sense. My sister has applied masks to her skin for a whole month, but there hasn't been a single sign of it turning whiter.

However, my sister's lover was not seriously injured because the Sun Knight healed him, so the speed at which he rushed back to the Cathedral of the Shadow God was very fast. He immediately came to propose, but my sister didn't dare to meet him before her skin turned whiter. She also didn't dare accept the proposal, so right now she is washing her face with her tears every day... However, even though she washes her face with her tears, she is still unable to restore her fair skin.

Sigh! The Sun Knight is too scary. Leaf, you should be careful never to ruffle his feathers. If you do end up doing that, then you should hurry and escape to my place here. I will have Mike hide you within the Monastery of the God of War, so that you will perhaps be able to escape calamity. Here's wishing that you never ruffle the feathers of the Sun Knight.

Yours truly,

Ann

Epilogue: Character Introductions

Queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid: The Queen of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid. Possesses strong endurance and wears a set of ceremonial clothes and crown that is even heavier than armor. With her thoughts interlinked with the female knights that are always at her side, she can give them orders without making any movements.

Austin: A warpriest from the Monastery of the God of War. Is the birth father of the Son of the God of War, Mike.

Ann: The second princess of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid. Is also one of the best female warriors in the Monastery of the God of War. Is currently pursuing a romantic relationship with the Leaf Knight.

Alice: The first princess of the Kingdom of Moon Orchid. Is extremely beautiful, a master mage of the wind element, and the future wife of Awaitsun-Silent Eagle.

Awaitsun-Silent Eagle: The head of the dark knights in the Cathedral of the Shadow God. Is so handsome that men want to kill him and then chop his corpse into pieces.

Neo: The former Sun Knight. Possesses the title of the Strongest Sun Knight in History and is Grisia Sun's teacher.

Aldrizzt: A dark elf. Is Neo's adventuring companion.

Stone Knight: Is part of the "cruel, cold-hearted" faction within the Twelve Holy Knights. His stubbornness is famous and said to be as hard as a rock. It is widely known that to break his skull is a simple matter, but to break his resolve one might as well go overthrow the Church of the God of Light, since that would be easier.

*

Epilogue

Everyone, if you flipped to the epilogue before reading the story, then Yu Wo would like to remind you at this point that this time, story content is mentioned in the epilogue. Therefore, please go read the story first, and

then look at the epilogue afterwards. Thank you.

In this volume I, Yu Wo, did something extremely outrageous... I made the main character, Sun, blind.

However, the most important thing is, I only properly told everyone that Sun had really become blind at the end of the story.

Actually, in the story, after he resurrected Leaf and woke up from losing consciousness, he never fully regained his sight. This made describing things in the story extremely difficult. However, though it was difficult I, Yu Wo, was very happy while I was writing. As I wrote, I wondered whether the readers could tell that Sun had actually become blind?

There are actually many places where one can tell that Sun is unable to see anything. Since the story is from a first-person perspective, everyone can infer from Sun's last words how much effort he had put into learning how to use his sensing ability, and thus find the clues hidden in the narration.

Hehe, I'm really very curious. Just how many readers had already guessed that Sun had truly gone blind even before reading the confession from Sun at the end that he was blind?

Everyone, why don't you come to my website to express your opinions?

*

Next, I am going to talk about the most important part – the results of the household popularity poll of the characters that have just been decided!

I have especially invited an artist, ASH, for a guest appearance to draw the characters that are ranked in the top five. Thanks to ASH for her warm support.

First place: Grisia Sun (Yu Wo's comments: The main character is the main character alright. If the main character in a story written in a first-person perspective didn't manage to take first place, I think he might as well ascend to heaven and repent in front of the God of Light.)

Second place: Lesus Judgment (Yu Wo's comments: Cool, handsome, intelligent, and is also in charge of explaining (exposing) Sun's crafty schemes. Even the author loves you.)

Third place: Roland Hell (Yu Wo's comments: Although he's dead, love doesn't distinguish between living and dead people.)

Fourth place: Ice Knight (Yu Wo's comments: What? I'm eating blueberry pie, hold on!)

Fifth place: Adair (Yu Wo's comments: Being utterly loyal definitely has its rewards. Even if he were to die of overwork in the future, now that he has a memorial arch, he would be able to die in peace.)

Artist ASH's words: I'm very happy to be able to make a guest appearance in the Legend of Sun Knight Volume 3 OxO!! At this point, I would first of all like to thank the editor and owner of ChunTian (Spring).

I've reread the Legend of Sun Knight volumes 1 and 2 countless times. No matter which knight, they all have such interesting characters that can make people burst into laughter.

Thus, after reading the second volume, I immediately decided to draw the top five characters from the online popularity poll.

While I was doing the drafts, I discovered that Ice and Adair had actually kicked the cute Storm out of the top five! O □ O!! (Shock) – Actually I really want to draw Storm. (Covers face)

Adair did have a certain image in my mind at the very least, but his appearance was still changed three times. (In the end I gave him a hairstyle that conformed to the norms of society.) As for Ice, he didn't have many scenes to begin with, and he only specialized in giving Grisia cookies to feed him and keep him full. Everyone seems to have a particularly good impression of him as a "virtuous wife," but I couldn't think of any ideas for his outer appearance. Therefore, I drew two completely different versions. However, no matter what it's still a work in progress, so let's wait until Ice has a more definite appearance in the story before considering this again. ^_^

Speaking of which, why is Ice's posture so strange? It's because I had originally wanted to insert him in the double spread too, so...

Hopefully it looks like an exaggeratedly comical action. He appears to be pulling out a sword but is actually holding cookies. Just like how Grisia is actually making his facial mask. (laugh)

So then, I hope to have another chance to draw the other characters, and also that everyone will like them XD.





Footnotes

[“wormwood”](#): The Chinese word for wormwood, 苦艾, actually contains the character for “bitter” instead of worm. Because of the character “bitter,” Sun rejects this type of seasoning without even knowing what it is.

[“Supreme Stinky Knight”](#): The beginning of Sun and Supreme use the same character in Chinese. Sun is making a pun here on his title.

[“possessed by “Ann” ”](#): The original Chinese phrase, 鬼迷心竅, is one that means someone is so focused on something that they lose sight of everything else. The first character of this phrase is often replaced by the person or item someone is focused on to express just how possessed by that person or that item someone is. Here, Sun replaces the first character of the phrase with Ann’s name 「安」迷心竅.

[“Supreme Stinky Knight”](#): The beginning characters of Sun and Supreme are the same in Chinese. Sun is making a pun here.

[“Sister”](#): Alice calls Ann her “second younger sister” here. In Chinese, there is a distinction made between older and younger sisters.

[“Witch”](#): Previously in V2C10, we mentioned a demoness. ‘Demoness’ has been changed to ‘witch’ and the previous ‘undying witch’ to ‘lich.’ The LSKV5 title will be changed from ‘Undying Witch’ to ‘Undying Lich.’ There will no longer be a conflict between the terms.

[“Sir”](#): In the Chinese version of this sentence, Awaitsun uses “您,” a respectful form of the pronoun “you.” However, in English there is only one form of the second person pronoun. Thus, “sir” is used to convey the added sense of respect.

[“...the whole eighteen miles worth of farewells...”](#): This is an allusion to the Chinese legend 梁山伯與祝英台, which in English is written as “Butterfly Lovers.” In this love story, a young woman named Zhu disguises herself as a man to attend school and eventually falls in love with a fellow student, Liang. Later Zhu’s father tells her to return home, and Liang accompanies her for eighteen miles of her journey, during which she tries

to reveal her true identity to him. The reference is used to convey the actions of two lovers who cannot bear to be separated; hence, Sun's exasperation.

[“囧”](#): Pronounced “jiǒng,” this is a Chinese character that looks like a person's face. It is often used as an emoticon representing moods such as annoyance, shock, embarrassment, awkwardness, etc. It can also be used together with OTZ (a sideways person on their knees), replacing the head and forming 囧TZ.

[“Eat your tofu”](#): Taking sexual advantage of a woman.

[“...hits the nail right on the head...”](#): The original Chinese expression, “一針見血,” literally means “to draw blood with a single prick.” It basically means to be right on target or to the point with one's words.

[The ingredients and instructions Sun gave Alice](#) were actually “Water plants, scorched earth, mud, sand, green pepper, and tuberose. After stir-frying it quickly with a strong fire, apply for three hours ...” In Chinese, the first words of these ingredients and the instructions are 水焦泥沙綠夜, 爆應 (shuǐ jiāo ní shā lù yè, bào yìng), which sounds similar to 誰叫你殺綠葉, 報應 (shuí jiào nǐ shā lù yè, bào yìng), or “How dare you kill Leaf, retribution!” The translation has been modified to spell out a message to Alice from Sun that can be pieced together in English.

Credits

Translator: [Prince Revolution!](#)

Epub: [Estevam](#) / [dotNOVEL](#)