

The Legendary Moonlight Sculptor

(달빛 조각사)

Volume 04

Nam-Hi-Sung

(남희성)

Story Description:

The man forsaken by the world, the man a slave to money and the man known as the legendary God of War in the highly popular MMORPG Continent of Magic. With the coming of age, he decides to say goodbye, but the feeble attempt to earn a little something for his time and effort ripples into an effect none could ever have imagined.

Through a series of coincidences, his legendary avatar is sold for 3.1 billion won, bringing great joy to him, only to plunge him into despair at losing almost all of it to vicious loan sharks. With revelation of money through gaming, he rises from the abyss with new found resolve and steps forward into the new age of games led by the first ever Virtual Reality MMORPG, Royal Road.

This is the legend of Lee Hyun on his path to becoming Emperor with only his family loving heart, his boundless desire for money, his unexpected mind, his diligently forged body and the talent of hard work backing him.

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

Chapter 1: Plains of Despair

“That person is strange. Why is he jumping around like that?”

“It looks like he’s insane.”

“Come on, let’s go.”

This figure was avoided and feared by the people of Somren Liberty City. That was because he looked like the sort of person who would cause you trouble if you got close to him.

He was actually Weed. Weed was jumping up and down in fury.

“Aaargh!”

He even let out a scream. At his mad behavior, everyone distanced themselves from his suffering. Hence, it was lucky that this was near the temple of the Church of Freya.

If he acted like this in the middle of the street, someone would have taken a video and it would have ended up, inevitably, on a website.

“Uwaaah!” At the end, Weed even burst into tears!

‘I threw away the opportunity for a real jackpot!’

He had left the Morata region through the teleport gate and arrived at Somren Liberty City. Right at the moment he emerged from the gate, a thought flashed through his head.

‘I won’t be able to use the effects of the Bingryong statue or the Ice Beauty statue any longer. That’s a pity.’

They were sculptures that had taken him over a month to make. The Bingryong statue’s incredible size, its overwhelming majesty, and its various options as well, were really amazing.

Thanks to the options attached to the sculpture, his hunting had truly sped up by more than half as much.

‘So why the hell didn’t I bring it with me?!’

The Bingryong statue was too large to bring. However, he should have

somehow brought the Ice Beauty statue with him.

If he tried to sell the Ice Beauty statue that increased the recovery speed of both health and mana, people would have lined up to buy it.

As the material was ice, it would melt with the passage of time, but if magic with ice preservation properties were used, the appearance of the sculpture could be maintained.

As the options attached to the sculpture could be stacked with the effects from bracelets or rings, even the effects from other items could be stacked.

Nobody would be able to guess how much money he could have received if that Ice Beauty statue had been sold.

‘Sob... It’s because I’m too much of a nice, naive, and kind person that such a tragedy had to occur.’

Though he continued to regret it while jumping up and down in fury, it was already too late.

A nice and pleasant person. Weed saw that as being no different to a fool.

Someone who was shamelessly devious, despicable, and dishonorable, but rich. Wouldn’t this kind of life be what you should truly aim for?

‘It’s not too late. From now on, you have to be tougher, Weed. Though it’s unfair that we had to become a sculptor, if we ignore all the advantages of being a sculptor, we won’t survive.’

Weed reaffirmed his life’s goal.

He had returned to the church of Freya together with Alveron and all the priests, who up until now had been watching Weed’s crazy behavior.

Some were frowning and others had frightened expressions. Like this, weren’t they even slowly edging away? So, even the NPCs were avoiding Weed.

“Ahem.”

Weed straightened his clothes and returned to his usual appearance of an adventurer out to punish evil and on a righteous mission.

“Then let’s go and meet the High Priest.”

Right afterwards, Weed headed to the High Priest along with the other priests. The High Priest had been waiting for his visit.

This time he didn’t need to make an offering like he had last time, and he was able to meet the High Priest directly. Weed was pleased by this slight effect.

Though the money he had been earning increased, if he didn’t manage the money that he spent, he would never become a wealthy person. Weed carried in his arms a crown embedded with white jewels.

“Here is Fargo’s crown that I have found and retrieved.”

“Ooh! I am truly grateful. Returning both Helian’s goblet and Fargo’s crown to us like this, you are our church’s savior.”

The quest to recover Fargo’s crown was complete.

The last relic lost by the church of Freya, Fargo’s crown, had been with the vampires of the Morata region...

The True-blood Vampire clan, led by the Vampire Lord Torido.

While waiting for the return of the Immortal Legion led by the Dark Mage Barkhan Demoph, they had arrived in the Morata Region and taken control.

For Barkhan, who tainted the continent with his evil, the elimination of the True Blood Vampire clan would be a painful blow.

As Fargo’s crown was a symbol of divine authority and majesty, it was an item that had to be retrieved for the church’s prestige.

- Your fame has risen by 1,200.

- Your friendship with the Church of Freya has reached 31.

- The Church of Freya’s publicity has increased by 2,200. The church’s

publicity can be checked in the religion status window.

- The Church of Freya's publicity: 4,612

- The publicity of religious organizations increases by combating evil or completing relevant quests.

- Your level has risen.

- Your level has risen.

- Your level has risen.

- Your level has risen.

- Your level has risen.....

As compensation for resolving a B-class difficulty quest, his level rose 9 times.

'This is pretty good service.'

At Weed's current level, to raise his levels all in one go like this by defeating a monster would be difficult.

However, to find Fargo's Crown he had to go through months of hardship, so this result hadn't been easy to obtain.

The High Priest then gave him 30 potions filled with white and red liquids.

"This is the gift that our church is bestowing upon you. It is holy water and the finest health regeneration potions."

"Why all of this..."

"Though it's not much, please accept it. They could be helpful if you use them in an emergency."

"Thank you very much."

Weed tucked away the potions. As the price of potions was too expensive, up until now Weed had never purchased them.

If you weren't someone working as a pirate or a bandit like the Dwichigi

quartet, it was fairly difficult to make use of potions.

It was because if your level rose and your health and vitality increased, you would need to purchase a more expensive potion of greater performance to match the increase.

So, there were only a few people who hunted while using potions. But if you did have potions with you, they could truly become a great help during emergency situations. For that reason, everyone packed a few potions on them.

“Also, here is the equipment awarded to heroes.”

Including Agatha’s sword, Weed received once more the same set of the items that he had been given for rescuing Helian’s goblet.

‘These must be the prizes given when lost relics are returned. This will make me some money.’

“Also, this is an item that was in our church’s treasure vault. As there was no one who could use it, it had only been gathering dust. Fortunately, as your profession is a sculptor, it would be good if you take this.”

-You have found an unknown leather belt.

When you acquire an unknown item, the first task that had to be done was item identification.

Regardless of whether the item is cursed or already owned by someone, if the performance is poor, the item wouldn’t be useful in any way.

“Identify.”

Deykram’s red Wyvern leather belt:

Durability: 60/60.

Defense: 22.

Born from the free sky, this belt is made of Wyvern's leather. Red Wyverns are creatures so extremely rare that their very existence is doubted.

Wearing a belt made of red wyvern's leather will make you the subject of adventurers' attentions.

It's stretchy, so it doesn't tear easily and fits well. Though its heavy, it can be threaded through trousers and worn tightly around the waist, and it seems able to hold sculpting tools.

The sculpting master Deykram has carved directly into the central section of the belt an engraving of a Wyvern head.

Restrictions: Level 150

Limited to the Sculptor Profession

Options:

Charm +15.

Strength +10.

Agility +30.

Sculpting Skill +7%.

Making sculptures while wearing the belt allows you to acquire an additional 5 fame.

Weed was silent for a moment.

He had expected to receive a special item from resolving a B-grade difficulty quest but he had received Deykram's belt.

Obviously, the item's performance wasn't that good. For an item of this type that raised defense and stats, it wasn't as if you couldn't find any others.

However, it was none other than Deykram's belt. One of the 5 sculpting masters who had ever lived on the continent, Deykram! His belt had now fallen into Weed's hands.

‘I’ve just earned 900 thousand Won.’

Deykram’s equipment set.

His helmet and sculpting tools had once appeared on an auction site. Their options that improved sculpting skills were useless to regular people.

As the sculpting profession was already becoming extinct, it normally wouldn’t have been traded, but the helmet had sold for 800,000 Won, and the sculpting tools had sold for 1,100,000 Won.

They had been bought by people who collected rare items.

The items he had found and returned to the High Priest, first Helian’s goblet and even Fargo’s crown, were truly rare beyond imagination.

“We, the church, want to show our gratitude that we owe a lifetime of heartfelt thanks to you, hero. Wherever you are, you have the goddess Freya’s blessing. If you are injured or cursed, come and find us at any time. We will treat you free of charge. Also, I will act to make this church’s teleportation gates available to you at any time.”

“Thank you very much.”

The High Priest let out a great sigh. His demeanor seemed as if he was seriously troubled.

“The church’s three relics have finally returned. With the recovery of our full authority, might, and divine power, our paladins and priests will now be able to exert their full, original strength. The Immortal Legion led by Barkhan Demoph is crouching down in the barren northern plains and increasing their forces, but according to the last message sent by the paladins who went to reconnoitre, they have no need for the monsters they have recruited because they are already so powerful.”

The Immortal Legion led by Barkhan Demoph was frightening because each one of them was a named undead.

Those who died in battle and weren’t buried by the enemy were revived as followers. There were paladins who displayed dark magical powers, and

priests who used the blessings of demons.

Whenever the Immortal Legion fought, their forces increased.

“Tidings have been heard that Barkhan Demoph has resurrected, and at the same time, hastened movements from the demon worshiping necromancers have been observed. These necromancers, who research magic with fresh blood and in hatred, can be said to be seeds of evil. I have been told that they are preparing something in the Plains of Despair.”

Ding!

The exiles living in the Plains of Despair.

The necromancers led by Barkhan Demoph believe in the demon
Beelzebub.

It is unknown as to why the necromancers, who obstinately research the principles of mana, built a temple for the worship of Beelzebub.

Dark elves and those exiles who were cast out from each kingdom during the age of chaos live in the Plains of Despair.

Some of the necromancers who were with the temple have left for the Plains of Despair. Find and eliminate them. If you go to the temple of Rosenheim kingdom, you can obtain information on them and support troops.

Difficulty: B

Rewards: Unknown

Quest Restrictions:

Failure will lower the Church of Freya's publicity to 0.

Fame -3,000.

Weed felt as if he would let out a sigh. It was B-grade difficulty this time as well.

‘Still, isn’t it a good thing that there’s no time limit?’

The Plains of Despair was an area a long way to the northeast of Rosenheim kingdom. Located on the border between Bertran Kingdom and Rosenheim Kingdom, it was an area where dangerous monsters spawned like crazy.

However, this was only the start of the Plains of Despair.

On a map that had been found at somewhere and at some time that had been called ‘Map of the Versailles Continent’, the Plains of Despair was drawn much larger than even Aidern Kingdom, the continent’s greatest power.

“Those necromancers who oppose divine providence will be eliminated.”

- You have received a quest.

“Thank you, Hero!”

The high priest’s face was filled with a great happiness. Once the story had finished, the High Priest would no longer respond to Weed. Weed slowly exited the church.

After training in the nearby villages, Mapan was in the middle of returning to Somren Liberty City. In his ear, he heard the voice of someone he hadn’t been able to reach for a long time.

- Mr. Mapan.

- Yes? Oh, Mr. Weed! I knew you would definitely die. Where are you now?

- The work went well. Come to the front of the church of Freya.

- Yes, I’ll run over now.

Mapan really ran like the wind. So quickly that it didn’t even take him 10

minutes. It was the return of Weed who had left after receiving a B-grade difficulty quest!

He arrived at the place after leaving straight from the market without even packing his goods. Mapan was also accompanied by a beautiful woman.

Of course, Mapan wanted to ask about Weed's activities, but thinking that it wouldn't be polite, he first introduced his colleagues.

"Here is Mr. Weed. And here is Miss. Hwa Ryeong."

"Nice to meet you. I am called Weed."

"Good day. I have heard a lot about you."

During the time that Mapan had met her and they had traveled together, her class had been a great help.

"Mr. Weed, don't be alarmed, but the occupation of Miss. Hwa Ryeong here is that of a dancer."

"Dancer?"

Hwa Ryeong spoke with a cheerful laugh.

"You can look at it as a class along the same lines as a bard. With dancing instead of music, we can buff the abilities of our allies and take on our enemies."

"So, it's like that. It must be hard on you."

"Not at all! It's so fun. I enjoy dancing as well."

Hwa Ryeong's specialty was in confusing enemies. When she began to dance, monsters lost their fighting spirit and fell into a daze. You could even look at it as one of the hidden classes.

She could even confuse monsters much stronger than her own level of 175, but in such cases the mana consumption increased.

It was the same when she attempted to confuse a large amount of monsters in one go. Also, if she attacked them while dancing, the monsters would snap out of it.

She could only wield a single stiletto in one hand, and her attack and defense were on the meager side, so it was impossible for her to hunt alone. It had its strong points, but on the other hand, the class also had serious disadvantages.

In any case, until now, whenever monsters had been encountered, Hwa Ryeong had confused them while Mapan drove their wagon as they quickly made their escape.

‘A sculptor, a merchant, and a dancer... This just gets better and better.’

A legend was passed down through Royal Road! It was about those with production classes and the other unusual classes.

The classes that people shunned!

By sticking together and combining their strong points, they were able to maximize their individual abilities and the strongest party was born.

It was a legend of how they could catch defeat monsters, and that before the party was disbanded, it had been able to show the optimal usage of their skills.

Of course, as it was first during Royal Road’s initial phase, the origin of the legend was unknown.

‘It must just be groundless rumors.’

Most of hunting consisted mainly of using the combat system. It is easy to find a person and create a group. With these, the speed at which monsters are hunted greatly increases.

But for those who are weak and useless in combat, their presence in battle is one that needs to be taken care of. There is no particular reason for them to join. So they aren’t even invited in the first place.

“Gasp!”

Mapan suddenly took a deep breath. He then crept closer to Weed and whispered to him.

“Since I suffered through Mr. Weed’s Lion’s Roar, I truly felt that I could endure and get used to any other person’s appearance in battle.”

(Not sure how clear this is, might use tweaking of the phrasing. Basically he's saying that after how strange Weed was in shouting at his enemies, no one else would even be able to surprise him, but he can't keep his eyes off Hwa Ryeong's dancing)

“And so?”

“Do you know what type of dance Mrs. Hwa Ryeong does for the monsters?”

“What is it?”

“The Bubi bubi.....” (jiggle it jiggle it)

“Gulp.”

This dancer, if she met an Orc or an Ogre, would actually approach them closely and dance the Bubi bubi! Hwa Ryeong's cheeks were dyed with a peach color.

“I once used to frequently go to night clubs... now I like dancing so much that I can't stop.”

“...”

“Oh yeah!”

There was something that Mapan really wanted to ask.

“But just where have you returned from after the past three months? Did you succeed in the quest?”

Weed laughed merrily.

“You'll know soon enough.”

“Huh?”



It first started in Somren Liberty City.

- You, do you know about the adventurer named Weed? This time he has completed a great deed. Fargo's crown! The crown that was lost by the Church of Freya has now been found and returned.

- The True-blood Vampire Clan is said to be an important force of the dark mage Barkhan. The brave man named Weed, famous for his devotion and artistry, is said to have defeated them.

- You know about the famous Weed too, right?

In concert, all the NPCs in markets, coach-houses, and those staying in inns or mercenary guilds, began to tell stories about Weed. After some time, the NPCs in the United Kingdom of Briton began telling stories as well.

- Something big has turned up in Somren Liberty City, it's said that the adventurer named Weed has completed a great request of the Church of Freya.

- The person named Weed....

- Weed has...

Then to Rosenheim Kingdom!

- Do you know of Weed who comes from our kingdom? What, you don't know? If that's so, listen closely.

It was not uncommon for even the NPCs from the Thor, Harpan, and Pallmore kingdoms to tell stories about Weed.

After getting out of his capsule, Lee Hyun logged onto an item auction site. He checked whenever he logged on, and today as well an e-mail from the Dark Gamer Union had arrived.

Ding!

You are invited to the Dark Gamers Union.

To prevent information leakage, this email is only sent to a small number of selected people. For more information we would like to talk to you in person.

The Versailles Continent or in real life, whichever one is fine. Because our Dark Gamer Union can exist anywhere as long as there is darkness. With

no obligations, we would like to meet and talk with you.

In this way, you'll be able to reach an understanding of our union and what we do in the union. You can take part in conversations and if you feel the need to keep in touch with another, you could even find a good partner.

Lee Hyun ignored the e-mail and began to write an auction post.

Among the items he acquired, those items that can be sold for cash, needed to be sold immediately. Because as time passes the market prices of Royal Road would slightly decrease.

It was an inevitable consequence of the increasing supply as the number of experienced users increased. However, as demand was similarly increasing, it wasn't a large problem to worry about.

The equipment of the vampires who had conquered the Morata area... those were still before the auction deadline. By now, their prices had reached from around a 100,000 to 400,000 Won.

"This much is good. When the highest bid has been made, it should reach the target price."

Lee Hyun entered an open auction and then registered the items to be sold. The priorities were two of the items that he had received from the High Priest of Freya.

"Agatha's sword or the High Priest's ring will be able to fetch a fairly high price."

There are market prices for common items. However, for items such as these that are difficult to obtain, the prices vary widely depending on the people who want to buy it.

If you met a person who really needed it, it could be sold for an expensive price, but if you didn't meet that sort of person, you might not receive a reasonable price.

"It'll be good if it sells well...."

Lee Hyun uploaded the auction post onto the site and went to sleep.

Overnight, a large fuss was raised on the auction site.

“It’s him! He’s posted something!”

“There’s no one else apart from him with a Triple Diamond rating. The ID that he’s posted with is the same as well.”

“It’s Weed! Weed really is selling an item from Royal Road.”

“This is really big news!”

When his account from the Continent of Magic was sold, Weed had already become a celebrity. Through Weed’s account, CTS Media had done several broadcasts on the Continent of Magic.

Now even among those not interested in games, there was no one who didn’t know of Weed. Lee Hyun’s ID from the item trading site.

That was something that the users definitely remembered. Until now, Weed had sold one or two items, but among those no really good items had been sold.

Death Knights’ equipment weren’t very popular at times, and there weren’t many people who needed vampire capes, boots, and gloves. So it hadn’t received any attention.

“Agatha’s holy sword! Rose-patterned gloves! High priest’s ring! This is the Church of Freya’s. This is the equipment used by the Church of Freya’s paladins.”

The gloves that had been engraved with roses were only of the level of an uncommon item, so the market price wasn’t high.

However Agatha’s sword that was used by paladins of the Church of Freya was one of the most popular items. The equip level limit was low and the attack was high.

You could even use a sacred blessing five times a day with it, so it was a popular item preferred anyone with a class that wielded swords.

Someone had looked at list of the items Lee Hyun had uploaded, and

after some research, had written this post. This post quickly spread throughout the internet.

Weed from Continent of Magic is playing Royal Road! Weed has put on an auction site Freya's paladins equipment! At once, many people wrote posts on the auction.

- Has that Weed really become part of the Church of Freya?

- Could he have become an actual paladin?

- Throughout the entire continent, the number of people who have become paladins as part of a church still hasn't reached a 100. To become a knight of a kingdom or a lord is easy, but it's said that to become a paladin of a church you have to overcome an extremely difficult situation...

- It's truly Mr. Weed. He's impressive in Royal Road as well.

The commenters on the auction posts were talking amongst themselves. Joy and surprise could be seen in them at the fact that Weed was playing Royal Road.

Those from the Continent of Magic, and those who had heard stories of the chaotic Weed on the internet had gathered together. However several people revealed frank disappointment.

- If it's the Weed from Continent of Magic, then for us who played the game at least, he was a legendary presence.

- That's right. It was like there was nothing impossible for him. He would go and conquer dangerous hunting grounds. In the hunting grounds that Weed swept through, there wouldn't be a single monster left. To us who remember his footprints...

- He was a person who was always alone and that was all he needed. For that conqueror to become a paladin of the Church of Freya is below my expectations.

- He who had solitude and an absolute strength became in some ways an object of worship. Now attention will be focused on him. Though he rose

to the ultimate position in a different game, will he merely become a slightly stronger person in Royal Road?

- A year has passed since Royal Road first appeared. To be starting now is irrational. Any more of him will be boring.

- Seeing Weed's name made me happy, but there is no need here for something like an idol.

The commenters laid out their contentious opinions. For the one known as Weed, the figure who had become the symbol of gaming, the people were divided between those who congratulated Weed for becoming a paladin of the church of Freya, and those who were disappointed that though he was a bit strong he wasn't at his former absolute strength.

Naturally, while this was going on, attention was drawn away from the auction post. Beneath their attention, the price of the goods that Lee Hyun had put up for the auction climbed up very slowly.

In the meantime someone appeared. He urgently posted a single line of writing.

- I have just logged out from playing Royal Road.

This kind of post incited the usual strong opposition.

- Who was asking?

- No one cares about whether you logged out or not.

Within a moment these cynical commentators followed each other up. Then the person who had first uploaded the post wrote a more detailed post and posted again.

- In Versailles Continent time, about 5 hours ago, in concert the NPCs of Royal Road began telling stories relating to Weed. NPCs across the continent are shouting out the tale of his adventure in defeating the Trueblood Vampire clan, who played an important role in the Magician of Darkness Barkhan Demoph's Immortal Legions, and returning the Church of Freya's sacred relic. I was also a user in the Continent of Magic. I heard talk that Mr. Weed had set paladin's equipment for sale and I came here

wanting to confirm this. So this was truly something done by Mr. Weed. I'm filled with admiration.

- What did you say? Barkhan's Immortal Legion?

- Isn't that said to be one of Royal Road's strongest forces?

- Moreover, if it's the True-blood vampire clan, that's a group with individuals whose levels are over 270. Their leader Lord Torido is over Level 400...

- I'm speechless! I just can't believe this.

The people were distrustful and tried to ignore the post. It was a self evident truth that the difficulty of a quest to return the Church of Freya's sacred relic and eradicate the True-blood Vampire clan would be high.

To say that one person had solved this quest couldn't be accepted. However the evidence was too obvious.

The equipment used by the paladins of the Church of Freya and the High Priest's ring!

Especially the High Priest's ring, as from what had been said about it, it was known that only someone who had provided a very large service for the church would have been given it.

Even if you had become a paladin, it wasn't an item that you would just receive. In addition, there was another piece of evidence that could not be denied.

The vampires' items that had been put up for sale by Lee Hyun last time. The vampire's mantle and boots that were still up for auction did not leave any more room for doubt.

Lee Hyun slept for 4 hours and opened his eyes before the sun had even risen.

He quickly wore his clothes and headed to the morning market. It was in order to buy the side-dishes for breakfast and for his younger sister's lunchbox.

Of course the school provided food, but nowadays there weren't many

people that ate that. The nutrition was poor and the origins of the ingredients could not be trusted.

Even if food poisoning occurred only rarely, wouldn't it still be a big problem if it was caught.

'Though it's a critical period of youth....'

He had to prepare good food for the sake of his little sister who was working hard on her exam studies.

Even if this wasn't the case, to prevent his sister from feeling any more sorrow from the loss of their parents, he wanted her to eat food filled with love.

While Lee Hyun roved the producer's market he bought fresh vegetables and meat. He didn't forget to properly cut down the prices.

Even in shops that didn't give a good discount on their prices during the day, by greeting them early in the morning and making his face familiar, it was possible to purchase goods pretty cheaply.

As he had originally taken all responsibility for the household chores on himself, he had a certain confidence in his cooking.

However the reason that his cooking skill had now rapidly advanced was because of Royal Road.

Now he held confidence that in cooking at least he wouldn't come second to anyone. It was of a level that he could find a job in a restaurant's kitchen.

"Yawn! Oppa, good morning."

"Did you wake up just now?"

When he returned from looking around the market, his sister emerged from her room rubbing her eyes.

"Go wash yourself. You'll be late for school."

"It's okay. There's still enough time."

"Don't act lazy. If it's something you have to do, do it quickly."

“Tch! It’s like every day there’s only nagging. That aside, is the preparation for the GED going well?”

Lee Hyun had made a promise with his grandmother.

The promise was that he would pass his GED, as he had not been able to graduate from high school normally. However he still hadn’t even taken a look at his books.

If there was time to study geography, he would take another look at the map of the Versailles continent. Instead of studying Korean history, he had to read the history books of the Versailles continent.

Because if you wanted to be a great adventurer you had to know background history. However he didn’t have the heart say something like that.

“Of course! I’m studying hard, so don’t worry.”

If you looked closely it wasn’t a lie, after all wasn’t studying this rather than that still studying all the same.

“Okay. I’ll trust you.”

As his sister washed, Lee Hyun prepared the breakfast. As it was becoming winter and the weather was turning chilly, he prepared a refreshing natural soup, red bean rice, and plain side-dishes.

“Thank you for the food.”

After he sent his little sister to school, a few minutes of free time became available.

“Now then, shall I see if how much the prices of the items I put up for sale have risen?”

Lee Hyun connected to the item auction site. However the number of bidders on the auction post was no fewer than 140,000 people.

“What is this....”

It was obvious 140,000 people had placed a bid, but the highest price for the items didn’t even reach 230,000 Won.

Even if Agatha's Holy Sword was sold for next to nothing, it was still an item that would go for at least 2,000,000 Won.

"Who seriously bid 230,000 Won? And if 140,000 people took part, can this price be real?"

Lee Hyun didn't have a clue so he clicked on the auction post.

- Mr. Weed, you are really impressive, even if it was only once a would like to wear Mr. Weed's items! However as I don't have any spare money I can only join in with this.

The person who had wrote this was the first to bid 500 Won on the auction. Many people who wanted to participate in an auction would start bidding from 10 Won, so the amount was meaningless.

- Congratulations on finishing the quest from the church of Freya. Please keep your spirit as a Continent of Magic user and do your best!

The second person to upload a post, raised the auction to 501 Won. After that it became a spectacle.

- Mr. Weed, good luck! 502 Won.

- Mr. Weed, you're amazing! 503 Won.

- I respect you. Work hard. 504 Won.

- Uh, is this a new auction game? 505 Won.

- Haha! This looks like fun. I want to get involved as well. 506 Won.

- This is, this is.... 601 Won.

- Please keep to the pattern. 602 Won.

It was these people's own way of showing their affection through fun. It was an expression of their friendliness as they slowly raised the auction price.

Thanks to the participation of many bidders in the auction, it was quickly brought to the attention of other people. Rumors spread over the internet so that people who hadn't even heard of Weed went looking for it.

- Ah! These really the items because sold by the person rumored to be

Weed.

- I have arrived for the pilgrimage.

- It's already over 90,000 people. The auctions prices are over 120,000 Won.

- Even without the duplicate bids, over 60,000 people have become involved. Unite through the auction post!

- Hey! Who just cowardly bid 200,000 Won....

- If you don't properly obey the order, we'll find who did it and take revenge. Be careful. Start again from 200,001 Won.

- Let's try to reach up to a million people!

Chapter 2: Jack of All Trades

“Royal Road? When we left we expected you to study, and now you’re playing with toys!”

“Now write an application for reinstatement”

“And if that doesn’t help, you can sit at home all day and prepare for the exams yourself!”

When the parents of Surka, Pale, Irene, and Romuna learned that their children were playing Royal Road in secret during their absence, they received an endless amount of nagging.

However, their children didn’t just sit around all day. They thought of a cunning plan and eventually their parents were lured into Royal Road.

“Oh! Pale, I’m going to change weapons but I’m 4 gold short, can you lend me some money? Don’t worry I’ll pay you back with interest!”

In hunting and fighting monsters, their parents were inexperienced. However, they were still able to do well. They were owners of a small family shop in game, and they opened one store after another. Their shops sold things ranging from weapons and clothing to skill books. They even opened a restaurant. As their parents supported their kids with skill books, a good bow, or even the divine knowledge of the priest, they in turn hunted loot for them. As a result, they got closer and closer to the coveted 200th level. And then in the Kingdom of Rosenheim the NPCs began to talk:

“Do you know about the adventurer Weed? He dealt with the terrible vampire clan and freed the people of Mora.”

“Oh, Weed, the benefactor of the Order of Freya! Knowing that there are heroes makes life easier, doesn’t it? I heard that he was from the Rosenheim Kingdom, and they say, the King is looking for him.”

Even in real life, gun shops, pharmacies and even flower girls from the market - everyone was talking about Weed.

When word reached Pale and his party, they realized that Weed

completed a difficult and dangerous task, and immediately sent their congratulations: “Congratulations, Weed.”

“Well done!”

“Next time, tell us all about it in detail.”

“Haaa!”

“Swoop!”

“Urraaa! Monsters!”

The Geomchis rushed forward, and a brave headless soldier quickly began backing away. No matter how brave he may be in the game, at the sight of so many opponents even monsters would get nervous and tremble. Opponents, not showing fear, boldly attacked the enemy and easily too!

Rough, casually dressed players with blazing eyes of greed desired one thing: Experience “Ha-ha-ha! Geomchidulchi?”

“Yes. I'm ready.”

“Attack!”

“Hip-hip!”

An avalanche of players struck the headless soldier. They jumped on the monster as if someone was going to steal it.

None of Geomchis knew how to game. Therefore, they went after high level monsters first, but they did not consider them worthy opponents.

“Kill them all!”

They were all looking for new places to hunt and they finally got to Lavias.

All this time they only sought to battle and fight strong monsters, so their levels grew at an astonishing rate.

Always together, a crowd of 505 people, they roamed the expanse of Royal Road. One large cohesive group. Students and instructors lived together within the school, so they could gather quickly and play in Royal

Road. Also, fighting monsters was seen as part of their training, so they spent a lot of time in game and hunted the most powerful monsters they could find.

They started as Weed did with scarecrows, and then consistently overcame many dungeons. When there was an enemy, the students threw all their energy into fighting and eventually won.

The only thing that interested them besides their swords was battle. They did not take any quests, because they were too lazy to bother. In addition, their appearance was very shabby. They were very poor and often hungry players.

The teacher put his hands behind his back and, while laughing, said: “3 copper? Oh-ho-ho! So much energy spent on this monster and we got nothing. Apparently, we are weak. Guys!”

“Yes, Master!”

“Will we pick these pennies? Or will we become stronger and kill monsters that drop gold?”

“Sir, for you, we'll go anywhere!”

After those words the disciples and mentors had no choice, holding back tears, following the the words "First the sword!" Understandably their fear of starvation was greater than their fear of monsters.

They even shared the last crumbs of bread, and this further strengthened the friendship between them.

The Geomchis were not afraid of monsters.

“Sooner or later, we will stop dying from hunger!”

The Geomchis became focused with their eyes brimming with intensity. You either die fighting, or you die fighting hunger.

So they traveled across the expanse of Royal Road and raised their level to 130.

In Lavias they heard that they could change their profession. People on

the street said that the soldiers gave many jobs, and if you killed a famous monster then you would also gain glory and money. Also with a new profession you would gain a significant increase in strength and agility, and a bit of armor durability. A job for true connoisseurs of battles!

But in any case, we should not think that their job change was based on the increase of stats. No, the Geomchis felt that they were heirs to Korean martial arts, and with their pride they lived and died.

Martial arts - it's their nature, their lives, and that is why all 505 people at the same time changed their profession. Well, their first job was a warrior, so the change to martial artist seemed like the next logical step.

“Have you heard about the adventurer Weed?”

“This time Weed has done something remarkable!”

Of course, this news could bypass by so many ears. When the Geomchis heard the news they were all happy.

“Ohhh!”

“If Weed made a feat so can we!

Feelings that are in every man.

Ambition! Desire for glory!

A Burning passion!

“Geomchidulchi!”

“Yes, Master.”

“Find out where the most powerful monsters are.”

“I'm already on it.”

Geomchidulchi first called Pale. He had long understood the torment of information searching, and figured it would be better to whisper Pale.

“Mr. Pale.”

“Yes, Geomchidulchi...”

At this time Pale, Irene, Surka, and Romuna were hunting.

He was a little scared that they would have some wild request.

But this time, nothing happened. Generally, the Geomchis lived with dignity and pride, they did not forget about the food aid, and in the future always thanked their rescuers.

On the other hand, Pale and his party had long gotten accustomed to their strange requests.

“Who's the strongest?”

“What? Wait ... no way....”

“Just tell me who and where. We'll do the rest.”

Pale was shaken a bit, because he knew what they were going to do.

The Green Dragon Biakis loved the peace and quiet. He liked to think of himself as the guardian of the forest. With that thought, he lived peacefully for centuries.

Biakis was fast asleep in a hollow on the top of one of the mountains, but when he heard the noise of people, his eyes became wide open.

“Criminals?”

Sometimes a group of adventurers trespassed on his domain. Sometimes even the strongest players in the continent of Versailles strayed from groups and went to hunt the dragon.

Each time, Biakis ruthlessly punished them.

“This time, you will also die” - thought the dragon angrily

The Green eyes of Biakis were filled with anger. From wherever he looked, people fearlessly approached. Even if a few fought at a time they would still be too much. Although in general the dragon did not care.

“Urrra!”

“We have arrived! Angry wild dragon, show yourself!”

He had never been insulted before. Biakis was furious. He opened his mouth wide, as if to yawn, and then took a deep breath ...

“Fuuuuu!”

Liberty City was one of the centers of trade in the Versailles continent. A huge amount of goods passed through its gates, and there were many transactions within the city walls. Virtually all artisans and guilds considered it an honor to open an office here.

Weed with Mapan sold all of their unnecessary items obtained from wolves and other monsters.

“Oh! I made 5600 gold” Weed said while rubbing his hands happily.

Compared to how much he had before, he made 2000 gold, and that was not small.

But it could have been much more. Weed saved a ton of money on medical herbs, by digging and collecting them, but almost all the armor and weapons he had were sold on the auction site for real money. If he sold them in the game, he would’ve had much more gold.

Selling all these loot from monsters, Weed carelessly went to a guild. Guilds were always crowded with a lot of people, especially if they were in combat occupations, but today in the blacksmithing guild sat 30 people compared to the scale of the large city it looked strange.

Upon entering, Weed looked with interest at the people sitting at the tables.

“I wanted to make swords, so I chose this profession. And now I’m so unhappy! All of my friends that I started with are already killing kobolds, and every day I have to swing a hammer, damn it! But if it were only that! I thought I could make much more interesting things... I’m sick of this”

“Yeah. I don’t understand why I chose this profession. It’s too boring. Right now I want to change jobs”

“You don’t say. I was here for a week making swords and what do you know? They are far worse than the ones dropped by kobolds! “

Players sat and whined because of their profession. Pathetic. In fact, the profession of a blacksmith was not so bad. It all depended on how you

looked at it “By the way, have you heard the news about the blacksmith Thor?”

“I heard that he’s the first player to reach the intermediate level in blacksmithing, and now he’s intermediate lv 4.”

“No. He’s already at intermediate 5.”

“Wow! I heard all the guilds want him.”

“Of course, he’s a blacksmith that can strengthen armor and weapons. When will we get to his level?”

“Well ... there are already several other smiths with an intermediate blacksmithing ...”

“Ah! I’m so jealous.”

Weed heard enough empty laments and quietly climbed the stairs to the second floor of the guild. People were usually located at the bottom of the guild shop, and serious matters were decided on the floor above.

Weed waited until his turn came, and came to a moustachioed, muscular representative of the guild.

“What is the purpose of your visit?” said the NPC, tugging at his apron.

“I want to learn how to manufacture weapons and armor.”

“Oh! Really?” The representative said happily “Do you want to become a blacksmith?”

“No. I just want to learn how to forge.”

“Hmm. Actually, we don’t just teach anybody ... However, if you can fix this thing, then I will think about it.”

The NPC passed Weed a battered shield.

Cracked bronze shield. Strength: 3/28. Defense 10.

This shield is used in the exam to identify the gift of a blacksmith. Made of bronze. Size small, usually mounted on the brush. Protects you from the

impact of a sword.

Requirements: Level 15.

Effects: Chance of enemy arrows missing increased by 14%.

Decreases critical attack by 19%.

With each level a skill gains the efficiency of maintenance increases. In the first level it can be repaired by 7 points, the second level is 10, and the tenth level 23 points. That is why, to fix the board at one time, it required an intermediate level repair skill.

Weed did not even get a sledgehammer; he just raised his hand and said: “Repair!”

The board lit up with a bright light and glittered as if it were new.

“Um, it looks like you’re qualified” said the master scratching his head. “Okay, let's start with an explanation of how to hold the hammer. Look closely, grab like this and hit like that.”

You have learned the skills of a blacksmith.

Depending on the skill level, the requirements on equips go down by 2 percent or more. If you have mastered the skill of a blacksmith to master level, you can wear the items of other professions despite limitations.

Weed immediately bought iron tools for the manufacture of weapons, a good hammer, whetstone and some items. He also bought a portable smelter and the standard molds for weapons.

Typically a player could only work in a blacksmith shop, but with these items Weed could create weapons anywhere.

The process of forging items is very simple! Thanks to the portable stove, by using mana, metal can be melted and then poured into a mold. From there a work piece is made which after being hammered makes an

item.

Hearing all this, Weed felt cheated.

Yes, the blacksmith profession required hard physical labor, but it eventually lost to the profession of a sculptor. During the creation of sculptures, he had to be constantly on his toes in order to keep the image in his head, he had to carefully cut parts only to finally get a simple sculpture. Therefore, the blacksmith profession seemed simple and crude in comparison with his profession.

“Good.”

Weed went to the nearest anvil and opened his bag. Somewhere in the back were the pieces of ore that he picked up during hunting.

“First, melt ...”

He melted the ore and made a lot of iron. Then he gently poured it into the mold and, after waiting a bit, he got the first piece. Now, while the metal is not cured, he only had to give it a shape.

Tap-tap-tap!

He smacked the sword, and dipped it into cold water, and finally added a little touch up.

With that Weed produced his first sword.

Training Sword from the conductor:Durability: 70/70. Attack 4-6.

Sword made from different types of metal, man made with the makings of the master. The attack Power is small, but it has high durability..

Requirements: None.

Effects: Strength +5.

You have raised the skill of a blacksmith by 36%.

“Oh! Cool! Well done!” Weed forged his first sword and now he truly

enjoyed it.

Playing alone, sooner or later you start to talk to yourself. A kind of defense mechanism that Weed developed during the creation of sculptures in the province of Mora.

“It’s pretty average.”

Of course, the blade in his current situation was useless. But it can be sold in the armory shop for at least 70 silver! It had no attack option, but it was strong and provided an additional 5 strength.

For the first time he managed to create a Mighty Sword!

“And something in the profession of a blacksmith is useful.”

Fox figures, rabbits and other animals had no value, just souvenirs. But Weed sold them for silver coins and even for a time lived on the money. And now, he forged a sword that people would gladly use.

“Good. Well time to get to work!”

Weed decided to use all the ore he stockpiled during the game to make weapons. And he had a lot: some of it he gathered even though he was still a novice, some he gathered in the last 3 months in the province of Mora. He accumulated a lot of ore deposits and now he took them all out to smelt.

Melt in the oven, give it form and then smack!

Weed took the job seriously, putting all of his energy and soul into the new business. In parallel, he was trying to watch the other blacksmiths and repeat their actions, to quickly improve the skill of a blacksmith.

Your blacksmith level has risen to beginner 2.

The attacking characteristics of weapons are now stronger. Now you can make more weapons too.

Your blacksmith level has risen to beginner 3.

Now you can make bronze and copper armor.

Your blacksmith level has risen to beginner 4.

The attacking characteristics of weapons are now even stronger.

Now you can change the shape of a completed sword. Its strength decreases, but the attack will increase.

Your blacksmith level has risen to beginner 5.

Now the armor you make will become easier and more comfortable to wear.

You can now make boots.

Your blacksmith level has risen to beginner 6.

Offensive and defensive characteristics of manufactured items are greatly enhanced.

Weed stayed inside the smithy, day and night, for 10 days, creating blades. He forged more and more until he used up all of his ore.

But still it was a surprise: that in ten days, he greatly increased his skill of a blacksmith. All this for his profession.

For each level Weed gained a 3% increase in his initial attack, and a 5% increase for medium skill levels. In addition, to enhance his sculpture he had to unwittingly raise a host of other features in trade skills that would undoubtedly affect the boosting of his blacksmith level.

In general, the skill of craftsmanship influenced all non-combat professions. For example in cooking. For each level, the effects of prepared meals are amplified by 5%, and with the transition to the intermediate level they are amplified by 7%. Now Weed's handicraft level was intermediate 8, so all the effects of his dishes were amplified almost by 2.

In addition his handicraft skill also had an effect on his blacksmithing skill. By using the same materials he could make things 2 times stronger than others, and therefore get more experience. It was because of his handicraft skill that Weed didn't have to suffer the torments of newbie blacksmiths. Of course, by the time he reached intermediate

blacksmithing the advantage would disappear, but Weed would still get a lot more experience than a regular player.

That's right, after spending 10 days smelting ore, he managed to improve his skills up to level 6.

Weed left the guild and went to the fishing guild.

“Do you want to enjoy spending day after day fishing, or do you hope to catch a legendary fish and become a legend sung by bards?” Asked the NPC wearing a vest with many pockets.

Perhaps joining the fishing guild was the easiest in the game. You just had to honestly answer a few questions, and then buy a fishing rod with floats.

Weed did not hide his true thoughts:

“I want to learn how to fish, so that when I'm hungry, I can eat.”

“Yes?” the NPC fisherman asked puzzled.

For many players in the game they became a professional fisherman for pleasure. While traveling to Versailles continent, you had to use a boat or ship, and there you could fish to pass time. But from all of answers he had received no one answered as Weed had.

The fisherman looked at Weed, as an unprecedented miracle, and laughed.

“An honest answer. Also, I see you're an excellent cook. Maybe someday, if you catch something good, you'll make me a tasty soup?”

“If it's a suitable fish, then no problem, I'll be happy to cook.”

“Hmm. Thank you. I'll give you some special bait.”

You have learned the skill of fishing.

You will never be hungry if you happen to be near a major source of water.

You can get water and food in rivers, lakes and seas. With each level of fishing gained so will your health.

You got bait for fishing, 30 shrimp.

Weed learned blacksmithing, fishing, and now thought deeply.

“Should I learn more or not?”

“Is this enough? Maybe I should skip the sewing skill. I already have several production skills so I don’t really have to learn another skill.”

His anxiety was caused by his childhood memories. At one time he had to work in a sewing factory, in a dirty, dusty environment. There, in order to make a few pennies he sewed buttons and ripped seams. Heavy, monotonous work, memories of which brought only pain. Besides, he got sick and sometimes could not come to work, and therefore he didn’t get his salary for the last month.

But it was not in his nature to retreat.

Actually, there was another sorcerer skill, the ability to cast magic on the items, but Weed could not learn it because of the high level requirements. Therefore he could only learn all the trade skills.

Finally deciding, Weed went to the second floor of the Tailoring Guild.

“Hmmm ... if a person has good taste it would be easy to choose a good fabric and sew beautiful clothes “

“If you invest in a piece of their work, many people would want to wear such clothes. You want to learn to sew? Purred the spokeswoman “Yes, I do.”

“And can you manage to sew on a button?” She asked squinting.

“Coo ... of course.”

Weed was able to sew on buttons as well as he used a spoon.

He sewed a few buttons, and received a new message.

You have learned the skill of tailoring

Saying goodbye to the representative, Weed left the guild. Unfortunately, in contrast to the Blacksmith Guild, tailors didn't get jobs at the guild, so he sat in the corner of a street, and set to work.

In Liberty City people disappeared in the streets for days, leading a conversation or sunbathing, or doing anything else, so nobody paid attention to him. He cut a few pieces of fabric, then sewed them, and made his first clothes.

Your tailoring level has reached beginner 2.

You can now you can use a soft cloth to sew clothes.

Amazing! With his high Art level, and intermediate level handicraft skill he was able to immediately reach level 2.

He sewed a few fabrics he bought from the guild, and his skill level increased again. Weed did not suffer from stitching together pieces of fabric: the work was so familiar that he often didn't even bother to look at what he was doing. In real life, Lee Hyun often sewed buttons for his family or put patches on clothing.

Snip, snip!

Snip, snip!

Cut the fabric, sew a button!

Weed hands smoothly and gracefully fluttered over the clothes, as though his hands were a musician playing his instrument!

"Oh, great!"

"Look at his hands."

"Excellent!"

More and more people started to pay attention to Weed as he pulled the fabric. Indeed, many players wandered the streets and just watched others,

oh how easy it was! The people who were standing near Weed, lips were full of admiration, because he was very fast, and with just a few stitches he made clothes. But there were others “And this is something you can wear?”

“I don’t know, maybe you can. I think they’re clothes ...”

“If they’re clothes then they suck. Look. No embroidery, absolutely simple.”

Weed vaguely heard the whispers of players did not pay attention to them. Why did they expect something outstanding from a level 2 tailor, although it was impossible to say that the clothes were bad? After a while, sitting in the street under the eyes of many onlookers, Weed raised his tailoring skills up to beginner 4.

Now, when the bag was stuffed to the brim with weapons and clothing, Weed decided to take a risk.

“Slowly ...”

Weed pulled from the bottom of his buckskin bags. He got it as a gift from the people of Mora -----

High quality deer skin: Durability 5/5.

Items associated with craft skills.

Can be made into leather clothing or other equipment.

Depending on the skill level, the effects obtained can be strengthened or changed Requirements: Tailoring level 2.

Weed probably should not have used the material until he reached the intermediate level.

But Weed had firmly decided something. Time was money. It was important to quickly increase the skill level, and if he had to use good materials, well then this would be his fate Snip, snip!

Weed very slowly and carefully sewed clothes.

Monk Tunic:Durability: 40/40 Defense: 13.

Men's tunic made of deer skin.

Cover the body excellently and emphasizes the figure.

Suited for a monk.

Requirements: Level 15.

Effects: Gives a 2% boost in agility

Your tailoring skill has greatly improved.Your Tailoring level has reach
beginner 5.

Through skilful work, seams will not break, and the strength or garments
are increased.

To sew a tunic Weed spent four pieces of skin.

“Just look ... it looks good ...”

“Yeah. It looks soft even in appearance and it made out of excellent
material.”

Spectators were amazed that in less than a couple of hours, an unknown
player was able to make such good clothes.

"Are sewing skills really that easy to master?"

“I don't know. My friend initially chose to become a tailor, but for a
whole day of work he gets only defective clothes, so he deleted his
character ...”

“Being a tailor is not easy. I also know many people who have chosen it,
and then shedding many tears.”

“How can this guy learn so quickly and sew such good clothes”

Weed was still sitting and he ignored the people' talking. He took out a
few pieces of deer skin and began to sew gloves and boots.

After the quest, he received 200 pieces of deer skin, so he was not short

on supplies So, slowly working, Weed raised tailoring skill to beginner 9.

In theory, by using a special material, it would not take a long time to get to the intermediate level of a profession. But the level simply would not grow.

This was because there was a restriction. The creators of the game decided that, over time, high level players could start to learn trade skills. Because they would have access to better materials they would have a great advantage over players that started off with craft skills. Therefore, there was a time limit imposed on created things, after which the player would no longer receive experience.

Chapter 3: Prismatic Clothing Auctions

Daring people like Weed, in search of adventure, often chose to start off in the capital of small kingdoms, like Rosenheim. Usually these players would then head to large populated cities where it was easier to get a good weapon, join a good party, and roam without straying far from the city gates.

At the main gate of Liberty City, there was a flock of people surrounding one person. He wore a strange helmet, a necklace, a cloak, and conspicuous white gloves.

"If you leave me your stuff, I'll fix it for free, and it'll be as good as new! If you bring me your leather or fabric, then I'll make you good clothes! If you bring me ore, then I'll give you a weapon or armor! If you bring me meat, I'll make you delicious food! In addition, the food I roast will increase your vitality by at least 150 points! And it's delicious!"

Nevertheless, such cries did not attract many players. The main reason was because the man offering his services was poorly dressed and badly armed.

"Is it true that if I bring you meat, it'll increase vitality?"

"I have a few skin pouches; can you really make them into clothes?"

However, the crowd shot down the few hopefuls, and shook their heads disapprovingly.

"Another impostor has appeared."

"Guys, do not fall for the hype. It's just a ploy to gain your items and escape."

"Yeah, a lot of new players do this, there are types of people like him."

"Think with your head. He sews clothes, prepares meals, repairs and forges weapons - have you ever heard of such a man? This is a scam!"

"Man, if you're a newbie, do something else, go hunting. Why do you try to fool other players? Ay-ay-ay ..."

After hearing such talk, many players grew angry.

"Oh, you dirty bastard!"

"Get out of here, you liar!"

The man at the gate was called Weed.

Standing calmly, he quietly listened to the torrent of insults. Yes, it was unpleasant but that was life. If you think about it, they were not wrong to suspect him. It would pretty much be impossible to find someone that knew how to sew, cook, and forging.

Not to mention, Weed even knew how to sculpt and fish. Learning new skills was not easy. It wasn't as simple as going to a guild and training. First, you had to work hard, and you had to develop the skills through constant repetition as Weed had. Therefore, to meet such a player in the game was somewhat incredible.

Even he wouldn't have believed it if he were told of such a person in the beginning. But Weed wasn't a newbie anymore. He was experienced in making money. Before, if he had so many players shouting and criticizing him, he would've experienced shock and tried to run away, but not this time.

During his empiricism, Weed sold hundreds of figurines, gained experience, and learnt how to measure the situation. He knew how, and what to do in order to squeeze out the maximum profit even when selling something simple. Weed was a professional in these matters.

"Let's start with the simple problem"

The main causes of distrust were - the erroneous idea that he was low level and the suggestion that he was trying to scam them. It was necessary to eliminate them, and then the situation would change dramatically.

"Well, that's that. Calling Death Knight!"

Weed with a disgruntled look on his face took out a red necklace and whispered something. Black smoke appeared, and out came the death knight.

"You called me master?"

"Stay here and do not move."

"Got it. Master."

The Death Knight stood menacingly near Weed. He wished to discipline the players that insulted him but money came first. The results didn't take long to achieve.

"Hey, what's with that guy?"

"He called a Death Knight."

"That's a Death Knight? Yes, it looks gloomy ..."

"Yeah, it's a death knight. It looks exactly like the one I saw online"

"Death Knights are above level 200. I don't believe it. Maybe it's magic? Is he a dark wizard?"

"A Dark Wizard - it's a second job advancement for mages? So it requires a level of 280 ..."

Now the unrest slowly turned into interest.

"Why would a man with such a high level scam newbies?"

"Yes, it's all mixed up. So is he scamming or not?"

"If you think about it, maybe he's telling the truth ..."

People began to slowly gather around Weed.

Those who shouted the loudest and accused him of scamming were the first to come. One of these people uncertainly handed Weed the cheapest meat he had.

"You can cook it right?"

"Yes. Wait a while. Payment will be 30 coppers."

Weed made a fire in the hearth and began to cook the meat. Adding a bit of spice, he flipped it a couple of times.

"Try it."

From the fried meat spread an attractive aroma. Everyone looked at the guy that got the meat. He hesitantly and cautiously bit off a little piece.

Yum-yum!

And ate it all instantly.

Then he quickly opened his bag, pulled out all the meat he had and handed it to Weed.

My vitality increased by 160 points. I'll pay, please cook it!

"Me too!"

"And me ..."

The situation changed dramatically. Many players sought him as soon as possible to cook their meat. An additional 160 points in vitality greatly added health and allowed them hunt more powerful monsters.

"Good! All right. Stand in line, please!" Weed shouted in order to be heard by all the players.

The line became huge. Roasting meat did not require special attention, and Weed quickly served people. He threw the meat on the grill and fried it expertly, while listening to a lot of questions.

"Next time I'll get more meat, will you cook them too?"

"What's your name, I will look for you again."

Weed gently smiled and answered every question.

"My name is Weed. Visit me any time."

"Weed. Understood. I'll look for you next time."

"You said Weed? Coincidentally ..."

In Royal Road nicknames were not unique. So many people played Royal Road that if you didn't allow people to have the same name, the game would have many strange and meaningless names ones with numbers attached . Therefore, developers took care of this by introducing a system where a unique number is assigned to each person.

"Do you happen to be the one who fulfilled the task for the Order of Freya?"

"Yes, please tell us!"

All the talk about Weed's success started in Liberty City, so it is not surprising that in the crowd there was not one person who had not heard of Weed. Yes, and in the whole game, as an NPC reached lv 30 it would start talking about someone in the continent.

"If that is the case ..."

Before Weed could say anything, the players themselves all discussed together.

"Incidentally, is this the same Weed from the Continent of Magic?"

"No, it can't be. Weed is a common name."

"Exactly. A lot of players have that name"

"Yeah, my friend also uses the nickname Weed."

After what Weed did in the 'Continent of Magic' the name Weed in 'Royal Road' became extremely common. When Weed was selling figurines, he met 6 buyers with the same name.

That is why the Pale, Surka, Romune and Irene did not even imagine that they were playing with the very same Weed.

"Hmm, it's still strange that out of nowhere appears a player named Weed and he begins to help players ... weird"

"So what? He called a Death Knight; as far as I know, even among the summoners there is none who can do so."

"Yes, let's think about the evidence in front of our eyes. Weed also destroyed the clan of vampires, did he not?"

"Yeah, they say he has a high level of faith. Tell me, where can a cook gain faith?"

"That's right, no player from the craft professions will be able to complete such a difficult task."

"Take a look. Weed is silent and isn't saying anything."

So, after much discussion the players persuaded themselves that this was not The Weed.

In any case, now no one called him a fraud.

Everybody thought that he was such a great cook, that the death knight decided to serve him.

Weed then again, as before, shouted out:

"If you leave me your stuff, I'll fix it for free, and it'll be as good as new! If you bring me your leather or fabric, then I'll make you good clothes! If you bring me ore, then I'll give you a weapon or armor! If you bring me meat, I'll make you delicious food! In addition, the food I roast will increase your vitality by at least 150 points! And it's delicious!"

Now people with pieces of skin gave it to him.

"Make me clothes."

"Me too."

"I'm new, and I have no armor."

Weed quickly examined the skin. As he expected, most of them were the skins of wolves or rabbits, and very rarely an ordinary deerskin.

"What kind of clothes do you make?"

"Please make me some pants."

"I will prepare you stylish and comfortable pants with good protection; wait a little, I will do everything"

Weed took from his pocket a needle, thread and scissors. Cut the skin and made pants. Of course, he didn't just pick up the pieces and stitch leather. Weed first estimated the size of the guy.

"If he's that size, then ..."

He cut off the skin and then stitched excellent pants. He made the hips loose, with wide pockets ... On the bottom edge, reaching up to the heel, he visually lengthen the leg. Weed thought of everything and made stylish

pants out of simple skin.

Quality leather pants :

Durability: 30/30. Protection 10.

Pants made of rabbit skin. This is not the best material for sewing, but thanks to the amazing talent of the tailor its deficiency was overcome.

"It turned out well" Weed even surprised himself. But he showed nothing besides a confident smile, as he handed over the pants.

For Weed, comparing the pants with his current clothes was pointless. As for the newbie, the pants would provide good protection for a long time. And it was all thanks to his intermediate handcrafting skill, without such this would not have happened.

"Wow, that's so good ..."

the newbie said as he took the pants from Weed's hands. He was speechless, rabbit skins, one of the most worthless materials in the game were turned into pants that could be worn without problems until level 30.

"That'll be 1 silver."

As Weed received commissions he continued to sew clothes for a long line of players. Hats, shirts, and gloves, with just a few strokes of his arms. Weed didn't even have to concentrate. It was like working in a factory again, only this time he didn't have to work in a musty room but in the clean streets of Liberty City.

There was a cool and pleasant breeze, but people who were waiting in line only felt the sun burn their eyes.

"Wow! Thank you so much for such a cool tunic. I'll wear it now. And if I bring more skin, will you sew another dress?"

When beginners received their new armor they would dance with joy.

With their new high-quality hunting clothes they would be able to hunt faster, and more securely.

Rumors of an unprecedented master spread already to the point where many players lined up in advance. Most immediately ordered food, clothing, and equipment repair. Only somewhere in the evening was there a player who nervously, handed Weed just three pieces of ore.

"You can really make armor?"

"Of course. What armor do you want? For the record, making armor requires 30 pieces of ore. And with just this, by adding the skin I can make some boots."

"Then please make some boots."

"That'll be 3 silver."

"Good."

Weed melted the ore in the furnace, poured it into the selected forms and received the boots.

Unclean Iron boots:

Durability: 35/35

Defense: 6.

Iron alloy boots. Although the defense is not high, they are comfortable and durable.

Effects:

Dexterity +2.

Usually boots made of iron and bronze have more protection than boots made of leather. But there was not enough metal.

And then, in a burst of inspiration!

Weed cut on the boots a fox with nine tails. A final touch reflecting his

personality. A kind of signature.

Tink!

The properties of the object have changed.

Artistic Unclean Iron Boots:

Durability: 38/38

Defense: 7.

Iron alloy boots. Although, the defense is not high, they are comfortable and durable. The image of a sly fox further increases the strength and health of the host.

Effects:

Dexterity +2

Strength +1

Stamina +1

Intermediate level sculpting was designed to improve the performance of objects. Maybe not much, but still two features were added.

Other skills could be applied to sculpting and only now it occurred to him that sculpting could be applied to other skills also.

"Damn it, the increase wasn't that great. It was good, but only slight better. "

The more Weed played the better he understood that all craft professions require secondary skills. Just like in life. Prominent figures who have left their mark in history, have been diversely gifted in art, mathematics and other sciences.

And they were all well-known sculptors!

Weed finally realized that being a sculptor was not as much to the artisan craft as an art. It was a peaceful occupation that did not help

battle. While this was not entirely true, the effects of beautiful sculptures had often rescued Weed; but to create such a work was so hard that it did not matter. The usual sculptures were just useless trinkets.

In addition, to raise the levels in sculpting was a lot harder than other professions. While soldiers battled, and blacksmiths forged weapons, sculptors had to create conventional sculptures and languish.

And even if after the labors they were able to reach the intermediate level of skill, the situation could not be changed, so to create a beautiful sculpture was not so easy.

But these were no useless professions: for example, the higher the level of the cooking skill was, the more tasty and healthy food he could prepare. It was the same with the sculpting.

Engraving technique and statue destruction - a unique ability of the sculptor that will never be known to any other class. And only through the work of the sculptures can one so quickly develop the skill and craftsmanship to master the skills of other professions. However, for such progress required great tenacity and originality.

"Here you go."

"Thank you" said the player who bought the boots, and in a burst of gratitude gave a 1 gold.

If he were to buy it from a shop it would cost at least 10 gold. In addition, the boots met with the requirements, so the player paid more than the original price with no regrets.

"Thank you."

"Be sure to take a look."

"I found a golden thread; can I give it to you?"

The things he made sold like hot cakes. Weed worked with full dedication, but the line never decreased, in contrast it grew.

Metal, leather, or fabric, even things that were usually thrown away, in the hands of weed it turned into treasure. Weed never refused a job and

the players adored him.

Weed was trembling with excitement.

In the past, when selling his figurines he had to carefully assess his customers and make great efforts to convince players to buy them. But now, thanks to the skill of a blacksmith, everything he did resulted in a cheer. He was doing really useful things, and people were grateful for it.

"Hmm ... when compared with the profession of a sculptor, everything else looked extremely useful."

After these thoughts, all pre-thoughts that showered love for his profession immediately disappeared and Weed began to be skeptical again.

"Maybe I should get a job change? I could become a blacksmith and put all of my effort into developing my skills. And then I'll just create beautiful things. I won't have to worry about money, because even if I stopped trying, money would still flow into my pockets."

Yes, the profession of a blacksmith was easier than a sculptor, but there were its advantages. However, Weed did not relax and back down from complaining: "Eh ...it's too late though I really wanted to change it. Oh, my pitiful life. "

Weed without rest did one thing at a time. He took any material with some small commission and worked tirelessly at it. He had one main goal – to do more jobs, and quickly boost his skill level. The higher the level of the blacksmith, the better the tools they tried to use. So people were amazed at what Weed was making without the use of high quality tools.

"He's really a good person."

"Yeah, look at all the good things he's doing ..."

"He's simple and not greedy."

At the gates of Liberty City were two richly dressed men.

Behind one of the men hung a huge blade; it was a two handed sword that struck with a lot of force, and the other man was one of the few Druid

Heliolaters in the game.

To become a follower of the sun, you had to be at least of level 250. To reach this level at this point in the game meant you were one of the highest level players.

They looked at Weed and whispered:

"Oh, a true master."

"Exactly. A conscientious and honest man"

"And smart. He cleverly thought ahead when he chose his profession..."

"Yes, starting with a craft profession is really reliable."

"I agree, and he doesn't just have one kind of skill but many..."

They stood and talked about Weed. Of course, they never found out about all the agony Weed faced as a sculptor. In their eyes, he had a very clever and thoughtful game plan.

Everything he made scattered in no time.

Design! Due to his high 'art' all the items he made had excellent design. Quality! The stats of his items were much superior to their counterparts in the shops of traders.

In general, it was not surprising that his things sold so well.

Weed's name instantly spread throughout all adjacent lands. Some players, receiving messages from friends, even began to come from other settlements.

It was hard to find a good craftsman. Most players had to go with the standard weapon from monsters or buy from NPCs. In addition, many players had saved up skin, ore and other materials from their hunts.

Weed did not refuse anyone and with any material created useful goods. When the line built up to a considerable number of players he began selling his previously created deerskin clothes.

Full of hope Weed arranged for an auction:

"Sale of sewed clothes. Suitable for priests and monks. Good, high

quality equipment from the skin of deer. The quantity is limited, so I will sell it to the one who offers the highest price!"

Suddenly, Priests and monks in the crowd eyes lit up. In the continent of Versailles there were not as many monsters with good cleric gear.

"One for 160 gold!"

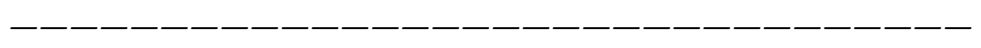
"Over here 200 gold!"

Clothes sold out within a few moments. Weed did not scam them, the quality was excellent, and were meant for players over level 100.

For the tunics people offered 200 to 300 gold, and a hat and boots sold for 50 or more gold. Thanks to the auction he earned more than 1000 gold.

And long after the end of the auction people came up and whispered trying to find out, whether there was at least one thing from the hide of a deer.

A couple of days after the auction, Weed had served more than one hundred people, and then finally achieved the desired result.



Your blacksmithing skill has exceeded level 10 and has reached the intermediate stage.

New skills:

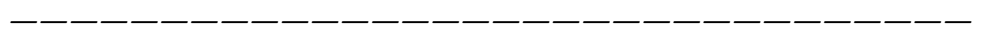
Sword Grind, and Armor Polish

Sword Grind – Grinds the sword, weapon damage is amplified
Armor Polish – confuses and dazzles enemies along with an increase in defense.

+5 To all stats

Reputation +50.

Art +3.



After some time his sewing skills reached the intermediate. Previously,

Weed thought he would first raise sewing skills, but he was wrong because he didn't take into account that the majority of people in the game were soldiers and they only asked him to make swords. Therefore, his sewing skill was late.

Your tailoring skill has exceeded level 10 and has reached the intermediate stage.

New skills: Ironing, and Hand washing +5 To all stats

Reputation +50.

Art +70.

Ironing - increases defense

Wash - requires water. Wash your dirty clothes in the water. This will improve the defenses of the object. Severe washing will wear and tear clothes. Skill can be used no more than 3 times on one set of clothes.

+5 To all stats

Reputation +50.

Art +70.

On that day, when his skills passed the intermediate stage, Weed served his last two clients and made an announcement. He climbed up on the table and, after looking around the crowd of players, many of whom came from neighboring kingdoms, shouted as loudly as possible to be heard by all: "Hello everyone, I'm asking for your attention. Due to personal reasons, for a while I cannot sew clothes or make weapons. I'm sorry. But there is good news! After 4 days, I will finally expose a single product. My sewing has reached the intermediate stage, and now I can make clothes out of Prismatic cloth! Come again in 4 days and you will not be disappointed!"

After those words, Weed wrapped his things and fled.

"Prismatic cloth?"

"What's that?"

People came up with many theories, but eventually curiosity won out, and players, disconnected from the game to look for information on sites devoted to Royal Road.

Sovereign Prismatic Cloth

Durability 5/5.

Item artisan skills. Excellent material for clothing and other equipment. During the manufacturing process 7 attributes will be chosen at random. Excellent protection from arrows and blunt weapons. To work with the fabric requires intermediate level tailoring.

It is now known where the fabric comes from but it is also known that it is not easy to get.

Tier 1 sewing material.

Effects: Grants seven randomly generated attributes.

Suddenly an unknown player shouted out that it was used to create high quality clothes.

Rumors spread on the internet faster than the speed of light. On the appointed day at the gates of the city, so many people had gathered that it was packed. Some people ran day and night from other kingdoms in hope to buy the clothes.

Yes, there were a lot of players, and various guilds were present. In the vast continent of Versailles there was a full on war between guilds, so in the auction, there were not friends, but implacable enemies.

All because of the hope to buy some unique items.

"Let's start the auction!"

Weed's auction was conducted by Mapan.

Of course, during the time he was crafting his face was seen by many, but now the crowd was ten, or twenty times larger, and he was sure someone would post a movie of the online auction. Weed didn't want to attract attention to himself and be identified as the Princess Knight, so he asked Mapan to hold his auction.

"So, the 1st lot ... Ah! Mr. Weed has prepared for us 13 items. For reference, one of them is unique, 5 are rare, and the rest are usual. So, lets start with ordinary objects. The first lot ..."

"1000 gold!"

"1500!"

"2400!"

"4000!"

The people fought to the last, so that at least one object fell into their hands.

Of course, things put up for auction are important, but so is the auction site and each participant - all heavily influencing the price of the object. If you advertise and then sell in a remote village, where only a few players were, no one would buy.

To make a good auction, you must first gather those interested, and then carefully maintain and create heated competition for the goods between the players and their greed.

Here is the secret to an auction!

Thanks to a great-planned auction, Weed sold all his rainbow tunics. The next day, people continued to come to the old place, but Weed, as promised, was gone.

Chapter 4: Engraving Master Darone

Bensa River

It was the lifeline of the British Confederation. Strolling across the expanses of the continent, it was said that along the river were nine spectacular sceneries.

When Royal Road was just released, players were enchanted by the river.

With dazzling beauty and tranquility, it was a place that pleased all travelers.

For this reason, many players choose to start off in the British Confederation: sometimes just to picnic by the river!

Couples would be littered about the river. Even the strong torrential rain did not scare them off because the river was so beautiful.

"Look at that. Can it really be that beautiful?"

"It's as if the sky has come to meet the river."

"As the rain falls into the river, it runs into the sea and fills it. Just like how my heart is filled with our love."

"Aww, I love you."

"Me too."

The heavy rain fell on the earth overshadowed by a dark sky. With the rising mist, and thick white fog, an impression that the river and sky touching was created. As a result, a beautiful yet terrifying scene was portrayed.

Couples sitting lovingly together under a tree would watch the scene as they made promises of eternal love to each other. Conversation made at that time would remain in their memories for a long time.

But the world can be quite cruel to love!

"Wow! There's a lot of water."

"Yeah there's a lot ..."

"It's a little bit strange."

"I'm scared..."

"Oh no! The water is getting closer!"

"Huh, I think it's closer than before."

"Oh no! Oh no! Oh no!"

The river was constantly changing. Many small streams ran into the river and nourished it. As the streams filled it, the rain gave it momentum. Eventually it would go so fast that the water would explode flooding its banks.

"Ahhhh!"

"Save me!"

"We have to run!"

"This is hell!"

Huge waves swallowed careless couples. In the thick fog, it was a battle for life and death.

People were screaming, running, trying to escape, but to no avail: the river showed no mercy to them.

Spectators watched from afar, those that couldn't stand the sight of lovers chose a place far away from the river, and watched happily as they were swept away. In real life, they lived a life of solitude, so an indifferent smile decorated their faces.

"Hehehe!"

"Ahahah!"

"Amazing!"

Even for all the money in the world, you could not see such a sight. The fearsome waves as they carried the couples away. The snow storms in the province of Mora. In the vast continent of Versailles these sights were priceless.

The Bensa River flowed peacefully. After the horrendous downpour, the river returned to its natural state, a majestic river flowing smoothly and slowly.

People living near the place at the time would find themselves becoming calm, and soothed.

However there were others, one person had cold and prickly eyes as he looked down at the people below.

The man was Weed.

"Ha, well now, I'll be sure to catch something big!"

It had been a week since he began to fish in the river. While fishing he honed his sculpting skills but that was the only thing he made progress on. His blacksmithing and tailoring levels rose quickly because of his high handcrafting skill but fishing was different. It all depended on what kind of fish you caught.

And if you used the best bait, no one could predict what kind of fish you would get and what the fish would do.

Maybe you would catch something, or maybe the fish would just eat the bait.

Weed had been sitting on the bank of the river for a whole week and he only reached beginner level 3 for fishing.

"Definitely something large. Yes, I'm going to catch a huge fish."

He closely followed the float with his eyes, without losing focus for even a second. Spinning in the crystal water the fish would try to steal the bait on the hook.

"Selling expensive fish!"

If it wasn't for the salary he received from the CST Media, money from the awards he gained from the Order of Freya, the revenue he made from repairing items, and the auction, Weed would not have had the opportunity to waste time. However, with money, he could now relax and develop his fishing skills.

Although he was in such a serene setting, Weed shuddered at the thought of depositing his savings.

To pay for his sister's tuition, he needed to set aside 2 million won every month. Since he had no regular income, his payment would have to be postponed every month. Weed felt like the protagonist in a horror movie.

Not surprisingly, he shuddered because all of the money would only cover breakfast.

Even the fact that he opened an account at a savings bank for mutual credit, where the annual rate of interest was 2% above average compared to other banks, did not save him from his anxiety.

If the bank went bankrupt, the government would only return up to 50,000 won. That is if the bank was connected to a major politician. Also he was sceptical of the savings bank.

"South Korea's politicians are a hotbed of corruption. They often create a bank for money laundering, so it's not surprising that they cannot give large profits."

Every day while fishing, Weed could not stop thinking about sculptural design. As a moonlight sculptor, he was influenced heavily by the local ice sculptures in Mora.

"I wish I was at Baran or Laviase. The sculptures there are probably harmonized with their surrounding environment. Hmm, I wonder what kind of sculpture would fit a river landscape. "

Making a fine piece or even a grand piece was not so easy. He needed an original idea and he had to implement it perfectly.

"There's a flowing river, and I catch in it... I know! I'll make something that attracts fish!" Weed jumped so that he almost dropped his bait.

He immediately contacted Mapan.

"Hey, Mapan!"

"Yes! Weed" he said with all of his attention and respect.

After the auction, he had gained several levels along with unshakable

faith in Weed. He would even go so far to say that as long as you're with Weed, gold coins will fall from the sky into your pockets.

"I need a stone, the larger the better. Also make sure it's pure and clean."

"It'll take two days, especially since it's a rock."

Weed anxiously waited for Mapan as he fished. However, when he pulled his line up, often there was no fish.

Weed had spent so much good bait, and had nothing to show for it.

"This is impossible!" Out of anger he threw the rod on the ground. "I'm missing something."

The gears in his head began to spin wildly. Faced with a crisis he became fully immersed searching for his mistake.

Then he heard a voice:

"Ho-ho, you need to understand something. Fishing is something that cleans your soul. Fish freely float in the river, carelessly and deliberately. That is why we want to catch them so badly, right? But once we catch them, then they are not free anymore, they become just a piece of meat."

On the river, there were a lot of players who loved to fish. Even more, in real life they were related to fishing in one way or another. And in Royal Road, these players did not play because they liked to game, but because they liked fishing.

It was a fishing club.

For them, Royal Road became a place of promise. They fished in amazing places not found on Earth. Ate delicious, exotic fish and chatted with interesting people. Their characters were developed only through fishing.

Luckily, in Royal Road, players are not forced to do one thing. If you choose a craft profession, it does not mean that you have to sit day and night, making stuff. Also, craft skills raised a large variety of skills. For example, if you made armor, it would raise craftsmanship, blacksmithing, and a couple of other skills.

With this, all players could go hunt monsters and not feel too weak. As with sculpting and other skills, fishing also helps a player survive. It increases vitality, stamina, and endurance, and it also increases your reflexes because all you do all day is wait for a fish to bite your hook.

"I'll learn how to fish. I don't have to raise my levels again, but I'll have to relearn the basics of fishing."

Weed studied cooking by looking for new recipes in real life and in game. But he was too impatient to fish. As he reflected on his crisis he found one problem.

You can't rely on good bait and your fishing skill. Like engraving, you have to rely on your own skill, while the system assists you. But as the saying goes, "trust but verify" so Weed decided to approach the problem from another angle.

He joined the fishing club and began to learn the basics of fishing.

He learned how to select and string bait, how to choose a place for fishing, and much, much more.

"So... Depending on where you are, the kind of fish you catch will be different?" Weed asked the jolly bearded fisherman "Yup, that's absolutely true. Think to yourself. At sea, you won't find river fish, and at a river you won't find any whales. "

"Uh... I already knew that. I mean does it matter where I fish along a river?"

"Tsk tsk" clicked the fisherman, squinting he said "Is the water in a river the same everywhere?"

There are deep places, and there are shallow waters. Stony places with seaweed, with pure water, mixed with food, without food, with cold water or with warm water. By the way, the latter is particularly important: When there is a convergence of cold and warm water, one can find there the most delicious fish..

"Oh. So that's how ..."

Weed realized that what he had thought initially was wrong. He would choose a secluded spot because he thought there would be no more fish in crowded areas. He then chose to sit among a group of fishermen but found it too noisy and crowded. However, now he knew that location mattered so Weed, without hesitating, fished near a skilled fisherman.

"Uhhh, this is great!" Weed said happily

After changing his location and selecting his bait, the quality of fish he caught improved. In addition, he caught much more fish than before.

"Here, I brought a stone" said Mapan, pointing to a cart with a big gray boulder inside.

"Thank you, Mapan."

"Ah. .. What are you going to do with it ..."

"Well, if you have the time, wait and see. Although I may be wrong ..."

"Are you going to make a sculpture?"

"Even though I know this might fail but..."

Mapan had seen Weed create amazing sculptures many times. He loved to observe him work, and sat watching on the ground, waiting for him to work.

Weed fiddled with his knife and tried to figure out something.

Perhaps the sculpture would show the peak of his current skills. Weed believed that he would succeed even though he was making a rock sculpture for the first time. He didn't want to rush and mess up the sculpture. Novices would often immediately rush to work, and then mess up, resulting in penalties.

Mapan waited a moment and said:

"What are you going to make?"

"Uhhh..."

"Still don't know yourself?"

Weed gave a silent nod. Mapan hit the nail on the head. We need to do

something that will help me raise my fishing level. Just what is it?

"Maybe we can make a huge bait?" Weed seriously considered the suggestion but decided against it. No, that's stupid; the statue would just scare the fish.

"We need to make a sculpture associated with the sea, something good which attracts fish ... Yes, a woman. A Mermaid!"

The well-known fairy tale of a mermaid:

Once there was a mermaid princess that lived her whole life under water, and when she was 15, she went above water for the first time in her life. At that moment, she saw a ship with a young prince on board. Surprisingly, she fell in love at first sight and for several days accompanied the ship. But then there was a storm. The ship began to sink, and the mermaid caught the unconscious prince and rescued him. When the prince woke he thought the temple girl saved him so he decided to marry her. Upon hearing this, the little mermaid in desperation turned to a dark witch, and got human legs in exchange for her beautiful voice. She went into the palace and tried to win the prince over but failed.

In despair she jumped out of a window into the sea and turned into sea foam. All the inhabitants of the sea bitterly mourned her death and often visited her resting place.

"Yes, a mermaid would be the best, and fish would swim to the location of the statue."

Weed worked hard carving with his knife. Recently he made sculptures of women by hand and so without further ado he again embodied the image of Seoyoon.

However, this time he would have to make changes.

"Everything below the belt should be a fish tail...bigger eyes, flowing hair... Hmm, I'll also have to make the top nude."

Weed stopped and appreciated the work done. The face appeared quite similar to Seoyoon. He was ashamed a little of making her naked. Internally, he opposed it; besides if she saw it, then he would be in trouble.

"Hmm, what should I do ... Ahh! I'll just remake an actress" Weed began to recall well-known actresses and made changes to the sculpture. The face changed a lot, and the body became more curved."

Interested fishermen gathered around Weed.

"Oh! What is this?"

"A Sculpture. I've never seen a sculptor like him before."

"It's beautiful."

Fishing on the river was slow and boring, so strange events attracted many players. Weed, scrolling through images in his head, quickly cut out details in the sculpture. In the end, it turned out as a beautiful but sad girl with a baby face.

Weed made sure to make the sculpture young because, as in the legend the little mermaid was not a grown woman.

Tink!

You have finished the Sea Nymph SculptureThe outstanding work of a master engraver Artistic value: 450.

Effects: The power of a water spirit will prevent the river from flooding for 10 years.

This effect cannot be combined with other sculptures.

"..."

Weed lowered his hands.

The statue was supposed to help catch fish, and not give any extra effects.

A Water nymph "the daughter of the sea god, with a nice fish tail." Apparently a nymph and a mermaid was something similar, and this similarity played a cruel joke.

"You ..."

The fishermen condemned weed as they looked at the statue. For them, as solitary men they liked to watch the river as it carried couples away. And now there was a sculpture that would prevent floods for the next 10 years. Weed had become the enemy of most anglers.

"Honestly, I didn't intend for this" justified Weed as the fishermen closed in on him.

"Ah! I'll fix everything!"

In his situation, he had to act quickly. Weed turned toward the sculpture and shouted: "Sculpture destruction!"

From the base of the sculpture, up-to-head, appeared a huge crack, and when it reached the top of the sculpture, it shattered into many small fragments.

You have used a skill: Sculpture destruction Because of great regret you lose 1 Art stat and lose 20 fame.

A ratio of 1:2 of your art stat has been added to you dexterity for one day.

Sculpting Skill has risen by 0.2%

Even with the destruction of a sculpture it was one of the skills of a sculptor, so it gave experience points. Even more points than creating sculptures. But it could not be used more than once a day and decreased performance.

1800 points from his art stat was added to his dexterity.

Now he fished so quickly that his hands were a blur. However, his fishing rate was not affected, but it still looked impressive.

*

The Geomchis gripped their blades.

"Ohhh!"

"We got everything but the dragon!"

After a quick death, the Geomchis were full of determination again.

Revived, they appeared somewhere in the forest and Geomohochi, standing on a tree, calmly surveyed the surrounding area.

"Fifth, what you see?" the teacher anxiously asked

"I don't see anything."

"Geomsamchi, what about you?"

"I see ... a boy."

"A little boy! Does that mean there's a town nearby?" As the master jumped up so did all 500 of his students.

Frankly, they did not want to admit it, but they were lost. After fearlessly attacking the dragon, many of them died and were reborn somewhere to the south of Rosenheim. With their supplies long gone, the Geomchis resorted to forest barriers and rare game from hunting.

Rare because the group of 500 could not move quietly enough to catch animals off guard. And because none of them knew how to cook, they ate under cooked or burnt meat, making everyone sick.

"Bring him here."

"There he is."

Geomsamchi quickly ran forward and brought the boy.

The Geomchis, looking at the child could not help but cry.

"Ohhh!"

"How long has it been since we've seen people?"

"Finally we can go back to a village."

"And eat delicious bread. Yum-yum."

The master on behalf of his students asked the child:

"Is there is a village nearby?"

The child looked nervous and stuttered:

"Ye-y-y-y ... Yes, but who are these uncles?"

"Uncles!" The crowd quickly became rowdy.

"Why did you call us uncles!" "We're not even married. We are young!"

"And I am only 20!" There was a pained cry from the crowd.

The Geomchis responded very strongly to the boy's words, though, they should have been happy that they were not mistaken for robbers.

With the boy's words the Geomchis began to reflect on themselves.

"That's weird. I see strangers form parties and hunt together but we don't do that."

"Why don't we?"

"Yeah. Wherever we go, people scatter."

"Also in the fortress of Seraburg! When we went to the market, people avoided us."

"This reminds me, we've never hunted with women! If this continues, we will live a lonely life, and die forgotten as a lonely old fart!"

The Geomchis for the hundredth time shared the same experience. Then the boy fell on his knees.

"Please help me!"

"Huh?"

"My parents have been taken away by the evil giant! I left the village in order to find help. I beg you, please save them!"

Tink!

A Giant man has been kidnapping villagers.

The giant man "a type of monster related to the giants" torments the villagers around the clock. Abducted villagers have to cook, wash, clean, and collect food for the monster. In return for their work they are given

very severe beatings. Kidnapped people often die quickly from exhaustion.

Save the boy's parents or they will die!

Reward: Black sword, and gratitude from the villagers Failure: Not completed within: 10 days -----

The instructors and students looked expectantly at their master. For them, doing quests was like being an errand boy, so they always refused to accept quests.

But this time, the master smiled gently and said:

"We will save your parents."

"Master, don't we usually refuse? Geomdulchi asked.

"Well, usually we refuse quest for bringing or collecting things. But as warriors we should help those who are in trouble, that goes without saying"

the teacher answered firmly.

"Then we will also ..."

"Everyone take the quest. We're going to catch a giant."

With the words "first the sword," the students cheered.

"Wow!"

"A quest!"

"I can't believe we're doing a quest!"

It was a dream of all real warriors to help those in need and drive out monsters!

The Geomchis headed toward the giant. It was not difficult, since along the way were traces of the giant on the ground.

"Oh! That's big."

"Probably more than 3 meters in diameter."

"If his foot is this big, then how big is the body?"

When doing quests, regular players would first gather information and prepare in advance. However, the Geomchis stupidly went on ahead. Following the tracks they came across a huge cave as big as the dragon's cave they came across before.

At the sound of the Geomchis, a huge, but not very intelligent monster appeared. As the giant walked out of his cave it grew angry at the sight of uninvited guests.

Boom-boom-boom!

The giant man ran toward the Geomchis, and the ground shook as if there was an earthquake.

"Run!" Shouted the teacher.

They scattered harmoniously left and right.

Wham!

The huge foot of the giant left a deep mark on the spot where the Geomchis were standing.

"What is this..."

With his weight and feet as weapons, he was bound to kill some of the Geomchis.

The Giant, shouting, was jumping, trying to crush the Geomchis. However, they avoided the jumps and struck at his feet.

"Now, grab him!"

The first and second Geomchis smartly climbed onto the giant. The monster didn't like it, and started to wave his arms around to get rid of the pesky soldiers on the back of his head.

"Uhuu!"

The first three Geomchis, clutching the giant's hair and clothes avoided his attacks.

Meanwhile, down below, many blows were dealt on his foot.

Like a huge elephant being taken down by a swarm of ants, the giant lost

its strength, staggered, and fell onto the ground.

Kwaahang!

"Victory!"

"All thanks to you, Master!"

While the Geomchis celebrated, a small boy appeared in the distance. He ran exhausted – looking at the men that were appearing from the cave. Embracing them, and telling them something while pointing to the Geomchis. Eventually he came up to the Geomchis.

"Thank you for saving my father and mother, uncle."

"Why...It's nothing."

"No, it is, as promised a reward."

You have completed the quest, Liberation the villagers from the giant's captivity.

The giant man, who lived in the mountains, caught and terrorized the villagers.

With his death, finally, comes peace.

Familiarity increased by 26

Relations with the village of Ulkyn has become friendly.

- Your level has risen

- Your level has risen

The boy bringing a sword much too heavy for him handed it to the master.

"Here, take it."

"Check item" the master quickly examined the sword, and found that it was much better than what they had at present.

"The rest of the swords are in the village. And our village is famous for medicinal herbs. In appreciation, we would like to give them to you, and if you want, you can sell them in the city for a good price."

The disciples were stunned that the boy did not disappoint them. They helped people in distress, increased their fame, while still training!

"Cheers!"

"OOOO! Now, let's keep going!"

Royal road gradually opened to the Geomchis.

Weed rose his fishing seriously.

"As long as I get an average fish, I will only eat fish."

He swallowed the fish whole, and with each new dish his determination grew stronger. Sometimes not wanting to waste time he ate the fish raw.

"Wow! Muck."

Weed kept on fishing only on the strength of his will and obstinacy.

He always liked to fight, collect items and get stronger. Which he could do indefinitely. Now however, what he was doing was nothing like that. Only a peaceful, leisurely fishing which didn't even make money, like his blacksmithing or tailoring skill. After all, if you catch a big and wonderful fish, it would be sold cheaply as food.

As the days passed his level rose to beginner level 9. More precisely, to 97.6%.

While he was fishing, he was surprised to learn of the existence of the fish market.

And next to Weed was always the same person. Slender and tall, a young man named Zephyr. Weed later found out that the guy started fishing here since the opening of Royal Road.

He was sitting on the rocks and gazed longingly at the Bensa River. It was said that some of the girls fell in love with this mysterious silent figure.

It would have probably went on as usual, but then came Weed. When he arrived, the strongest fisherman on the river was just Zephyr. His fishing level was well above average. Therefore, Weed decided, and sat down with the best fisherman on the river.

At first Zephyr paid hardly any attention to him, but gradually he began to respond to Weed. And at some point began to compare fish.

The two men grimly watched the river.

Zephyr's float first went under water.

"Oh great, a big fish!" Shouting, he pulled his rod back. But the only thing that hung on his hook was just an old boot."

"Damn."

Frustrated Zephyr sat on a rock and had started to stick on new bait, when Weed's float went under water.

Weed carefully, but with great control, was pulling his prey out of the river. As if playing a game, Weed and the fish pulled on the line. Using a lot of force was bad. Sometimes you have to let go a little, sometimes on the contrary, spin. Fish were strong, and if you thoughtlessly pulled at the line, then it was possible to break the line.

With a little trouble, Weed pulled out of the river a large carp. It was a humongous fish, more than 45 centimetres. In the history of fishing in the Bensa River, that fish ranked among the top 10 largest fish ever caught.

Tink!

Your fishing level has risen to level 10 and has reached the intermediate stage.

Now you can use rods as weapons.

+25 water affinity

+2000 life, increased effect when cooking fish the ability to catch specialty fish

+50% to the effects of fish bait

+3 to all stats,

+50 reputation

+30 endurance

+30 intelligence

+30 wisdom.

After so much of suffering, Weed, finally increased his fishing level.

Having achieved his goal, he began to slowly collect his things.

"While the focus on this is finally over" he thought to himself.

Weed set out to learn all the craft professions to master level. It was huge and demanding mission, which would take him more than one year.

But now with his stats increased Weed was pleased.

"Are you going?" Zephyr cautiously asked when he saw that Weed had begun to collect his belongings. His voice was full of regret.

"Yes, I must go."

"I just realized that we never spoke much ... And you ... you're probably older than me right?"

"Well if you ask, perhaps I am. Perhaps we'll even see each other again."

Weed left the Bensa River, and headed to the capital of the kingdom, Kroin, to sell his figurines, which he made while fishing.

Ding-dong!

He rang the bell on the door of the souvenir shop. The owner was at the counter alone.

"What leads you here?"

"I have come to sell some sculptures."

Weed put his products on the counter: figurines of vampires, wolves, the

crown of Fargo and many others.

"Wow!" The shopkeeper could not hide his delight. "Excellent! I have never seen such excellent products. I cannot even imagine their value. Such depth, such a flight of thought in these statues ... and you happen to look at the wolf, when they made this statue?"

"Yes, I did."

"Were you hungry?"

Weed nodding played along:

"Yes, I had to go hungry for four days."

"Oh! Even so. I feel it, when I look into the eyes of a wolf, a living statue ..."

"Ohoho" Weed laughed heartily, with the shop owner's last words he offered a prepared fried fish.

"Oh, yes! While you evaluate my products, try this dish, I cooked it myself. Eat it for Health and quietly gaze at my statues."

"Why thank you. Maybe I will look for you in the future. I too, was at one time engaged in the work of a sculptor, but alas, I didn't have much talent, so I had to open the shop."

"I have only recently embarked on the path of a sculptor, and I still have a lot to learn. But my desire to sculpt does not lose to anyone. Consider me a novice sculptor and suggest any advice if you see any errors. I will be very grateful."

"Impossible."

Flattery! Gifts! Dedication!

To the people that have influence, it is better to be a little obsequious and friendly. Weed brought a simple dish, said a few kind words, and his relationship with the owner of the shop greatly improved. Who would not be pleased when praised!

But compliments should be used carefully, and one should be careful not

to overpraise. Or else, his efforts would backfire. For example, if the shopkeeper had really short legs, and if such a person were to say that he looked very tall, then the effect would be the opposite.

The shopkeeper would immediately notice the flattery and begin to think, what do you want from him. In order not to fail so miserably, you had to carefully select words for compliments. Look very good, or when laughing look honest. Therefore, choosing his words, it was necessary to consider them.

You can even use criticism. Take all tall men and criticize them:

"Growth means nothing. If you do not possess eyes enabling to see and appreciate beauty, you cannot even understand the nature of good works."

"Yes, you are right."

So, while the shopkeeper priced figurines, they traded with each other phrases and their friendship strengthened.

After exchanging pleasantries and evaluating the figurines, they moved on to the main point: "How much would you give for them?"

Weed goal for the game never changed. Money, money, money and more time! He was ready to get out of his skin just to earn more money.

"For such a superb job, I will give you 3 gold per sculpture. Is that all right?"

"I'll sell them all" Weed replied without hesitation.

Recently, he stopped selling figurines to ordinary players. Even if you put in extra time and effort into your work, people would only pay something around 1 gold. But when you sell to a shop, it's possible to get 2 or 3 gold.

Although if you figured how much time he spent on the creation of figurines, the payment would not cover even the cost of simple physical labor.

It was much more efficient to make money by hunting rather than selling statuettes.

Weed gratefully took the 245 gold.

"Maybe when my level rises, I can earn more. But until then I'll have to do this" he thought sadly.

Throwing the money into his backpack, he was about to leave.

"I see you have a talent for sculptural design. You see beautiful things and make them into sculptures" said the shopkeeper.

Considering that this was another compliment Weed was already heading toward the exit, but his next words made him change his mind.

"A Sculptor must feel the beauty of life, and I see it in you. Did you happen to hear about the master-sculptor Darone? I usually do not tell, but you have the gift of the sculptor, so I can trust you. Did you know that Darone lives in the town of Rega?"

You have acquired information about the master-sculptor Darone.

Chapter 5: Shapeshifter Sculpture

Weed went to the slums of the city.

Built on a hill with terraced buildings, the house he was looking for was located somewhere on the outskirts of the fort. It was said that if you bought a house here, you could get a view of the whole castle. Here there were no shops or useful buildings.

The only reason Weed came here was because of Darone. As a sculptor, it was very important that he uncover all of the secrets of sculptural design. Therefore, he was damn lucky to find one of the masters so quickly.

"Even if he doesn't cling to fame, to live in a place like this..."

At first, when Weed heard of sculptural design he was skeptical. Now he really anticipated meeting a master engraver.

"Each engraving master has their own skills. If you learn all five techniques, you can learn a final skill. However, to fully utilize a profession was not something easy to do...."

If you remember how it all began, it was very strange. The story of how he became a sculptor and mastered it was incredible. First, he became friends with the instructor leading the training centre by beating a scarecrow day and night.

With his love of battle and contempt for sculptors, he established a friendly relation with him. Then, following the advice of his instructor, he went to the sage to find a profession.

After being deceived by the sage he became a Legendary Moonlight Sculptor at level 60. But that wasn't the end of it. He suffered through many hardships as a sculptor, but persevered and mastered several craft skills. Weed finally found Darone's house.

The house was surrounded by a fence, but he couldn't really call it one because of how shabby it was. Inside, there stood a middle-aged man.

"It seems that person is Darone."

As he went inside, he quietly watched Darone sculpt. Weed only saw him work for a brief time but he immediately recognized that he was a master. He didn't want to interfere but the fact that he was making a sculpture resulted in many questions. Darone was carving a middle-aged woman in a wide skirt.

While working, he would periodically stop and spit blood on the ground. Only after he finished did he look at Weed.

"You waited a long time. Engraver?"

"Yes."

"So, you found me ... It is necessary to realize your own skills. As your soul changes, you develop different skills and create something that is entirely your own.. But still, I see you want to learn my secrets."

Weed understood what he meant but he couldn't even count the number of times when the engraving knife technique helped him. With the benefits of his other skills such as the sculptural life giving skill, he became excited.

"I want to learn!"

"Good. However, I don't just reveal my secrets to anyone. I must first check whether you are worthy to teach. Therefore, go and try to understand the souls of five living beings."

Tink!

Weed was confused.

Sculpting secrets went against common sense, 'the engraving knife technique', 'giving to sculptures' and now he had to copy the movements of five living things in order to penetrate their souls. He could not figure out what to do.

"Is this the general attitude of a sculptor when he gives a task?" he asked.

"What? You do not want to learn my secret? Are you rejecting my quest?"

Weed answered quickly.

"No. I really want to learn. Right now I'll go and repeat the movements of five creatures. Is that good enough?"

"Yes. But I do not know if you can ..."

You have accepted the quest.

Weed left the fortress.

"Five creatures...."

With that description, the criteria fitted any living creature.

"Then, I shouldn't choose a complex creature."

He looked around the castle. Running around the grounds were rabbits, squirrels, deer, and other animals of the beginning levels. The kinds of monsters beginners killed. He made up his mind. His first objective was to imitate a rabbit. Small rodents and deer were too fast, so his choice fell on a rabbit.

Crouching on the ground, he snuck up on a rabbit which was peacefully munching grass.

"....."

Although he did not want to, because of his indomitable will power, he began to imitate the bunny.

"Yum-yum."

Weed was on his knees chewing grass.

Because of his knowledge of herbs, he did not have to worry about eating poisonous plants. But to everyone else he looked very silly. The bunny apparently felt his eyes and hopped toward another location. Weed could do nothing but to squat jump after.

The rabbit moved in zigzags, and without warning changed speeds.

Periodically he would stop, drink water, chew grass and watch him.

"What! Why is the rabbit so fast?"

You repeated the movement of the rabbit. Progress 0.6%

Fortunately, he repeated the movements correctly, but it was still unclear what this had to do with sculptural skills. In any case, Weed hopped after the rabbit, and his progress reached 35%.

However this was only the beginning, after the rabbit there were four other creatures. Running after the rabbit, Weed learned a lot about the bizarre behavior of rabbits.

First, the behavior of rabbits was very different than what Weed thought before. The rabbit washed his ears, marked his territory, and sometimes would jump to express its cheerful mood. Naturally so did its human counterpart.

The small, cute bunny was followed by a big and cruel person.

"The rabbit looks so tasty, if I could just get a bite...tasty."

But he did not hunt rabbits.

For a whole day, the only thing that went into his mouth was grass, and now just looking at the rabbit caused him to drool. In the whole continent of Versailles, this was the only rabbit that was spared from the hands of Weed.

You repeated the movement of the rabbit. Progress 84.2%

The more progress he made the slower it rose.

However in just 5 days he reached 80% and now was able to give them simple commands. "Sit down. Stand up. Turn around. Side kick!" The rabbit rolled on the ground following Weed's commands.

"Rabbits ... When you know them better, you realize that they are very nice animals."

When his progress reached 99.8%, the bunny sat and looked toward the sky at the moon. Then Weed did the same.

You have fully mastered the movement of the rabbit.

After the rabbit's turn was the deer's. Weed did not consider himself a typical sculptor because he put all of his points in strength and dexterity. Regular players with the profession of a sculptor put all their points in art.

But Weed was stingy about putting points in art. Art was supposed to enhance the value of items he made, and increase the chance of creating a beautiful work, but that wasn't easily seen. As for strength and dexterity, he felt it made him stronger. That's why Weed developed his art stat passively through the work of his sculptures.

Now his art stat exceeded 800 points, and he had 505 points in dexterity, including bonuses, of course.

"If it's a deer I might be able to follow them!"

The deer calmly plucked leaves from the branches of trees, and suddenly as if frightened of something ran off. Weed could do nothing but go after him. Due to his high dexterity he would not be shaken off.

You repeated the movement of a deer. Progress 0.2%

After hopping around like a rabbit, chasing a deer was much more invigorating. Also the deer was a lot more elegant.

However, even here there were pitfalls. It suddenly dawned on Weed: "Deer run on four legs." But it was too late to change to a different animal; he got onto all fours and tried hard to keep up with the deer.

Mapan and Hwaryeong, after some transactions, headed to the town of Rega.

"Everything went smoothly all thanks to you, Hwaryeong."

"No, it's because of your skill as a merchant Mapan."

Mapan and Hwaryeong, sitting on a cart, were engaged in a friendly conversation. Trading consisted of buying and selling, between which took a long and boring journey. As a result, merchants made sure to make friends with the NPCs when they visited a town. So, if you weren't devoted, trading would be very boring.

As a merchant, Mapan could reduce the weight of traded goods, and increase the moving speed of vehicles. However, even with these buffs, journeys were long and boring.

Mapan and Hwaryeong generally talked to pass the time. This time, they began to talk about Weed.

"Oh, I wish I was there when Weed fought and defeated the Vampire Lord Tori with the help of the Order of Freya's Paladins."

"Yeah, not everyone can complete a B level quest. He even built an ice dragon in the northern continent."

Hwaryeong eyes sparkled.

She loved fairy tales and legends, and all of the stories about Weed completely delighted her. She was really impressed when she heard that Weed and Alveron - a Pope Candidate of the Order of Freya - set out to save the cursed paladins!

When they arrived in the ruins of the abandoned village, Weed and Alveron were weakened by the bitter cold and surrounded by monsters of overwhelming strength. Still, they persevered and gradually built up their strength.

While the quest was still in progress, Weed sculpted a gigantic ice dragon. When all of the cursed paladins outside of the castle were freed, Weed and his force stormed the Black Castle. There they defeated hordes

of vampires, freed the innocent villagers and defeated the final boss Tori.

Inside Hwaryeong's head, all of these events played out as one epic movie. She saw earnest heroes in pain, struggling against the cold, fighting monsters and even the forces of nature itself. Hwaryeong's impression of the recount of Weed's quest was that it was an incredible and dangerous adventure. Mapan shrugged his shoulder.

"People talk about this now, but believe me. At first glance I saw that he was a very special person. When he came down from the sky..."

As they shared small talk they neared the city gates, but then they encountered something odd. They found a large crowd watching something. It was unusual for so many people to be gathered on the plains because the city gates were still a couple of hours away.

Mapan and Hwaryeong looked at each other. After a long and tedious journey, they were very interested to know what was happening there.

"Shall we?" asked Hwaryeong.

"Yes. It is necessary to look."

Mapan stopped his cart, and they joined the crowd. Then they saw something that shocked them to the core.

Running across the field was a fox. Its lush, long tail swaying gently in deft movements. But they were not shocked by the tail. An unknown player was following the fox on all fours. When the fox jumped, so did the player.

When the fox tumbled, so did the player. Sometimes there was a difference in movement that was so small, if it wasn't for the player, they wouldn't have noticed.

"Wow, who is this? This is kind of weird."

Mapan began questioning a number of people standing around. They were not close enough to see the face of the player from where they were standing.

A little girl standing nearby started giggling: "That man? I don't know

who he is, but I saw him imitate a bunny, a deer, a goblin, and now a fox. And with each imitation, he gets better and better." "There are really strange people these days ..."

And at that moment, the fox turned back. As he looked back Mapan and Hwaryeong saw the player's face.

"Oh!"

"Wow!"

It was Weed! Weed was imitating a fox.

Mapan and Hwaryeong gave each other a look, while everyone else watched excitedly, and pondered the situation.

Both of their faith in Weed was boundless, but sometimes he did some embarrassing things. Without saying a word, they turned back toward the vehicle. Completely ignoring Weed. Rabbits, deer, goblins, and now foxes. Weed mastered their behaviors. Now he looked for his last creature.

"Damn, this job takes a lot of time!"

Because rabbits, goblins, deer and foxes were beginner monsters, they were often killed. As a result, he had to spend a lot of time searching and redoing everything.

Therefore, Weed decided that the fifth animal would be something that no one would attack. He chose a horse. They were easy to find, and not far from town were pastures for horses. There, he ran hard on all fours and began imitating them. A horse is an animal that is born to run, so even with his high dexterity Weed had a hard time trying to keep up. If not for the fence enclosing the pasture, he could not do it. "This is the last one, if I just preserve a little more, I'll get to learn the secret of sculptural design."

You repeated the movements of the horse. Progress 12.1%

After a day he was only at 12%. Having developed a plan, Weed had a meal prepared with vegetables and special grass to make even more

progress.

"You are what you eat. Therefore, by eating grass, I will learn about the horse much faster."

You repeated the movements of the horse. Progress 59.0%

You repeated the movements of the horse. Progress of 89.7%

You repeat the movements of the horse. Progress 95.9%

Two, three, four! The more time passed, the more progress he made. And finally: -----

You have fully mastered the movement of the horse.

Weed was filled with euphoria. Then he realized something...Clop-clop-clop! While imitating a deer, his movements were constrained and a little clumsy. Now he ran familiarly and comfortably.

Weed flew like the wind! And somehow he had the feeling that on the four legs he ran faster than two.

Tink!

You have mastered a special movement skill.

Quadruped Run. One of the skills of movement.

In use, you will be able to speed up by 60% more than usual.

However, it consumes health and mana.

When running against the wind your stamina consumption goes down by 30%.

When running with the wind, your speed is increased by an Additional 20%.

When running on certain terrains, speed is further enhanced by 80%.

- Stamina +5

- Resistance +5

- Dexterity +5

"Wow! Wow ..."His imitation of the animals turned into a skill that ran on 4 legs!

However, he didn't want to attract attention, and its use was a serious burden.

"Looks like I can't use this skill in front of people ..."

And yet, Weed smiled broadly. The fact that he followed the movements of the animals wasn't a secret to his friends.

"Nothing. They just will never know."

After completing the task, Weed went back to the castle. Of course, on two legs.

Again Darone was working on a sculpture of a middle-aged woman.

While he worked, Weed waited quietly and observed that the sculpture was very similar to the old one."He's making the same sculpture again" said Weed, puzzled.At one time he mass produced figures: birds, people, and wolves. However, not a lot of experience for copies was given.

"And the face ... frankly it's ugly."

If you become a master sculptor, then you have the power to create a princess so beautiful even the gods would turn green with envy. However, the woman had a common face.

Darone finally finished and turned to Weed:"You completed my assignment?" "Yup. A rabbit, deer, goblin, fox and a horse. I repeated their movements."

"Nice work and you finished rather quickly. You have done well. Now, keep the image of these animals in mind and sculpt them. If you pass this

simple test, then I'll tell you my secret."

"No problem."

Weed was experienced in making sculptures, from large to small, wolves to dragons.

"I remember making rabbit and foxes, I made a lot of them and sold them to other players."

Weed confidently began cutting away with his carving knife. However, for the first few minutes he felt something was wrong.

"What did I do wrong?"

All of his confidence evaporated. Weed stopped and began to seriously ponder what had gone wrong.

The figure in his hands was very different from his previous statues. In general, it was not surprising, since over time his sculptural skill increased. But there was something new. When he imitated the animals, he began to know them better.

Why rabbits have long ears and a short tail, and how a rabbit moves was now subconsciously taken into account in his work.

His figurine became more expressive, detailed and lively.

"Oho ho ..."

Before, he simply used to copy an image he had in his head, but now he could make a sad figure of a rabbit, and a joyful one.

Even a rabbit chewing grass, first tearing, and then biting. Or a rabbit running away from predators.

In general, now Weed could highlight the nuances of life of a white bunny. When he repeated the movements of a goblin, he felt a little resentment.

Now working on the figure, Weed began thinking, trying to understand its soul. As well as working on the figure of a horse, he recalled the endless fields.

Weed was surprised at how comfortable and interesting his work became. It felt like he was spending time with friends. When Weed finished 5th figure.

Ding!

A grand piece!

You have completed the five figurines of animals.

Small, but very complex sculptures. They reflect the work of a real master and therefore contain great artistic value.

The sculpture causes joy and delight to all who see it Artistic value: 460

Effects:

Health and mana regeneration increased by 6% during the day.

Increases affinity towards animals.

Resistance to fire magic + 15%. (excess heat in the body and be released through your ears) Can detect any entry level traps.

Leadership + 25

Intellect +10

+10% Movement speed

These effects are not compatible with other statuses.

Number of grand pieces made: 4

Sculptural skill increased.

Weed clenched fists.

Several times he made 'fine pieces' and even created a 'master piece' when he made the ice dragon. However this was the first time he created a 'grand piece' out of a small sculpture.

"In addition to these effects ..."

Usually his sculptures increased the amount of health and mana you had, but this was the first time he had a sculpture increase affinity.

"A rabbit, deer, goblin, fox, and horse. The features of these animals appearing in effect."

Up to this point, he only thought that large sculptures were valuable. But now he saw that even small sculptures could give the same or even better effects.

The possibilities for an engraver were huge. Darone looked at the figurines and nodded. "Love for sculptures makes your work even more vibrant and beautiful. You've passed my test perfectly."

You have completed the quest Understanding a Sculpture.

Before you would cut out the form of the animal. But with sculptural understanding, it is possible to show the soul of the being displayed. Love for animals, and the desire to learn, are one of the main qualities of a sculptor.

Rewarded: secret skill!

Learn from Darone directly.

Once Weed finished the message, Darone continued.

"The secret is nothing special. All I do is love my work. I don't use any special techniques or rules when creating sculptures. I just devote my heart to it. And of course when you do, the sculpture is bound to become something special. That is the secret of a sculptor."

"That's it?"

"The understanding of what you're creating, is my secret, and there's one more thing I would like to teach you, it's a skill only for those who understand sculpture...cough cough" Darone coughed and spat out a new batch of blood.

"Are you okay?" Weed asked anxiously.

"Ugh, I cannot say that all is well. Time is running out, and I still have to create 300 sculptures. I would, at minimum, want to fulfil the orders I've received, and then I can leave this world with a peace of mind. Will you work with me for a week? By working with me, you can gain a better understanding of my secrets."

Tink!

Darone's orders.

For a whole week, you will have to follow Darone's orders. This will help you, as a sculptor to make living sculptures in the future. This is required to fully understand his secret skill.

Difficulty: Profession quest

Reward: Experience gained at this time is multiplied by two.

Quest Limit: The quest will result in failure if you do not meet the deadline. Your fame will be reduced and you will have to pay a fine.

Weed did not hesitate. Naturally he would be repelled by the time limit and decrease in fame, but a secret skill was at stake. Besides, there was another reason. Ever since he created the ice dragon, his sculpting was at intermediate 6, and hasn't raised much since then.

This time, he had a lot more experience, and with a little more effort he could reach intermediate 7.

"Yes, and it's hard to get experience. This looks like a good opportunity,"

After working for a week with Darone, Weed could significantly increase his sculptural skill. Besides, because he was working on an order he didn't have to worry about what to create.

"Decide what you're going to do." Darone said as he handed Weed a sheet with a list of orders.

300 sculptures. Of course, among them some were difficult, the ones that required deep thought. Weed could only take the simple orders, but then his ambition flared.

"It's not easy to have fun. I can't learn much if I take the simple orders. Now I'm prepared to suffer..."

He decided to make 30 sculptures a day resulting in 210 by the end of the week. Morning, afternoon, and evening.

"If I work without rest, everything should work out."

The figures on the bow.

A fleet, floating on smooth waves, under white sails far, far away from the sun.

A customer highly requested a dolphin sculpture.

His orders didn't vary much. He only needed to do a little work, and on success, he received compensation in the form of experience. True, there were some difficulties. A sculpture had to meet the requirements of the customer.

For Weed, who was used to working as he liked, at first had difficulties. But over the time, he got used to it and easily understood what the customer wanted. On the first day he only made 15 sculptures, the second 24, and then the third day 35.

Taking orders, chatting, and listening to stories, Weed became friends with Darone.

"As a young man I met a woman and fell in love with her" said the master.

"All my life I only had one talent, so I decided to be a sculptor."

"That's nice."

"However, she soon left the world, and I couldn't accept it. After her

death, she lived on in my memory, so I sculpted her. Creating sculptures isn't an easy job. It's not enough to see and create an object. You need to put your soul into the job, just as I put my love when I sculpt her."

Thus, while working, there were leisurely conversations.

A week flew by. And Weed just barely managed to complete the entire order and reached intermediate level 7

Tink!

You have completed the task Darone's Orders.

All throughout his life, he carved a sculpture of a woman. His sculptures were full of love and life. By sharing his skills with a novice sculptor, he can now safely and happily leave this world.

- Your sculpting skill rose.

- You have mastered a new skill: 'Sculptural Shapeshifting'

- You have mastered a new passive skill: 'Sculptural Comprehension.'

Weed immediately checked his new skills."Open Skill info. Sculpture Shapeshifting. Sculptural Comprehension!"

Sculptural Shapeshifting:

A technique created by Engraving Master Darone, which is known to very few people.

When you create sculptures you can change your body into the form of the sculpture.

Requirements:

- Technique can only be used only after mastering the skill of Sculptural Comprehension.

- 2000 mana and 500 or more in Art

WARNING!

During the transformation into another person or creature you change only the appearance and physique, your stats and level remain the same. If selected for the conversion of a huge creature, you will need a certain amount of strength and health.

Sculptural Comprehension 1 (0%)

The better you understand the object, the greater your chance of creating higher quality works.

As skill level goes up, additional effect of Sculptural Shapeshifting will be added.

Beginner: Adds 10% to the effect of transformation. Can only change into earthbound races.

Intermediate: Adds 20% to effect of transformation. Can now change into flying creatures. However, you must learn how to fly.

Advanced: Adds 30% to the effect of transformation. Can transform into colossal creatures.

And so, Weed learned another secret of sculpting."Sculptural Shapeshifting ...

Because his level and stats would remain the same, it was hard to tell if it was worth turning into powerful monster.

For example, if you turn into a dragon, you cannot use its absolute power. Yet still, you would have to control its body, which would be difficult to do. Not being able to take normal steps, you would become an easy target even to non-combat professions.

On the other hand, if Weed shape-shifted into a rabbit, he would be a cute monster rabbit in the level 200 range. Another plus would be that it was a very useful skill in understanding sculptures.

"Kulrok!"

Darone crouched again and coughed up more blood. He gave it his all and was about to depart from the world.

"You ... I have a personal request for you."

"I'm listening."

"Could you support me while I finish the sculpture? I don't have much time left ..."

"I'll help."

Weed stayed for one more day, to take care of Darone.

Master put his whole soul into the last sculpture. Towards the end of the day his cough did not leave him even for a minute and the earth was red with his blood. Finally he finished his last sculpture. It was a middle-aged woman. The one he loved.

Putting aside his engraving knife, Darone painfully said:

"Well, that's all. Go and try out several skills. Do not idle. A Moonlight Sculptor only grows with increasing experiences."

"Yes, I'll do that."

"I'm proud that I was able to pass on my secret to a Legendary Moonlight Sculptor. However do you know why your profession is different from a normal moonlight sculptor?"

"No, I do not know."

Weed really didn't know. Even after a long search on the internet, he couldn't find a difference between a legendary moonlight sculptor, and a moonlight sculptor.

"Most professions are passed on from teacher to student. Secrets of a master onto the hands of a beginner. So, once upon a time there lived a king who united the entire continent. A knight who called himself the best. A merchant who made a great fortune and others... Only one of them said that they were legendary...."

"So ... it's a good profession?"

Weed thought his profession was a scam.

Even now he thought of changing jobs, but he could not forget the hype and hope in his heart that the profession is unique.

"A legend is a legend, nothing more ..." Darone said quietly.

"....."

"You bring your profession glory; your profession does not bring glory to you ..."

"....."

Money, not glory! That was what Weed sought. Therefore the words of the master brought him into confusion.

"That's the twist. So, a legendary moonlight sculptor is no different ..."

It would have been better if Weed did not know that!

He would rather at least have some hope, thinking that his legendary profession was something better than an ordinary profession.

"Sarah ...?" said Darone.

Staring upwards, he drew his last breath and disappeared in a flash of light.

At the spot where he died, he left a small wooden sculpture...

"A sculpture.... Only people who really loved the world would leave behind a sculpture..."

Only now, after the past few weeks of training did Weed begin to realize what kind of profession he chose and which direction he had to go.

Just being a sculptor is not enough, you need to invest your heart into it. Even the smallest fox has its own soul. And it can only be captured by a true master. Weed took out a wooden block, and began to work on a new sculpture. After all, he was the one that saw the final hours of the Engraving Master Darone. And who, if not his very student would have his image in his memory.

Ding!

A masterpiece! You have completed a sculpture of Darone.

The sculpture, made by a devoted disciple, radiates love, like his master.

Although he left the world, a part of his soul will always remain.

Artistic value: 2300

Special Effects:

- health regeneration increased by 50% for a day - Resistance to magic
40%

- Vitality increased by 45%

- All stats +10

- In areas where the sculpture is visible, there will be peace These effects are not compatible with other sculptures.

Number of masterpieces created: 2

Sculptural skill has reached intermediate level 8.

This allows you to create more detailed and delicate work.

Handicraft skill has reached intermediate level 9.

The effects of crafts skills are increased by 5%

Sculptural Comprehension has reached beginner level 4.

The more knowledge and love of a sculpture, the better effects a sculpture will have.

- Fame + 1350

- Art + 79

- Endurance + 3

- Stamina + 3

- Leadership + 5

- In exchange for creating a masterpiece

All stats + 1 point

Translator's Note

Volume 1 Chapter 9

Some of you may not realized, but the wooden statue dropped by Darone is really important.

"Rodriguez handed Weed a wooden statue that fitted in his palm. It was shaped like an imperial knight.

"What is this?" Weed asked.

"It is the legacy of Geihar von Arpen the Magnificent. My family used to serve in the Imperial Family of the Arpenian Empire. The blood, and obligation accompanying it has flowed in my family. I am the one to take the task for this generation. Now that I hand it to you, I am finally liberated from the reins,"

Rodriguez said.

"But what is this statue for?"

Weed had already received a wooden statue of a different shape when he carried out Zahab's Moonlight Sculptor quest.

"I do not know the secret of this wooden statue, either," Rodriguez said. "The myth has it that there have been five masters in sculptural art on the Continent. Of course, it is only an ancient myth, for they came and went like the wind. They are known to leave their own crafts in their legacies, so I surmise that this statue is probably one of them. According to the myth, if you succeeded in collecting all five of the statues, and solve the puzzles arising from them, the ultimate secret of sculptural art will appear."

Chapter 6: Siege of Ohdein Castle

Weed left Rega in full excitement.

"It has been a long time since I've fought."

He felt that he lost his sense of combat. Usually, he fought against difficult and dangerous monsters, but for the last few months he had been developing his craft skills. Combat was like walking on a tightrope. Against difficult and dangerous monsters, with only one slip you would fall.

"Maybe I'll die alone and forgotten..."

He felt weak. Perhaps his source of fear was the fact that while he developed his crafting skills, everyone else was out hunting. It had been several months since he returned to the Order of Freya, and the last time he gained a level was the 9 levels he gained then.

Sometimes he would get whispers from Pale, saying he passed level 190. With Surka, Irene and Romuna having about the same levels. Even Mapan reached level 160, and Hwaryeong reached level 210.

Everyone moved forward, but Weed stood still. Though he cannot say he did nothing. During these past months, Weed had come a long way. His level didn't increase, but his stats did, and he was able to learn a secret skill.

*

"Oh my God!"

"I'm going to die."

At the sight of a monster they rushed into battle. Even against stronger monsters the Geomchis didn't hesitate.

Their goal was to get stronger.

Striking quickly, they confused the wolf. Then, by maintaining pressure and attacking from different angles, they took it down.

The more they played the more they became recognized as 'A group of

Crazy Men’.

Five hundred players led by the first five Geomchis.

"Um... Master?"

"What is it, Geomchi2?"

"It’s about Weed."

The Geomchis didn’t often whisper to Weed, because they felt uncomfortable distracting the affairs of a man who did so much for them. However, Geomdulchi and Geomsetchi continued to interact with Weed.

For one reason:

Information was power!

After all, if you knew more than others you could stand in front of the master; find tasty food, know which monsters dropped good loot, and much more. The two of them even learned cooking, all in order to be useful to their idol, their master, who even now surprised them.

The master swung his sword as if it was the most natural thing to do in the world. It was aimed perfectly, and the wolf could do nothing to avoid the sword! The disciples became spellbound when watching their master fight.

"I know he’s a master swordsman, but..."

"I know, he’s incredible."

So everyone went out of their way just to please their master.

Geomdulchi carefully continued.

"Weed has completed his objective and is going on hunt."

"Well, I want to see him fight. Indeed a man can only be assessed when he goes into battle with a strong opponent."

"But he hasn’t fought for a long time. Isn’t that right?"

"Yeah," said another Geomchi.

"After such a long time, do you think he has forgotten how to fight?"

"Well, what..."

Oho-ho, their last words amused the master.

"What's so funny, after such a long time, your skills are bound to dull."

"Geomchi2."

"Yes, master?"

"Predators do not forget how to hunt. Whether to hunt as a cat or a lion will be their call.

"Well...I guess that's true, master."

While he agreed verbally, in his heart he thought different. Even outstanding athletes, after a long break became dull.

"And warriors, when they sheath their blades for some time they will know."

"What?" said Geomd; he hadn't been paying attention to his master.

"We must be able to separate ourselves from the blade. To achieve our goal we must not rely on drugs, or guns in our case. Learn to set aside the sword, and in your mind, continue to practice. That is one of the main methods of training."

*

Many people in Fort Ohdein were conducting business.

"Selling supplies!"

"Give everything your best. Hold down the fort, and destroy the Balkans guild."

"Reflect all of their attacks, and do not give them an inch!"

An alliance of guilds was assembled at Fort Ohdein.

Originally, the Oasis Guild, Prosperity Guild, and the Wings of May Guild were allies and they captured the fort together.

However, because the fort was of immense value, the Prosperity Guild betrayed its allies.

The other two guilds tried to negotiate but nothing happened.

The Oasis Guild consisted mainly of mercenaries who bickered about their loss, and scattered. But The Wings of May Guild, vowed for revenge as they left the alliance.

In the Balkans Guild, the guild master was sharpening a knife.

"We have to recover what was stolen from us!" shouted the guild leader.

They had already assembled several times and tried to take down the fort, but only suffered defeat after defeat. Now everything had changed. Overcome with anger The Wings of May joined an alliance with the Balkans. So now their forces outnumbered their enemy.

The fort was located on the border between Ledern Kingdom and the British Confederation. Many traders passed through its gates each day and left money in the pockets of the owner of the fortress.

Both sides had gathered a lot of people, but no one could predict what would be the result.

All attention was fixated on the fort.

There was still two hours before the siege.

The Balkans Guild slowly gathered around the fortress. Inside, the defenders were also busy.

"Their army has arrived."

"Second corps has gathered. Waiting for orders."

"The third corps is in position."

"Fourth corps ready to go."

The Prosperity Guild was divided into four corps each with 3000 men. The main force defended the walls and was dedicated to fight. The second force guarded the gate in the event of its compromise. The third force consisted of archers and mages. They supported the rear and were located on the towers. The last corps was responsible for supplies and consisted mainly of fresh recruits.

Also at the fort were many defending NPCs. They weren't happy about the war, but in general, no one cared about their opinions. The guild master of the Prosperity Guild thought of only one thing, victory. If they lost the fortress, they would lose everything. Therefore, they were desperate and recruited a lot of mercenaries with compensations three times what the Balkans Guild offered.

Many of the mercenaries were gathered in the back of the fort.

"As expected, our job is to wait. Once the battle reaches a turning point we'll move in. Does anyone have any questions?"

After Brine's last words, one of the generals of the Prosperity Guild, there was only the sound of clanking armor and weapons. Mercenaries checked their weapons and slowly gazed at the walls.

"This is a rare sight. Look at all these soldiers."

"Look at that. A flying Wizard."

"Since there are so many people, the battle will be fierce..."

"The Balkans have a grudge against everyone defending the castle and that includes us."

"So that means we all have a higher chance of dying?"

As they waited, the soldiers talked.

The Prosperity guild promised each of them 10 gold for participating, 5 more gold per kill! And 20 gold if they stayed alive! True, the last two only applied if they won. But many soldiers actually gathered not just for money but for the lull of battle.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

There somewhere behind the walls of the fortress, drums and horns sounded.

"They're coming."

Wizards and archers took position, while below them stood the mercenaries.

The ground started to shake as a large number of people marched.

"Iron Cross Knights, defend the fort against the Balkans!"

"The enemy is coming!"

"That's it, it has begun!"

Mercenaries jumped from their seats and gave a shout.

"Urrraaaaa!"

"Kill them all!"

"Defend the fort, don't give in to the invaders!"

The mercenaries, hearing the sounds of drums and horns shouted loudly and happily shook arms. They were all excited but there was one man who continued to sit. Theodore went up and approached him.

"It looks like you're scared. Don't worry, it's nothing. Everyone gets scared their first time," he said confidently.

Theodore was an experienced soldier who had faced many battles. So he tried to calm newcomers to demonstrate his superiority.

"Oh it's starting?" the bewildered newcomer said, looking around.

"Yes, wait, are you making something, a doll?"

Theodore leaned over and looked closer at what he was making. It appeared he was making a butterfly from a branch cut from a tree in the fort.

The Iron Cross Knights. They were a source of terror to their invaders. Now the situation changed, and they were fighting to retake the fort; nevertheless, there was none equal to the knights.

The knights stood on a hill at a distance and followed the general course of the battle. Everything would be decided in the second wave and that would be when the knights would enter.

The guild master of the Balkan Guild shouted out: "Soldiers! Companions! Here they come! We will retake our fort!"

With his words, hundreds of warriors moved in to attack. It was an incredible and menacing sight; everyone in the castle could feel the tremors they made.

"Fireball!"

"Aimed shot!"

The mages and archers on the walls fired at the invaders. However, the attacking army was so large it looked like pebbles being thrown into an ocean. In retaliation, spirits and golems were sent. Assassins having infiltrated the fort, cut the throats of magicians. Ladders and ropes filled the wall. Ballistae and trebuchets rained boulders and iron shells upon friends and foes. So far, all attempts on the fort were unsuccessful because of its strong defence. But now, with the support of new allies and enormous amounts of money, some spent on siege weapons, they finally gained enough strength to become a threat. All throughout the fort, fights broke out; it was a magnificent battle.

The mercenary troops under Brine joined the battle 4 hours later. The walls of the castle had already fallen to the Balkans. However, the cost of their success was paid by the scores of soldiers' blood. Almost a third of their archers and NPCs were killed in combat. The Prosperity Guild had no regrets about spending money to protect Ohdein. But now, after much fighting their forces seemed equal.

The invading troops headed to the Training Hall, which was located next to the mercenary forces under Brine.

"Everybody, please stay where you are."

Even without words, everyone knew that there was nowhere to run. The mercenaries were at a stalemate. Their enemy was just ahead; therefore the soldiers menacingly brandished weapons, mostly swords, axes and spears, and waited for the enemy's attack.

Weed was among them.

"This is great, too."

He had already seen several battles for the fort on TV, but now he was

personally involved. And it was great. Terrifying sounds came from all sides: the buzzing of deadly spells, and the screams of dying people. It was all real.

A cold sweat trickled down his back. Even when he played Continent of Magic, he never took part in a siege. This would be his first real experience. Only because of his desire to return to his sense of combat did Weed decide to plunge into the bloodiest battle available. Even with his eyes closed he could feel killing intent.

When the mercenaries began to attack, he immediately covered his face with a wooden mask in the shape of a butterfly about to take off.

"Oh-ho. Time to meet your maker. Ahahaha! Power Attack!"

The warrior swung his wide blade...

Bam!

Weed easily repelled the sword. All worry gone, he only saw the enemy. Just by looking at his shoulders was enough to predict his attacks, and then counter.

"Engraving knife technique!"

A fatal blow has been struck!

Weed aimed at a critical point and his enemy fell lifeless to the ground.

"Uh... He killed Altona!"

"Revenge."

"Thunder Slash!"

"Triple Attack!"

The three of them, activating their skills, simultaneously attacked Weed.

Apparently, the victim was their friend. However, after examining their ability, you could see that they weren't even level 200.

With great hesitation, Weed lowered his sword and took all of the blows.

Bam-bam-bam!

Each strike flashed light, and finally disappeared into white mist. Graham leather armor! He polished it until it shown, and now enemy attacks were reflected into the air.

"Is he dead?"

"Where are his items!?"

Poor guys, they thought Weed had died, and their faces were all shining. However their feeling of security vanished as Weed appeared completely unharmed. Their smiles left their faces. At this point their enemy seemed like a devil. Weed smiled, his health exceeding 9000. When skills reached the intermediate stage, there were added bonuses! In addition, with his armor polished, and health gained from his fishing skill, he was practically invincible.

The damage he received didn't even reach 300 points.

"Weaker than I expected..."

Weed gave his opponents a disappointed look.

Enemies killed: 4.

If your side wins, you will receive additional rewards.

Also, along with an increase in fame, you can get a title.

"Engraving Knife technique!"

Weed attacked without hesitation. With each passing moment his opponents lost more and more health. There wasn't a big difference in level, but Weed's stats were far inflated for his level. In addition, with his armor polished and sword sharpened, he had a significant advantage over his opponents.

The three players could not withstand his attacks. A few moments later

they fell dead to the ground.

Ding!

Weed went to the bodies of his enemies and found 1 item. As quickly as he massacred his enemies, he picked up their loot.

"Kiiya!"

Weed jumped from one opponent to another. Enemies swung swords at him and shot spells at him, but still they continued to die! Weed was not high leveled, but the average level of his enemies did not exceed 170, so they could not withstand him.

Top players on Royal Road didn't participate in sieges. After all, if they were mobbed and then killed, their penalty would be huge. So basically, only mercenaries, NPC soldiers, and guilds fought in large battles. On the other hand, among the mercenaries he faced some level 250 and higher. Those that did not care about the penalties. They were the real machines of death on the battlefield!

"Don't lose your head and die. Retreat!"

Weed was not afraid of soldiers at level 250. After all, he fought against stronger enemies, for example vampires. However, he had long understood that it was better to fight as a party.

So when he approached a strong opponent, Weed hid behind a strong ally until they engaged into battle. Then he quietly went off to kill other enemies.

"Engraving Knife Technique!"

Dishonest, and clever tricks! However, Weed did not feel any remorse. Like a hot knife on butter he cut one opponent down after another, reaching a total of 42 kills.

"Ahhh!"

"Everyone! Bring him down instead!"

Many players simultaneously attacked the masked soldier, but like everyone else, they could not oppose him. And they dropped more and

more things for Weed to pick up.

With the mercenaries on defense, they had an overwhelming advantage.

The battle lasted all day. Again, blood was spilled at Fort Ohdein. This time the Prosperity Guild, defended the fort, whereas the Balkans Guild attacked. Everybody discussed the fight, and most of the conversation revolved around one player. However, they didn't know that. Instead they thought there were 42 masked mercenaries. People that did not hesitate to use their comrades. Whirlwinds of death that left nothing, not even a single copper.

*

The Geomchis finally passed level 170. They laid waste to everything!

Thanks to their crazy pace, they leveled quickly. What was amazing was the fact that they started when Weed was level 180. Here were the results of real men!

They walked through the valleys and mountains in the southern kingdom of Rosenheim; sometimes they went to places that were never explored before. They gradually became famous, and naturally, there would be people who were jealous.

"There's something wrong with them."

"It's the famous mug, I hate crowds of players."

"Maybe I should kill them."

Halman and Margaux talked to each other, while Levi and Grand quietly sipped beer.

"Yeah, let's kill them and raise our levels."

"Let's split the loot fairly this time, currently I still don't have a breastplate."

"That's not a bad idea."

The Dwichigi Quartet!

They had tried to use Weed and Mapan, but instead killed themselves.

With the Cloud Guild hunting them, they had no choice but to hide in Rosenheim. Since then, several months passed but their levels still haven't increased, because they hunted people instead of monsters.

"Sounds like fun. Come on, let's go!"

As always their shady business would be suggested by Gran.

"Kekekek"

"Hihihi"

Levi and Halman laughed.

Although they were "friends", there was always the risk of getting betrayed. After all, they already experienced it several times! But still they would get back together.

"Killing alone is no fun."

"Yeah, it's better to kill while having a conversation."

"To me, there's nothing more fun than killing."

Respect and friendship were not words to describe the relationship the Quartet had. They gathered only because they wanted to have fun!

The Quartet blocked the road. It would be a burden for them to take on all 500 Geomchis so they targeted a group of 5 that was separated from the party. It turned out it was the first 5 Geomchis.

"Huh?"

"Who are you?"

The five of them had puzzled looks in their eyes. Gran smiled wickedly and drew his sword.

"Flaming Sword!"

Gran attacked without warning, and rushed forward.

"Master!"

"Watch out!"

The Second and third Geomchi's mouth opened in surprise. Their

master leisurely stepped back, and drew his sword. Like flowing water he blocked the attack.

"Ha! Idiot!"

Gran's eyes were full of triumph. He was using a dangerous attack that exploded on impact.

However, the master just simply overcame the attack by deflecting it.

Tink!

As their blades crashed, his blade was deflected and the attack cut down a tree.

"What are you freaks?"

Up to this point Gran didn't know what to do. He had no idea it was possible to block the attack.

"Huh?"

Compared to Gran, the other 4 Geomchis' eyes were even wider. When leveling up they learned a few techniques, however the technique their master just used was thought to be useless. It was a technique that consists of first pinpointing the direction of the enemy attack and the amount of power behind it. Then diverting the force, and changing the flow of the attack causing it to miss. In addition, it used up 50 mana, and was hard to use. It didn't just require technique, you needed to advance quickly and calculate your position. Something only masters could do!

The master deflected the attack another 5 times.

"Oh...."

All the confidence Gran had disappeared.

The master asked quietly, "Who are you? A monster? Man? You're stronger than a death knight, so... do you drop better loot?"

Gran could not say a word. Somewhere he had made a serious mistake. Of course, he didn't stop, and tried swinging, but that was when the master easily countered him and began to attack.

Bam-bam!

"Hmm... Not dead yet?"

"Kiiya!"

Gran due to his high health and good armor stayed alive. His teammates didn't idle, they were moving to surprise attack the rest of the Geomchis.

"These guys are monsters too?"

"Students, now they come to us. We don't have to search anymore!"

"Look at the one on the left – oh my!"

Perhaps other players when realizing that they were facing the Dwichigi Quartet would run away because they didn't want to get a player kill status, but the Geomchis didn't even know about this concept. In a sense they were more brutal than the Quartet.

After a variety of wounds, the killers quickly died.

A few hours later the Quartet met again.

"What happened?"

"Ahh... I don't even want to think about what happened yesterday."

"So...you're not going to get revenge?"

The Quartet fell in a serious predicament. And as always Gran came up with an idea.

"No, we can't give up on revenge."

"I agree."

"But we aren't strong enough."

Levi showed weakness. After yesterday's events he didn't want to face them ever again.

"We're in a guild now. Let's get them to help."

For the Quartet, Rosenheim was like a haven. There hadn't been a large guild formed to police there, so crime flourished.

The Dwichigi Quartet had joined the Jamaica Guild . Because the guild very badly needed strong players, they accepted the Quartet.

The killers immediately contacted their friends in the guild. With lies, the Quartet managed to rally up 300 men.

"Kill them!"

"Wow!"

The Dwichigi Quartet with the support of 300 soldiers attack the Geomchis. They were warned in advance about their opponents' strengths so they had assassins sniping with crossbows.

"Ahh!"

"The enemy!"

Many of the Geomchis were killed in the first minutes of the surprise attack. Assassins attacked from behind and slit the throats of many. The survivors, standing back to back, began to block one attack after another.

"Damn, these guys are stronger than we thought."

"Everyone get back, use ranged attacks."

"Ice Storm!"

"Lightning Bolt!"

Many deadly spells flew toward the brave warriors. So far they had never encountered magic, so they were caught off guard. The massive attack dropped their health substantially.

"Damn!"

The Geomchis, not holding back their anger, cursed. If their enemy approached them, they wouldn't hesitate to rush in for an attack. But the enemy stood back, attacking from afar with a barrage of spells and arrows. And because the Geomchis didn't use shields their health began to decline rapidly.

"Even if we get taken down like dogs, we'll at least get one of you!"

Some of the students broke away from the group and rushed at the

enemy, but the spells became concentrated and they quickly died.

"Oh my God..."

"Who are they? Why did they attack us?"

For the first time since they started, their faces were lodged with anger and despair. Sometimes they were dying of hunger, but now they were being killed by unknown players.

Geomdchi2 shouted: "Master get back!"

"I see. Fall back..."

"To where?"

"Into the woods! Everyone fall back into the forest. We'll have more cover there."

"Yes sir."

"Follow me."

The first and second swords went on to create an opening. In a wedge type formation, they fended off most arrows, but could not oppose the magic.

After suffering heavy losses, they managed to escape into the forest.

"We're alive!"

"How many of us are left?"

"A little more than 260, Master..."

"...Almost half of us have died."

The Geomchis sighed; all they could do now was rest and bandage their wounds. However, they were poor and didn't have many.

"Look! They're coming!"

While they rested their pursuers got closer.

"How did they find us?"

"Apparently they have some thieves or hunters. They can track us."

The Geomchis were gripped with frustration. As martial artists they could not cover their tracks. They had to run deeper into the forest. But now they were tired, and they were still constantly receiving ranged attacks.

"Geomdulchi, samchi, and everyone else!"

"Yes, Master."

"We're listening."

"Should we split up so that half of us can survive. Or will we fight!"

"Sir, we are men!"

"Let's show those bastards what we're made of!"

Now the Geomchis drastically changed their strategy. They didn't run, using the forest, they hid and used surprise attacks. However, their wounds were very heavy. Their enemies were using magic and even their priests were treated. Gradually, starting with the weakest, the students began to die, until only the instructors were left.

"Uhh, Master!"

"We're sorry, live on!"

When their health reached 0, in their final moments of life, they would look at the master.

In the end, only their master survived.

"..."

In the dojo, there was dead silence. The students and instructors were focused on one capsule. The one where their master lay. And now after some time Ahn Hyun-Do, their master came out.

"Master!"

Jeong Il-Hoon, Choi Jeong-Beom, Ma San Bohm, Lee Ying-Up and all the pupils were so tensed that their breath trembled. Usually it was in the nature of Ahn Hyun-Do to stay silent but then he slowly said, "He killed me...."

"...."

"He called himself Gran, and then slit my throat."

Everyone finally exhaled. The students and instructors were furious! To them Ahn Hyun-Do was their role model. Yes, he had some eccentricities, but in swordsmanship he had no equal! Once upon a time, before coming to the school, they doubted his skill when they heard about it. But as they watched him fight, their doubts dissipated. Their idol, to die and be humiliated caused them to rage.

But Hyun-Do looking at their angry faces laughed.

"It's been 30 years."

"...?"

"I told Jean that it had been 30 years since I've lost a fight."

"But there were too many enemies!"

"No, Ille-hoon. The number of enemies and their level cannot serve as an excuse. But now don't you think Royal Road has become more interesting?"

"Yes Master!"

The students and instructors, caught up in the answer instinctively.

Ahn Hyun-Do clenched his fist.

"It's perfect. We are like real soldiers and we should take on everything with all of our heart!"

The instructors and trainees became caught up.

"Ohh! It's true!"

"I like intense fights!"

"Let's repay their offence, a hundredfold."

However they froze as their master went up to do something.

He walked up to the blackboard and began to write in chalk the names.

Gran, Halman, Margaux, Levi and the Jamaica guild

And in front of each name he wrote – enemies!

He said with a smile, "Don't erase."

"We won."

Gran and the other members of the Quartet celebrated their victory. With lies, they got the Jamaica Guild to help and destroy the Geomchis. Now they went over dead bodies to divide the loot. They loved the taste of killing, but with no less pleasure they enjoyed splitting the loot. After all, with just a few days you could get valuable weapons and armor that took months to obtain.

"Let's see what they left."

With greedy looks Halman and Margaux were to first to search. But soon their faces contorted in surprise.

"Nothing..."

"No! It can't be!"

"There's nothing valuable!"

"This is ridiculous, look again!"

Gran and Levi carefully searched for items. However, they only found several swords in urgent need of repair and barley bread, lots of barley bread.

Chapter 7: Dungeon hunting

"It's time to talk about the latest news on the continent of Versailles. We will introduce you to the events that occurred in Royal Road. And today we have a guest in the studio, you all know him, it's Joo-wan. How are you!?"

"Hello! Hye-min, your smile today is even more charming."

"Ho, ho, you already managed to come, no need to bother with compliments. Apparently, there is some important news today, right?"

"Yes, you're correct. Not that important, except your preference in taste, because I sense that in the morning you ate finely roasted pork..."

"Oh, what did you say? In the morning, roasted pork tastes best. But do I really smell?"

Joo-wan and Shin Hye-min. Although they quarrel and say random things at times, they are a pair of young reporters of news for the gaming channel, KMC Media. Lee Hyun slowly ate as he watched the news program.

'Often they are blunt, but it's better than CTS Media.'

Yes, the eternal problem of time management: seriously making profit, it's hard to stay up to date with all of the events in the game. CTS Media invited to broadcast the most beautiful and famous actors, but they did not have the most important thing, innovation. In each episode, the actors focused on their image and boasted about their characters, which greatly annoyed the audience. Sometimes the show went so far off-field that it was unclear what they were talking about.

Compared to them, the news on KMC Media was much more convenient to watch. The excellently organized collection of information allows them to be surprisingly quick to recognize, and summarize main events in their news programs. The huge size of the Versailles continent gathered the vast number of players who to some extent, wanted to be up to date on the game.

"Now you will hear some wonderful news. Take a break from other

issues for a few minutes. Now, at last in the Kingdom of Haven, the player Bad Ray received level 370, which was called the 'impenetrable wall.'

"Wow! Superb!"

"Remember that Bad Ray is one of the leaders ranking among the highest-level players, and certainly you know of the nickname 'The Black Knight.' Inside the tower, the soldier finally reached level 370. The highest level in the game! Now, let's see how this happened."

Warriors of the tower.

A gathering place for the strongest warriors of Royal Road to compete. A knight in black armor wielding a black sword was fighting against a fierce barbarian. The barbarian, screaming in a fit of rage, inflicted a terrible blow with his two-handed sword. However, using foot techniques, the black knight easily avoided and deflected the enemy attacks.

The speed of high-level players defies description. Blades flashed with unimaginable speed. And when you take into account their equipment, you would have thought that it was a battle between a red and a black dragon. Still, the winner was immediately clear: the black knight was playing with his opponent! In the end, the dark player won the battle.

"You just said that the player Bad Ray won the fight and become the highest-level player in the game! Thanks to the victory over the warriors who guarded the tower, he reached level 370. I also would like to add that the technique which Bad Ray used in this fight has never been seen or used before!"

"Oh, ho, ho. Amazing!" Joo-wan was waving his arms and cried about. "However, Bad Ray must have been pushed, to have revealed such skills and technique?"

"What amazing insight! That's correct; Bad Ray is from the guild, Hermes. And as you may recall from our earlier news, Hermes took on the previous ruler of the kingdom of Haven, Iluina, and announced that they have chosen the path of a military dictatorship."

"That is, you mean to say that Haven declared war on all of the United

Kingdoms?"

"Yes. Apparently their recruitment of more forces boosted their confidence."

"Moreover, they have Bad Ray."

"Exactly that! Although the leader of the guild is a different player, Bad Ray is in fact the face of Hermes. Thus, from the showing of his increase in level from the tower's warriors, Bad Ray announced to the world the supremacy of his guild."

Later on, the news turned to other matters. They mentioned that somewhere far off, some guilds started a war against a powerful wizard in a newly discovered cave. On the mainland of Versailles, something was becoming commonplace: someone lost their items due to the outbreak of tornadoes and earthquakes. So if you are going to an unfamiliar area, you must be careful and try to gather more information to avoid the maelstrom.

'Level 370....'

The numbers refused to leave Lee Hyun's mind. In the Continent of Magic, he was the best player! However, even then, Lee Hyun did not realize the true value of that nickname. He only played for fun, slowly beating monsters and almost never talked to other players. When he gathered an especially numerous amount of items, he would visit a town and then sell them. Hence, the nickname of the 'Best' had a hollow ring to him. It was only when he decided to sell his character that he came to the realization of such a title!

'Bad Ray... if you sell your account, how huge an amount of money will you make!?'

This was especially so, as the number of players in the Continent of Magic is not comparable to Royal Road. Over one hundred million people play Royal Road! Office workers, freelancers and many others used the game as a vacation spot. It is so popular!

While he improved his fishing skills, Weed saw many people like this.

They came to the river Bensa to relax, away from family or work. Having picnics or sunbathing under the hot sun. Even if only level 50, their mood did not spoil.

The players do not hunt monsters for loot; instead, they just bought it all at once in the shops with real money. Often, they did so just to show off in front of their friends, as if they had come on vacation to a resort. In general, that was not far from the truth. With Royal Road, you did not have to take a leave of work for a week, or miss a weekend, as long as you have a capsule in your home.

Lee Hyun did not blame these players. On the contrary, he considered them as a different form of clientele. While there are such people in the game, anyone can make a little more.

Lee Hyun's thoughts all came back to Bad Ray. Everyone, from junior office workers and ending with company presidents played in Royal Road, so the cost of the highest-level character would be astronomical!

However, in the case of Bad Ray, if he is not a fool, it is unlikely he would sell his account. Royal Road has only recently begun its triumphant run throughout the Earth, and according to experts, its popularity will last for at least another 10 years. So selling a character, the value of which will still grow further, would not just set you back in the game, it would also be a great folly.

"Yes, thank you On Joo-wan. Do you have any more news to report? You talked quite a bit about the continent of Versailles."

"Of course there is. If you talk about all the events that have occurred on the mainland, even 24 hours would not be enough. I wouldn't be surprised if something amazing occurred at this very moment."

"Really? Then don't hold out on us and quickly share something new!"

"Hye-min, do you like craft skills?"

"Hmm, yes I do."

"And if you would go into details...."

"Er... I like passionate people who can create something new with their own hands."

"Very good. Then you'll definitely enjoy this news. Just recently, a player has reached the intermediate level of Tailoring, Cooking, and Blacksmithing."

"Wow! That's great!"

Lee Hyun bowed in astonishment.

'Tailoring, blacksmithing and cooking – someone got them all up to intermediate?'

Lee Hyun went down that road, so he knew how hard it was to develop these skills to intermediate. So when he heard the news about another player doing this, he could not believe his ears.

'Well for cooking, it is just a long and tedious process. With tailoring and blacksmithing, if you use good materials you can quickly raise their level.... Though, thanks to trade, I'm raising the level of skills twice as fast.... Perhaps, it is possible that player did the same....'

But even through the use of trade, the development of all those skills, you still need to spend a huge amount of effort, materials and time. Lee Hyun found it hard to believe that someone else had mastered all three of these skills to the intermediate level.

Shin Hye-min made a pretty expression and eagerly asked

"Oh, so have you interviewed him? After all, if you find a player who has mastered those three skills to the intermediate level, he would definitely have a lot to say."

"No. Unfortunately, we found out about it too late...."

"I don't believe it! On Joo-wan couldn't get an interview?"

"Yeah. I was busy working on another story at the time, and to be honest, hearing of such a player, I couldn't believe it. Only when the site posted a few things that he did, I rushed to interview him; but, I was too late. The unknown player finally made clothes from prismatic fabric – a fabric of 1st

class quality if you didn't know – and he disappeared into an unknown direction. The clothes he sold at the auction gained a lot of attention and was made into a video. Now it's displayed here on the screen."

The video screen of the studio was replaced with a major medieval city. Buildings made in the style of the Renaissance. Majestic temples and high towers, lots of two and three-story buildings buried in the midst of green gardens. Far ahead you could see the Colosseum, and many players wandering the streets as well as horses pulling carts.

In a shop you can see a player arguing with the owner, and in the middle of the spacious square, the auction was taking place.

A merchant wearing a suit offered for sale clothes that add seven different attributes. A lot of players gathered around the dealer in hope of buying something good. The price grew rapidly. Lee Hyun knew the merchant auctioneer.

'Yes, that's Mapan. So the player that raised all three skills to intermediate, it was...'

On Joo-wan was speaking about Lee Hyun.

Interestingly, would he have fainted if only he knew that Lee Hyun's fishing and sculptural skill was intermediate as well?

'Well I was not conducting the auction...'

He thought that the recording of the auction they showed on TV was excellent. Players were excited, crying out and colliding with each other for the desired items. With it, Shin Hye-min and On Joo-wan spurred the interest by adding sharp comments. After the completion of the video, the images of the items sold by Mapan appeared, including the price it was sold for, as well as the item description.

"Look Hye-min! Clothes made from prismatic cloth, made through intermediate tailoring.

"This is amazing!" On Joo-wan enviously pointed at the monitor behind him.

Rare Tunic made from prismatic cloth

Durability: 110/110. Defense: 55

A tunic of prismatic cloth stitched by a mid-level master. The master has put his soul in this piece of cloth. Even some monsters would hesitate in attacking it with their sword.

Requirements:

Level 150

Strength: 80

Dexterity: 80

Effects:

- Damage from arrows reduced by 85%.
- Fire does not affect the durability of the garment.
- Granted 20% probability that lightning spells do no damage.
- Blunt weapons cannot inflict a critical hit on you.
 - Additional glory 100
 - Art increased by 10
 - Dexterity +10

Thanks the development of skills through trade, the item has incredibly high durability. The defense is also far superior to any other items made of good fabric. In addition, it has seven additional effects! With simple items, there may be two or three randomized effects, but often they are useless. But with this, when it is seven, and all of them are beneficial!

For unique items, Lee Hyun could only get a single unit. As with beautiful sculptures in the line of work of a sculptor, things do not always turn out that good as often with tailors.

"After the auction, the player did not return. When he appears, then I,

On Joo-wan, will hasten to interview him, wherever he may be. I promise you that."

Lee Hyun glared at this narcissistic twit.

When you become famous, you have to be prepared for the appearance of both pros and cons in your life. For example, if you sell stuff, it's a plus. More people become interested in you and thus buy items; however, due to the fact that players start to follow you, they naturally appear and interfere with hunting and quests.

That is why Lee Hyun had asked Mapan to hold the auction for him.

"Aww! It's a pity that we could not get an interview, but it's time to move on to the next story. On Joo-wan, do you have anything else?"

"Yes. Finally, I would like to talk about the siege of Fort Odhein. The Guild Prosperity defended the fort from the attempted invasion of the Guild Balkan, gaining another victory. As of this moment, there is no force in the region that could fight on equal terms with the Guild Prosperity. It can be assumed that for some time, it is only natural that the fortress will be at peace. The prices will increase by 70% due to the costs of the military operations and the repairs from the defense."

"Indeed, I can hear the noise even now from the disgruntled."

"It can't be helped. The taxes are set by those who own Odhein. Yet even with this price increase, I'm sure a lot of traders and hunters will continue to visit the castle. Now, let's see the video of the battle."

The screen changed once again.

The shot gave a bird's-eye view of the fierce battle between the guilds for Odhein fortress.

Apparently, a magician tried to make a recording as he flew across the sky, in an attempt to capture the entire scale of the battle. And it was a success.

A grand battle unfolded before the audience. Wave after wave of attacks hit the walls of the fortress, and the defenders slowly had to recede. It

slightly seemed that the resistance was going to break.

But no such luck. The result of the battle was that the defenders won, the Guild Prosperity. It was all thanks to the fact that inside the fortress, they divided their forces and were successfully able to defend themselves throughout the day, until the siege couldn't last.

"In the battle involved...."

Lee Hyun, who had been watching the battle on the screen with interest, had turned off the TV. He took a shower and went to lie back in the capsule.

Lee Hyun logged into Royal Road.

He was still inside the walls of Odhein fortress. Once the siege was over, he immediately left the game, and therefore, went back to the same place, the entrance. A lot of people were wandering around the area. During the siege, ordinary players could not get inside the walls of the fortress, so now everyone was trying to catch up.

"Did you hear? They say that the player Bad Ray hit level 370!"

"Yeah, that Hermes guild is lucky."

"They also say that the number of players who visit the Kingdom of Haven have increased several times."

"Hmm. Somehow, maybe we should visit the Kingdom of Haven? What do you think?"

"Yeah, that would be interesting."

Many players discussed with interest, the latest news of Royal Road. For them, the game has become a world where they really lived. Bad Ray has also become a symbol of success for such people. He was revered as a king, or even world-wide celebrity! If there are clips from his battles, they are immediately downloaded to millions of gamers.

Just like in all other online games. The whole process of the game was based on a bunch of features and the fighting techniques of a player. It was important for people to be able to demonstrate their skill in

combining abilities in order to fight against your opponent. Of course, the higher your skill, the less consistent with the natural laws of battle in the real world. But the game was fun to go into battles, because the further you go, the more powerful your enemies become and more difficult will be the monsters.

Therefore, high-level players garner great interest among ordinary players.

The players who were discussing Bad Ray said their farewells and went about their own businesses as Weed went to one of the retail stores.

"Looking for a priest. Above level 170."

"Paying for a long distance player! Mage or archer!"

"Buying a sword that is suitable for a player at level 210! Additional effects as well!"

The area was noisy again. After the battle, a lot of players returned to the normal lifestyles, gathering in groups, chatting and trading.

Weed now had a level of 230. Thanks to killing many players in the battle, he was able to get two new levels. But not everyone was as lucky; many players died and in contrast, lost experience and were hurrying themselves to catch up. Weed threw the ten points he received from the levels to dexterity as he entered the shop.

In the last few months, Weed became far too enthused with the development of his artisan skills, and therefore, he did not pay attention to the items that could be useful in battle. The shopkeeper was a strong type of NPC, with an ugly scar on his face that might have been the result of the last battle of the fortress. He happily greeted the visitor.

"What are you looking for?"

"I need items, seasonings, herbs, and bandages."

"Good. Here are some items, medicines and herbs, as you can see."

Unlike other cities or castles, there was no separate food store. Therefore, food, herbs and other products were sold at the same place.

However, there were a lot of shops that sold weapons and armor.

Red herb Zareta

Expentable: 2 silver

A herb that helps healing wounds.

Blue Cylon herb

Expendable: 4 silver

Herb that helps to restore wisdom.

As an ingredient in food, it increases the rate of mana regeneration.

This bloody battle for Odhein was not in vain, there were a lot of herbs in this shop, and some were even of very rare species. Weed bought 200 pieces of each herb, a whetstone, thread for sewing, bandages and food. It also didn't turn out that expensive. In fact, the prices at the fort used to be high, but in honor of the victory, the players who fought on the winning side will not get taxes in the shops or on goods for a week. A bonus for the winners of the bloodiest battle.

When Weed was finished, he left the walls of Odhein. His direction lay to the nearest cave, the cave of Basra!

A group of wizards were led by Sollon; in their flowing blue robes, he awaited the approach of the enemy.

"Return quickly, and get yourselves ready!" Sollon screamed. His voice was filled with tension and excitement. Yet, the squad just clicked their tongues.

'The guy's quite mad...'

'That's not all, he just wants to show off in front...'

However, this was the time to remain completely empty of thought. The

thief Batu was being pursued by a detachment of enemy, and was approaching the position. The archers who saw the farthest provided the information on the force.

"The enemy is coming!"

"More than 40 people."

"Well done, Batu. Everyone, be ready to attack!"

By Sollon's orders, the magicians lined up and prepared spells. They then began to call out consistently.

"Attack! Billow out, pure flame of rage. Firestorm!"

A properly planned ambush had borne its first fruits. Under fire from many spells, the Basra monsters quickly weakened. But that was only the beginning; Sollon had the group begin a second series of attacks.

"Archers! Volley!"

The few archers let out a volume of fire that prevented the enemy from closing in on them. The monsters were slowly pushed back. Some of the players used stun arrows, which further slowed the enemy's movement. During this time, the magicians prepared new spells and again did battle.

"Flames of my anger, reflect my feelings and become a wall in the way of my enemies. Wall of Fire!"

"Mother Earth! Stop the unworthy that trample thy space. Mud!"

The cave floor became slippery and the Basra soldiers began to fall as the wall of fire rolled onto them!

"AWWW... Ack!"

"Hot! My throat!"

But the battle was not yet over. Besides wizards, this battle involved close-combat. After two magical attacks and volleys, the monsters' health had decreased by more than 70%.

"Dance of Death!"

Amongst the fighting warriors, a girl flashed by with two daggers. Like a

butterfly she flit between opponents and attacked the men of Basra. Vividly, she attracted the attention of males with her looks and graceful dance moves! It was Hwaryeong!

Where Hwaryeong flashed through with her dance, enemies got terrible wounds. In addition to it being a dance, 'Bubi-Bubi' is also a battle dance.

"Beautiful."

"Awesome."

When Hwaryeong began her dance, Sollon and the wizards immediately forgot about the battle and admired her movements. The dance transformed Hwaryeong from a beautiful girl into a beautiful goddess. Sollon's squad had become a fan of this amazing beauty in no time at all.

"Hwaryeong, hold on!"

"Woah. She just winked at me."

"No, not at you, it was at me!"

"Gyaaaaa!"

Magicians threw off their mantles and went to blows with each other. Squad Leader Sollon had to separate them and bring back discipline, but the beauty of the girl had captivated his heart. While all stood and stared in awe at Hwaryeong, another newcomer to the squad, Zephyr did battle with the monsters.

"Iron Fishing!"

He used the iron line to wound and confound the enemy, only to leave them captive with a sweep of his Hades throw.

Zephyr, the militant fisherman.

When he approached a few enemies, he attacked with lightning movement as the lure was hooked on them and he threw them to Hades.

"Lure!"

Under the effect of his ability the monsters retreated from Basra, as Zephyr threw the fishing line to lure more captives. After all of the attacks

of the squad, the Basra monsters had almost no health. So after a while, Zephyr and Hwaryeong put all the opponents to rest.

You got 3.49% experience.

In the one fight, Sollon and each member of his squad got 3.5% experience.

Hunting. Another reason why the Odhein fortress attracted so much attention from the various guilds. The area around the fort was filled with different dungeons, and most of the monsters in those gave a lot of experience per kill. On the mainland of Versailles, you can find good hunting areas like Odhein, and bad where you get little experience, overly strong monsters, and worthless drops.

Sollon went to Hwaryeong and with a sugary-sweet voice, and told her:

"I saw a number of butterflies that have besotted me as they flew in front of my eyes. But the most beautiful one of all now stands before me, Hwaryeong."

"I want nothing like that."

"No. Don't be shy. You should be proud of your dance, Hwaryeong."

Yet she said nothing. This was not the first time she heard a praise similar to Sollon, and she remembered and knew what was coming next.

"Ah, remember, I told you this before. I am in the Guild Mavaros, our guild has the Basra cave. So if you join us, you can always get a lot of experience."

Almost all of the most attractive dungeons in Royal Road were in the possession of a guild. For the right to constantly catch the monsters and kill the boss in front of the cave, small local battles occurred. After all, the owner of the dungeon accrues an additional 30% experience from killing the monsters!

Although, battling for a dungeon is very rare because of the complexly

intricate relationships between all the guilds in Royal Road. For example, the Mavros guild participated in the battle of Fort Odhein, on the side of Prosperity, which won them the possession of the dungeon Basra. Then if someone tried to take possession of the dungeon, they would not only have to fight the Mavros guild, but other allies of Prosperity.

"Oh, sick!" Hwaryeong muttered unhappily to herself.

After Mapan established links to all the major cities of the kingdom, thus raising levels, he could travel safer and no longer needed Hwaryeong's protection. As a result, he kept applying gentle hints and she finally decided to travel independently. And so it happened, a few days of exploring the United Kingdoms of Briton, she went to the Basra instance. (instance = dungeon/event).

The location was great, the monsters gave a lot of experience, and she was left to fight for herself. Gradually, her dancing started to attract the attention of other players and sometime later they invited her to their group. So a few days later, she happened to be in Sollon's squad. In general, she was satisfied. Only now did it become difficult. Sollon did not want to let her go!

Hwaryeong loved to chat with new and interesting people, but because her dancing was very beautiful, she always found people like Sollon. If Hwaryeong joined with a different group, he would try his best to stop the hunt. Wedging himself inside the party, wasting time by talking or even strike a critical blow with magic and specifically take Hwaryeong away.

In general, he behaved like a little shit, but because the Mavros guild had a big impact on them, no one complained. Sollon then changed tactics and decided to speak again.

"If you leave the squad Hwaryeong, you will have to drop the thought of hunting with my guild."

All would shun Hwaryeong. She had to hunt in Sollon's squad. The only consolation was that she managed to find common ground with the other newcomer in the squad, Zephyr. They often talked, and she liked the guy, though he was much younger than her, and he even listened to her when

she spoke.

"Lightning, zigzag!"

"Sylph, bind their feet."

Sollon's squad fought the monsters of Basra. The cave was full of monsters, the squad didn't even have to move, they just waited till their thief, Batu would lure a new group of enemies into an ambush. A squad of archers and wizards! First to enter battle were the mages, who use spells to greatly reduce the opponents' health. As they regain mana and begin to produce new spells, the archers join the fray. They shell the monsters and slow down the movements as they wait for the mages' next attack.

Then towards the end of the battle, comes the melee, Hwaryeong and Zephyr.

In general, everything was planned out and kept the magicians attacking. Usually, other teams would take only two or three mages in the cave, as they had to work in a seriously confined space.

However, in Sollon's group, the number of magicians were 8!

Battle, rest, battle, rest.

After each fight with the monsters, Sollon had them take a break. This was not because they were tired of getting experience points; no, they waited until the magicians could recover mana and restart all over. So as of this moment.

"Look, the last monster dropped silver armor!"

"Woah!"

"You know what, let's give them to Hwaryeong?" Sollom exclaimed with excitement.

"Sure!"

"If that is what Sollon decides, then give it."

The players expressed joy in support of the decision of the party leader, but only on the outside.

Deep down, they were indignant.

'That's the same thing as before with the dancing broad.'

'Damn! And it was my turn to pick up an item...'

'Hrm. Now we have to give all of the best things to her?'

But no matter how irritated they were, the players still remained in Sollon's group. In Basra cave, it was difficult to find another party like this where they can receive such a lot of experience.

Like everyone else, Hwaryeong received her experience points, but since most of the work was carried out by the mages, she came out very discontent at the end.

'My experience is growing... but when can I hunt?'

In her doubt, she turned to one of the soldiers of the squad, Davron.

"If everything goes the way it has, and we do not use our abilities, we won't gain in strength, right?"

"Huh?" A lack of understanding spread on Davron's face, and then on reflection, she asked another question.

"What about our skills?"

"Well we need them, to, uh, improve."

"Right. And?"

"And we are hunting in a squad, we get new levels, but our abilities do not grow...."

It was noticeable that Hwaryeong was very worried, and Davron then asked in surprise.

"Of course, there are people like you Hwaryeong, who worry about development of skills, but in this case, shouldn't you gain more levels? First you need to level up, enter into a strong group and get experience"

"But in this case, we will eventually become weaker than the other players without developing our abilities..."

Hwaryeong just recently remembered how she traveled with Mapan, and defended the cart loaded with goods, by dancing. Sometimes she had to dance for several hours and significantly improve technique.

So when she saw the surprised look on Davron, she asked.

"So everybody does this? Right?"

"Of course. All the hunting you have been doing, what made you make that choice, Hwaryeong? First you need to quickly increase, then you can gradually develop in skill, hrm..."

Sollon's squad perfectly fitted Davron's statement. Everyone tried to increase their level as quickly as possible without paying a single bit of attention on their techniques. Since wizards are trained for attack power, then for the remainder, they only gain experience. But for magicians, all was not as rosy.

In a battle, they do not receive damage and therefore their growth in levels, without increasing defense and stamina, make them glass cannons. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the party only fights against weak enemies, even if many, it was of no use to the squad. It was all quiet and very haste-less fights.

Chapter 8: Weed's hunt

Dungeon of Basra!

A place filled by numerous monsters, was located close to the kingdom's capital.

"A free spot in a party. Anyone willing to join? We have 30 people and promise a fast hunt."

"Looking for a skilled warrior."

"Selling healing herbs. Cheaper than in stores! Batch purchases are welcome!"

Weed, who just approached the cave of Basra, was watching players form parties. Some were joining the already existing parties, some were creating new ones. And all of them were hanging around the dungeon entrance.

In cave of Basra, monsters not only granted plentiful experience but dropped decent loot. Therefore its entrance was always crowded with players. Though no one dared to enter it alone which was way too dangerous.

"Do you want to join a party?"

Quietly standing Weed was approached by a few people accompanying a warrior with white plumage on his hat, who was the one to ask the question. Not waiting for an answer he continued: "Excuse me, what are your level and profession? I see you have a sword so you must be some kind of fighter and one of our spots just got free, maybe you would join us?"

Weed slowly examined the man with the plumage. Not so much his looks as his equipment.

"Duke's helmet, weapons and armor of The British Confederation, items for level 180 and above. Costs 800 gold."

"Our group has 15 people. Everyone is of level 170 or higher. My name is

Vintich, we are from Mavros Guild. So how about it, want to hunt together?"

Just the fact of them being from Mavros Guild would mean a positive response from any other player. Weed though slowly shook his head.'

"Sorry, but I'm not looking for group."

"Huh?"

"I'll manage myself."

"..."

Followed by confused stares, Weed headed into the cave.

In the cave of Basra players were hunting from level 120 and up to 300. The dungeon had four floors, every next one having stronger monsters than the previous.

But it was not monster's strength that was driving off lone players, but their extremely annoying ability to steal items. In short, if you die - they rob you. Sometimes they would even go so far as to take your equipped armor.

As a result, after dying, player would not only lose experience but 3-4 times more items than usual. Therefore it took a certain amount of resolve to hunt in this dungeon. However, thieves of Basra were dropping good items, so it was never empty.

"He said it's on the 3rd floor."

Weed carefully slipped through 1st and 2nd floors, trying not to interfere with hunting parties too much.

"Gotta be careful if I don't want to become a pincushion after appearing too suddenly."

Once Weed decided to hunt, first thing he did was contacting Mapan. But he had to refuse due to being too busy. As far as Weed knew, after selling items in the auction the merchant raised his level quite a bit and earned a lot of money, which he used to purchase a title and form a trading group under his name.

Instead, Mapan told where he could find Hwaryeong. It was then that Weed decided to come to caves of Basra to visit his friend.

Weed easily found Hwaryeong on the 3rd floor of the dungeon. She was hunting with a large party in the very centre of the dungeon. Gracefully dancing and striking monsters down, that girl was hard to miss.

Weed waited for the fight to finish and approached her.

"Hey, Hwaryeong, long time no see."

"Oh! Weed? Why are you here?"

"I decided to hunt and so I stopped by."

Hwaryeong warmly welcomed Weed as she was just starting to get bored. But then a player in a blue robe approached them from the depth of the cave.

"So, who's this man? - Asked Sollon after inspecting Weed from head to toe."

The way he said it, all the petty little soul of the mage was clearly visible on his face.

Barely holding her anger, Hwaryeong replied:

"This is my friend. His name is Weed. He's a sculptor."

"Oh! That's how it is!"

Not quite satisfied with that explanation, Sollon continued throwing suspicious glances: "So you're friends? Or lovers even? And how long have you been hunting together?"

"We were introduced by a common friend. And we haven't hunted together yet. You got a problem?"

Hwaryeong's reply somewhat calmed Sollon.

"I see! Then there's no problem!"

And as if showing his good will he continued:

"Weed, maybe you will join our party? I don't have anything against your

profession, but it must be hard to hunt alone with it."

"Yeah, Weed. Join us! - Hwaryeong exclaimed excitedly."

Actually, Weed wasn't going to join any parties. He just came to say hello and invite Hwaryeong to go hunting with him. However he could not just leave after seeing the eager expression on her face.

After joining the party and finishing one battle, he realized that he just had nothing to do. Knowing that Weed was a sculptor, Sollon wasn't giving him a chance to join the fight.

Instead Weed got plenty of time to talk to Hwaryeong on various topics. Certainly under constant supervision of lingering nearby Sollon.

Having grasped the situation, Weed openly stated:

"You are quite popular, Hwaryeong."

"That's not it, - said Hwaryeong with a smile, pretending that nothing's happening."

"My profession is dancer. Therefore I have high Charisma attribute. And also there's an 'Appearance' attribute."

"Charisma and Appearance?"

"Yeah, with an increase in charisma beauty increases. It can be said that some kind of 'Glamour' appears. Brighter eyes, shiny skin."

"And then that 'Appearance' attribute is..."

"Well, that's what comes to mind first. Improved stature, cuter face, more elegant curves. But that only applies to dancers."

Weed recalled that he as well increased his Charisma attribute using belt of Deykram.

'I see, so that's what it does...'

This proved that the profession dancer isn't as simple as he used to think. Besides basic attributes, one has to improve something new.

Now it was clear why Sollon fell for Hwaryeong so hard.

"And as I'm a dancer, most of my efforts are spent on increasing Charisma and Appearance attributes."

"Then..."

"Exactly. My real face is somewhat plainer... Not like I have to tell you that, but I still did, just in case."

It was natural that initial in-game appearance was gradually changing. Usually it took a keen eye to see the difference. However because of her profession, in Hwaryeong's case changes were much more significant.

If you were to pay more attention to the woman, claiming that her looks do not depend on lighting, you'll notice that it's not true. Even most beautiful women who prefer not to use makeup will try to take the most advantageous position according to lighting.

Men are weak for beautiful women.

That is a rule!

But every rule has exceptions. And Weed was one!

'Woman equals money. Relationship with any woman revolves around money. If you spend it - you get love in return. I don't want a relationship like that...'

Weed had some twisted view on the matter. In his mind he compared beautiful girls to hippos feeding on money.

After 12 hours of hunting Sollon said:

"Ugh! Today was a really hard day. Well, let's meet again tomorrow. Thanks for the hard work."

Party members started to log out one by one.

Weed tightened his grip on the sword in anxiety. Finally! He was waiting for this moment.

'Well, so it's time to start?'

To begin with he took out a whetstone and sharpened his sword.

Shiiing-shiiing!

You have sharpened the sword!

Attack power increased by 14%.

His sword sharpening skill was at intermediate 4th level. He wasn't able to use it as often as, say, repair skill. Besides, if it was raining or he wasn't hunting sharpening effect would vanishing quickly. Therefore, the only times he got to use it was immediately before battles, when sharpening weapons for himself and his party mates.

"Done, next..."

Weed pulled out a soft cloth and thoroughly polished his armor, until it started to shine.

You polished armor!

Defence increased by 16%.

Chance to dodge increased by 2%.

Armor polishing was very similar to polishing. There weren't many opportunities to use it for prolonged periods, but its effect was good.

These two skills, greatly benefiting party's strength, usually were used by blacksmiths after being accepted into a party. If you were a blacksmith, but didn't raise these skills for some reason, you wouldn't be accepted in a party in most cases.

"Now food..."

Weed opted for a dish made of shrimps, with a romantic name 'Sea flowers'. Usually seafood in the game was quite expensive, but much to his surprise in Odein stronghold he managed to buy it cheaper than in Rosenheim Kingdom. And not just because of absence of taxes, but because of it being conveniently located right on one of the major trade

routes.

Nothing beats seafood when it comes to increasing Vitality and Life. And shrimps proved to be best among seafood!

To enhance dish's effect even further Weed prepared sweet maple syrup sauce and a salad out of potato, lettuce and béchamel.

Weed opened his mouth wide in anticipation.

He slowly peeled the shell off; after cooking, it acquired a golden tint and was easy to remove. There was only soft white shrimp meat left on the stick and it was all ready to be swallowed by Weed.

His will struggled with his urges.

His mouth wanted to take a bite, but hands didn't want to let go. Especially because it wasn't just a simple shrimp. Weed applied his sculpturing mastery to emphasize its beauty.

After slowly dipping shrimp in syrup sauce, under the influence of its aroma, Weed saw the glow of divine wings around the shrimp.

He even gave the dish a name: 'Angel-shrimp from heaven'!

He couldn't think of a more fitting name. The aroma was driving him crazy. Strong and delicious. No one would be able to endure its call.

Yummy!

In anticipation, Weed slowly stuck his tongue out and slowly mowed the shrimp towards his mouth...

When all the party members started logging out Hwaryeong immediately followed them. But that was just to get rid of Sollon. After waiting enough time for mage to leave, she logged back in.

As for Zephyr - once he recognized Weed, he didn't logged out at all. He just stepped aside and watched his former fishing rival.

Hwaryeong and Zephyr were closely watching as Weed was about to eat the lone shrimp.

'There's only one so there's no way I can ask him to share...'

However Hwaryeong didn't have the strength to hold back, so she loudly swallowed.

Deafening gulp broke Weed's concentration at the crucial point.

"Eh. I thought you logged out, Hwaryoung?"

"Ye-eah, - slowly replied the girl, staring intently at the shrimp."

And let out another gulp.

Hwaryeong wasn't asking to share. But here wide open eyes were staring at shrimp with such fascination that there was no need for words. She looked like it was the first time she saw food in many days.

Burning desire! Hunger! Craving!

'I don't want to get beat up over food!'

With a quiet sigh Weed handed over the shrimp. He didn't have a choice.

"If you want, then... this... for one gold..."

"I'll gladly accept!"

Hwaryeong bit the shrimp without the second thought. She didn't even get upset over last words of Weed, trying to minimize the loss in any possible way.

Yum!

Shrimp immediately disappeared in her mouth.

Actually, Hwaryeong wasn't so obsessed with food. Even in real life she was watching her waist and often was on a diet.

But the shrimp's aroma drove away her voice of reason. She had a feeling that if she won't eat it right now, she'll regret it for the rest of her life.

It could be said she was behaving like an addict at that time. All thanks to the ever increasing cooking skill of Weed.

After gleefully finishing the shrimp, Hwaryeong finally settled down. She

wasn't regretting it one bit. Every piece of the shrimp was giving her heavenly pleasure.

'Now that I think about it, Mapan mentioned that if you stick to Weed, good things will be happening to you all the time! I got to taste such a delicacy! Yummy!'

Finally, she threw a regretful glance at the remaining head and tail of the shrimp that usually no one would eat. But if not for standing nearby Weed and Zephyr, she'd eat those with delight.

'Sorry, shrimp.'

Weed with regret took out another shrimp and started cooking it from the start. Shrimps were expensive so they couldn't be eaten as snacks.

For Weed they were representing investments.

Investments in fighting ability! Because effects of food were giving maximum possible boost to Mana, Life and some other attributes.

That's why he didn't regret spending money to buy 500 shrimps.

You are well-fed.

Life +400

Mana +400

Stamina +20

Art +15

Don't trust those who say hunger inspires artists.

Only artist with a full stomach can concentrate on his art instead of his hunger. Actually, food's effects varied depending on player's profession. Were Weed to be a cook, there'd be increase in vitality and cooking, or better taste.

Weed started to gather his belongings. And of course he didn't forget to

take his 1 gold from Hwaryeong.

"I'm going to continue the hunt, you with me, Hwaryeong?"

"Yeah, sure!"

To be honest, Weed never considered any other answer.

Her abilities as a dancer would come in handy as a trump card. Even though damage from her attacks wasn't that high, her movements were swift and monsters couldn't even scratch her. Besides, if you were in one party with Hwaryeong, your attributes would get a certain boost, contrary to monsters'.

You have created a party!

Weed brought up the control menu and invited Hwaryeong.

"Thanks! - exclaimed Hwaryeong in excitement and accepted the invitation."

Then she waved to Zephyr.

"Will you join?"

Fishermen nodded happily.

"I'm in if you're ok with me!"

Weed just nodded and sent an invitation to Zephyr. He didn't have anything in particular against it, there were plenty of monsters and therefore, experience, and some extra help would come in handy. Though he didn't quite understand why Zephyr didn't logout as everyone else.

"Then wait a bit, Hwaryeong. I'll make another dish for Zephyr and polish and sharpen your equipment. And repair too if there's a need."

It was a great opportunity to improve, though by a small margin, his blacksmithing, cooking and tailoring skills.

"Wow! Cool!"

"The defense increased, and fishing rod's attack too..."

Hwaryeong and Zephyr gave Weed a surprised look. They didn't expect a single man to be a master of so many trades. And it was just a small step that separated an unskilled egghead from an omnipotent player.

"Thanks Weed! Now let's go find a party. We have 3 people and many parties will gladly accept us, or so I think, - joyfully said Hwaryeong, but in return Weed just slowly shook his head."

"There will be barely enough monsters for us three."

"Huh? What..."

"Do you honestly believe we can hunt in dungeon of Basra with just the three of us? - asked dumbfounded Zephyr. Unaware of it himself, he guessed right."

"Three of us will do fine. Though, I'm wrong. We have four. Come forth, Death Knight!"

Smoke started pouring from necklace on Weed's neck, and a moment later the death knight Van Hawk emerged from it.

It had been a while since he was summoned last time, so he was excited.

"You called me, master?"

"Yes."

Just one glance on his minion filled Weed with grief. Death knight was leeching off 20% of his experience. A lot of time had passed since Weed defeated and subjugated Van Hawk.

They fought through numerous battles and Van Hawk managed to greatly raise his level. Especially in the province of Morata, where Weed decided that the more vampires die - the better it is for the party, so he wasn't holding the monster back.

And Van Hawk used it to the fullest; at that time he was getting not just 20% of Weed's experience but all 100% for those he killed by himself. Because of that he managed to greatly surpass Weed and reach a level of 290.

"Damn monster! It's time you pay off for everything... - Weed immediately started grumbling."

But death knight had things to say too. After all he was getting experience not for sunbathing. He had to kill a lot of monsters, suffer through mockery of paladins and beatings of his master.

He had things to say, but he decided to remain silent for now.

History of dungeon of Basra wasn't a common knowledge for players. In the past a family of nobles used to live in the lands of Basra. It was strongly objecting to integration into British Confederacy, so they made a deal with the thieves guild and started to prepare an uprising. And the headquarter of that uprising was located here, in the dungeon of Basra.

After sending death knight to the front, Weed and his party descended to fourth level.

"There's no one at all here..." - said Zephyr in a barely audible voice.

And he wasn't wrong; as dungeon of Basra was highly popular among players, it was rare for them to hunt on 4th level. Monsters inhabiting it were too strong, with levels from 240 and higher.

Trembling in fear and barely moving his feet Zephyr didn't have a choice but to slowly follow Weed in hope that things will somehow work out.

'Amen! Why did I even come back! I could be relaxing at home right now...' - thought Hwaryeong.

'If we die here, we'll lose all the items... We're crazy to come here without a priest or paladins...'

Hwaryeong and Zephyr could barely hold back their fear and anger. Weed's behavior was confusing them. Even when 3rd floor hunting was hard enough, he dragged them to the 4th!

Therefore they followed behind the confidently pacing Weed and dark knight.

"Let's check his bag!"

"And turn out his pockets!"

"And raise a level! We need more power for new revolt!"

A group of thief-monsters jumped out from behind the corner. They were equipped in iron armor and were carrying swords. Not sparing any more words thieves of Basra started their attack.

"Power of Darkness!" - yelled Van Hawk and rushed into the fight.

Death Knights were quite adept with dark magic. The spell he just used significantly increased weapon damage and defense of armor.

"Deadly Blade!"

Van Hawk accumulated dark energy in his blade and directed it towards the oncoming thieves. His weapon greatly darkened and a few moments later it let out thousands of finest threads, which struck attacking enemies in the chest.

Thieves collapsed to the floor.

Zephyr and Hwaryeong were astounded.

'Whoa...'

'That's what level 290 monsters look like? How does Weed even control such a beast?'

At that moment they realized that Weed wasn't just another ordinary player, and that it is really possible to hunt in dungeon of Basra with just 4 people. Weed's words weren't just feeling bragging any more.

Meanwhile Weed himself was surprised not less than his friends.

'Wow, when did he become so powerful?'

Weed could only remember him beating the knight and improving his own skills. And he was extremely surprised to see his minion in a different light. Death knight managed to beat four enemies with a single strike. Even though it was partially due to his dark nature, which increased damage to non-undead enemies.

'Crimson amulet of life... the item in which the death knight Van Hawk was eternally trapped. Furthermore, he had another black amulet with

Lord Tori in it inside his backpack... Was that really a reward? Or just some cunning way for NPC to increase its level before breaking out of...'

Suddenly Weed forgot about everything, jumped forward and dropped the hilt of his sword on the head of Van Hawk, who lifted his sword to finish defeated enemies.

"I command! Do not to kill them. Just disable, we'll finish them ourselves."

"Understood Master. - Abruptly roared Van Hawk in Weed's face."

Because of significant increase in level death knight could feel his growing power and wasn't so content with receiving orders from 'lowbie' Weed.

'That jerk is talking back to me. I haven't taught him enough...'

Weed noted to self to teach a lesson to Van Hawk later, but for now he headed into battle: "Sculpting blade!"

He couldn't imagine himself without that technique! With his blade shining blue Weed was rushing among enemies dealing multiple blows.

"Die!"

"Money! Give me your money!"

His opponents' swords were passing dangerously close to Weed. Because of dodging and parrying he managed not to get any wounds. Though from aside, he looked like he has given up on his life.

'Here... this is more fun...'

The thrill of being completely surrounded by enemies. Your heartbeat quickens, you start to perceive you opponents' breath and movements. Intoxicating sensation of your own might fills you with overflowing happiness and you feel like you can conquer the world. A game like this will never become boring!

Weed thought about Swords.

In the school, Hyun only was taught basic skills, so he had to learn the

art of the sword by himself in the game. However lately he's been coming to the dojo to learn from the master of the sword himself. An Hyon-Do wasn't an ordinary man, so his lessons weren't ordinary as well.

"This is a Sword."

In the hands of his teacher the sword was drawing graceful and smooth curves. It was hard to believe that someone could handle a sword like that. This was an art of a real master, who was creating another masterpiece.

'This really is a Sword.' - thought Hyun, watching in fascination.

However, as if reacting to his thoughts, the pattern started to change. Now it was a prowling predator, or an eagle, falling from the sky, or... Then, in front of the predator the Fort Odein appeared.

'No, not Odein, but something solid, significant...'

Something thicker and taller than Fort's walls blocked predator's path. The obstacle was in his way, and without a second thought the beast lunged forward and tore it apart and rushed ahead.

"Sword... It is harder to master than a gun, but by doing it you become stronger. Death, decease and other hardships no longer bother you. I became free after I mastered the sword."

Lee Hyun learned a lot from An Hyon-Do. He entirely changed his attitude towards sword, learned to properly breath, move and take care of his weapon. He became stronger.

Even though, his life wasn't easy before he started going to the dojo. Absence of parents, debts and constant fights with bullies. Hyun could violently assault anyone in attempts to defend every precious memory of his parents. And that strengthened his spirit; he would never back out of a fight. However watching the skill of his teacher, Hyun started to realize that only god knew if there's a limit to mastery of a sword.

Every thief-monster was a lot stronger than death knights of Lavias. In the fight with the knights he only had to watch the front, but now he didn't have the right to miss anything happening at his sides or his back.

'Woah, fights grow more and more entertaining...'

Weed avoided a long stab from the side and lunged forward.

"AAAAA!"

His hands were flying around him, parrying and striking at the same time.

You have dealt a critical strike.

You deal consecutive critical strikes.

Your continuous attack succeeded.

Do you want to save the series of strikes?

Skillfully moving from enemy to enemy, Weed was dealing series of critical strikes. If you were to deal an exceptionally successful series of strikes in the game, you would be able to save it, to later use it at will as an individual technique. However Weed just dismissed the message and rushed back into battle.

For Weed fight was something living, unpredictable and extraordinary. Sometimes you have to act as your instinct tells you, and by using fixed techniques you just restrain yourself.

"Sculpting blade!"

After killing three monsters he dove right in the middle of enemy group. With a trust in his skill and polished armor he was eagerly spilling enemies' blood.

Though a bit later, but Hwaryeong and Zephyr also joined the battle.

"Charming dance!"

Enemies who watched erotic and tempting moves of the girl, froze in confusion and embarrassment. Their cheeks reddened and eyes filled with desire.

"Such a beautiful girl."

"Oooo! Why did I go from knight to thief, if only I still were..."

"She melted my heart of stone!"

Having captured the enemies' attention she exclaimed:

"No introductions! I have no interest in you!"

"Eeeh?!"

Her words left enemies stunned, and she proceeded to dance with another group. Not forgetting to cooperate with partners of course.

"These ones won't be attacking us."

"For how long?" - Immediately asked Zephyr. Their lives depended on that information.

"About two minutes. Their level is too high; you must deal with the rest by that time."

"Swing!"

Zephyr swung his fishing rod and joined the fight. Every time he extended his rod a few enemies were knocked down.

Weed and Van were holding back main forces of enemy. Hwaryeong tamed enemies to the right and Zephyr was fighting the ones on the left! Compared to previous fights, their situation was complicated, so they had to give their all to stay alive.

Hwaryeong incapacitated 12 more opponents and fell on the floor exhausted.

"I'm done... can't continue..."

She spent all of her mana, and was sitting on the floor completely drained. Up to this time Hwaryeong always tried to pick the weaker monsters while not exerting too much in a fight. But this time she had to

give it her all and she realized, that her dance techniques and attributes weren't developed enough. She wasn't strong enough.

'That's hard... I probably should have fought stronger opponents before?' - Slowly thought Hwaryng, expecting some monster to end her life at any moment.

But then there appeared Zephyr, who came to cover her from advancing enemies. Thanks to fishing, his attributes, especially fortitude and stamina, were highly developed, so he handled this fight better.

Zephyr was fighting the surrounding monsters at his limit. He wasn't hitting opponents one by one, but all of them at the same time! Fisherman's skills allowed him to damage whole bunch of enemies at the same time.

When their health was dropping to about a third they were dying, as they were immediately finished by a series of critical strikes from suddenly appearing Weed. It seemed like the situation was straightening out, when enemies, incapacitated earlier by Hwaryeong started to come to their senses.

The intense battle continued without a single moment of rest.

"Sculpting blade!"

Weed was trying to move as fast as possible, but still the moment he was finishing one opponent another was already attacking him. He had to hurry: if he were to stop even for a moment monsters would come closer and completely surround him, which would be a sure death.

Hwaryeong regained some strength and hurried to back up Zephyr. She was dancing like a butterfly, stabbing exposed sides of enemies with her daggers. It seemed that the battle will never end. However a few moments later deeply surprised Hwaryeong realized that there was no one else to fight.

She didn't remember how she was fighting and who dealt the last blow. In her chaotic memories fight looked like a fragment of hell. It was hard, long and extremely dangerous... She couldn't believe they won!

'Phew... That was hard, but... fun...' - she wiped sweat off her forehead and smiled.

That was the only fight on her memory where she had to exert herself by 110%. Her mood was great.

Well, if not for death knight's help, they'd all be finished by now. But that didn't upset her at all, their victory was well-deserved.

"Weed, do you always fight like this?" - asked Hwaryeong the question that had been growing inside her since the beginning of the fight.

"Yes," - calmly answered Weed. He already started to repair damaged armor.

If armor or weapons were losing even a bit of durability, first thing after a fight Weed was repairing them.

"But that is so dangerous! And hard! Are you not afraid at all to fight monsters, whose level is a lot higher than yours?"

Hwaryeong got a little frightened. She couldn't imagine how one could be able to fight alone with only enemies all around. Even though they were playing a virtual reality game the fear was real.

In tight situations the stench of blood and the feeling of opponent's strength were often stunning players by fear. After that they were easily killed.

"You know Hwaryeong, in Lavi's I had to climb very high, and from up there all the monsters looked so small. It seemed like I can squish them with a finger. That's when I realized that they're just food. Food that makes me stronger."

Hwaryeong let out another of her dazzling smiles.

"Seriously, with you Weed, there's no time to be bored."

However not everyone was celebrating the end of the fight. Zephyr was watching death knight with fear.

"Zephyr?!"

"Hwa... Hwa... Hwaryeong." - Worry made him stutter.

"What happened?"

"Look at the death knight..."

"Huh? Death Knight?"

She looked at Van and noticed that he's preparing another of his techniques. Hwaryeong was oblivious to what was going on so she became curious.

She was unaware of what Zephyr realized long ago. He got to fish with Weed for quite a long time, so he had an idea on what was about to happen. Did you think after fishing Weed was sitting in a shade to relax? Not at all!

Having finished fixing armor, Weed applied a number of bandages and got up on his feet.

"Hmmm... - He said, - now it'll get a bit dangerous. Don't worry too much, but I think we might have a couple close calls this time."

"..."

"You know, I'm not in my best shape. I haven't been fighting for a long time. To be honest, I don't even remember the last time my health dropped below 15%. Even in Odein I was fighting mostly weak opponents."

"..."

"Let's see. After this battle only my Endurance slightly raised. That's because I made a miscalculation and the battle wasn't as hard as I expected. Next time I should aim to drop my health to 3%. I'll tell you a secret: when your health gets very low, your Endurance attribute increases greatly. So in following battles you should try to lose as much health as you can. Trust me, that'll pay off handsomely. For example, at the moment enemies' hits feel like tickling for me."

Zephyr and Hwaryeong were speechless from surprise.

'That's something! So the blows of thieves of Basra are 'ticklish' for him?'

'How? Even though he has an intermediate blacksmith skill, he can't be...'

'My armor isn't any worse, but every hit of a monster hurts like hell!'

'Damn masochist!'

But his next words shook them even more.

"Well, now that the scouting and warm-up is over, it is time we fight for real."

Scouting? For Zephyr and Hwaryeong previous fight was living hell!

Having seen their twisted in horror faces, he asked in doubt:

"So... Do you accept me as a party leader? If so, then the hunt goes on."

They hurriedly nodded. Having accepted Weed's invitation, they automatically assigned him as a party leader. And also he was the strongest of the three.

Even though Zephyr's fishing and Hwaryeong's dances allowed them to raise their attributes quite a lot, they still were as far from Weed as from the moon.

'He has 5 crafting skills at intermediate level...'

'He's a beast. A machine... To do all those things...'

He was odd, of that Hwaryeong and Zephyr could agree.

Let alone his crafting profession having battle techniques, his attributes were ridiculously high as well! Looking at Weed they could feel their inferiority, even though compared to other players they were pretty normal.

'So there exist people like Weed...'

'We aren't that useless!' - they thought.

Usually the party leader's position was taken by a warrior or a knight, due to them having high Charisma and Leadership attributes. Because if leader had high level of those two attributes, party members were less likely to be affected by panic and were getting increased experience. And

monsters confronting such players were not able to use their skills to the fullest.

"Aaaaaaa!"

"Deadly dance! Charming dance!"

"Fishing rod feint!"

"Come on! Hit me! Raise my endurance!"

The hunt has started.

Endless fight to the death against thieves of Basra. As soon as one group of monsters got finished, they were switching to the next. They only had time for quick repairs and light healing.

"Waaaaaaaaa!"

In the past Zephyr wouldn't believe if someone was to tell him he won't be looting defeated enemies. But it was happening now, because of the constantly attacking waves of enemies they just didn't have time for that.

They were fighting in such manner for almost 16 hours, when finally Zephyr got wounded. A thief has stabbed him in the stomach with a sword. A deadly injury.

Hwaryeong threw a hateful glance at Weed.

"You overdid it! We are humans, and when we get tired we need rest!"

Then Hwaryeong looked at Zephyr with a bit of envy.

'He's dying... At least he'll get some rest... I wonder when I will get free from that devil?!

That was the first time she was envious of a dying player.

With a relieved smile Zephyr said:

"I'm fine, Hwaryeong, Weed, don't worry about me. Hahahahaha!"

He laughed to tears from joy. However Weed's expression didn't falter one bit.

'What if?.. No, can't be. He's not a priest and won't be able to save me...'

- Zephyr got frightened for a moment, happily watching blood pouring out of his stomach.

His health was quickly dropping and already reached 23%. Situation wasn't critical, but without immediate priest's help an injury like this would end killing him.

But then Weed rummaged through his bag and started taking out bandages one by one.

"I'll fix you right away."

"Ahahah! With bandages? Don't joke like that..."

"Apply bandage! - Was shouting Weed again and again, rapidly applying multiple bandages."

Bleeding has stopped

Wound has closed

Life increased to 26%

Life increased to 29%

"Wow! - Zephyr's eyes were round from astonishment."

He gave Weed a frightened look.

"Erm... Weed, what's your level of First Aid?"

"Intermediate 9th level."

Just a little bit away from the high level!

During his long hunt in the province of Morata, Weed had to apply loads of bandages and so his skill level got surprisingly high. Usually parties had at least one priest, so players weren't using First Aid skill at all, so most of them had a skill level of beginner even on high levels.

"Intermediate 9th level of First Aid..."

Zephyr was hitting his fist on the ground in sorrow. Damn Weed, a real

sadist and devil! Now he'll have to hunt monsters forever!

The battle continued...

Weed was slaying one monster after another and was thinking that it wasn't actually that hard. Compared to what he experienced in the province of Morata, dungeon of Basra looked like kindergarten. Even in Lavias death knights were a lot more dangerous for him!

At least they were using long swords and dark magic. Thieves of Basra on the contrary used short swords, and though they attacked in great numbers they were a lot less dangerous opponents.

This time he didn't have Alveron with his healing magic, but since then his health has raised a lot because of improved attributes and fishing. To almost twice the amount, 1400.

Also, thanks to his blacksmith skill, Weed was able to sharpen and polish equipment, increasing his survivability even further.

The profession of Legendary Moonlight Sculptor!

Only because of it Weed was forced to significantly improve his handicraft skill, which allowed him to raise many other skills to intermediate level during last few months. And those made him even stronger than if he was still hunting up to now and achieved a level of 280.

To become stronger and fight harder battles. Weed enjoyed fighting strong opponents; that's why he went to the 4th floor of dungeon of Basra. And even before, he was fighting death knights while only having level 110. That sure was hard, and he died a lot, but having gained some power and experience, he was winning battle after another and that was making him happy.

Having defeated another group of monsters, Weed suddenly realized that his bag was full.

"Crap..."

Hwaryeong and Zephyr weren't sad at all!

"Can't help it..." - dragged Weed.

Hwaryeong and Zephyr started to nod excitedly.

'Time to end it. It was a hard hunt.'

'Damn, that was terrifying.'

They were sure, that thieves of Basra will be coming to them in nightmares for the rest of their lives.

But then Weed's words shocked them yet again.

"Can't help it, we'll have to make a quick trip to the village to sell the stuff, and then we'll come back again. Thieves of Basra wait for us. Let's do it quickly."

'Daaaaaaaamn!!!'

Chapter 9: The Dark Gamer Union

Lee Hyun closed his math textbook.

A few years ago he had to drop out of middle school, and since then he never once thought he'd open a textbook again. However, to pass the exam in order to get high school diploma he just had to get back to studying.

"Hmmm..."

Ever since Hyun left school, he was spending all of his time on earning money by manual labor, so his brain got pretty rusty. He was meticulously reading the book, but its meaning was eluding him.

"Damn, why are they teaching so many different formulae!? If I would ever need them, they can be easily found on the internet; and for the complicated stuff I could use a calculator..."

Lee Hyun was muttering to himself nonstop. It was very hard to study math all by himself, but going to cram school would mean additional expenses.

I should probably just forget it and return to the game... But I already paid for exam...

After a long speculation Hyun and his sister decided that she'll help him with studies for an hour every couple of days. But even with his sister's help, learning math was very hard. And when the student has no interest in the subject, teacher has to put dozen times more effort.

However Hayan had planned everything ahead. Knowing her brother well, she took an unusual approach to education.

"Look. This number is your savings. Think about them! You deposited \$300 for 12 month with 5.39% interest rate. How much will you get in the end?"

"316 dollars and 17 cents!"

When Hayan was asking questions like that, she was always getting a

correct answer in a blink of an eye. But that answer didn't satisfy Hyun as he continued:

"The interest will amount to \$16.17. But they are subjected to taxes. It's either \$2.10 of simplified tax, or \$2.42 of standard tax."

Hayan smiled happily:

"See? It's simple. You have to learn everything in a similar manner. Now to the next problem. Count the money."

After a long break from studying, Hyun's head was barely working; but gradually he started to notice that solving problems became easier and easier.

Let's see!

Hyun have read all the textbooks and solved half the problems from them. He even borrowed all the textbooks his sister had.

All in 4 days before the exam!

That's because when you still have a lot of time you just can't make yourself study. But once exams are already at hand, you just have no choice but to get yourself together and learn all you can in the remaining time.

And so came the day of the exam.

Hyun left his home early, to be able to walk to the school in the centre of the town, where his exam was held.

I must... I have to do my best...

On the way there he visited his grandmother in the hospital. She was getting better, she wasn't as pale, and according to her doctor, she was able to go for walks all by herself.

"Don't worry if you fail, Hyun. You'll always be able to prepare better and pass all your exams." - said his grandmother with an encouraging smile.

"Sure, Grandma..."

Lee Hyun tightly gripped her hand.

His grandmother's hands were all wrinkled from the hard manual labor that she had to do in her late years to raise Hyun and Hayan after their parents died.

Hyun will be grateful to her for the rest of his life. If not for their grandmother, they'd be sent to orphanage and most likely get separated, as it is rare for two children to be adopted by the same family.

"Well, I should go now..." - Hyun said goodbye to his grandmother and went to the school.

Exam was held at a public high school 'Korea'. It was part of educational complex 'Korea' and was located near a college and a university.

Though the university didn't get into top ten most prestigious universities of the country, it had good teaching staff and well-designed infrastructure. A lot of talented young people, including students from abroad, were studying here in an independent and creative environment.

The main quality of a prestigious university isn't its rating inside the country, but its reputation abroad. 'Korea' university was well-known in other countries, so it had more students from abroad than any other Korean university.

Lee Hyun appreciated the majesty of the main building of the university.

Even though I live a lousy life... but I swear, my sister will be able to study here...

Every group consisted of 30 people.

After receiving his question list, Lee Hyun noted with a surprise that he knew most of it. His intense and rushed studying method had a great result.

Though he shouldn't ignore the fact that this exam was meant for adult and elderly people, who for some reason, were not able to get a proper education. So it was a bit easier than the usual exam.

I know almost all of them. If only I had a chance to continue getting education, I'm sure I would have achieved a great result. - thought Hyun,

slowly looking through the questions.

Hyun regretted a lot that he wasn't able to continue going to school. In his opinion, the faults in Korean educational system gave rise to another unfortunate genius!

But he didn't have time for idle thoughts, so he took his pen and started writing down answers to the questions, contemplating deep in thoughts over some problem from time to time.

One of the subjects Hyun was allowed to choose for his exam was ethics. Actually, he could pick a foreign language or some other subject, but he picked ethics as he decided that he doesn't need to study it, you just have to know basic principles.

1. You found a wallet on the ground. What will you do?

Take it.

Pick it up and check for any witnesses.

Pick it up and run away.

Pick it up, check for ID card, and try to find the owner.

Take money and leave the wallet.

Lee Hyun scratched his head. Even his decision to leave school wasn't as hard to make.

So which answer is the right one?

He thought ethics was an easy subject, but it proved to have such complicated questions.

Well, 3 of the answers are correct...

After pondering for a while he opted to the 2nd answer. 5th looked correct as well, but 'leaving the wallet' wasn't the best choice.

Other ethics questions weren't as hard, and Hyun answered them with

ease.

I'm totally getting a full mark for ethics.

Ethics was last subject, so with it he finished his exam.

"In my last trip to Ross Gleasis I got a new weapon. Shining Golden Axe!
With 60+ damage!"

"What about bonus stats?"

"Strength +45, Agility -10, increased chance to not to encounter bandits while travelling; if it falls in water it will be lost."

"Whoa! Cool!"

In the hallways, people who just finished their exam, were standing in small groups. And almost all of them were talking about Royal Road.

"Golden axe..."

Axes in the game had the highest damage attribute, but their attack range and speed were considered to be the lowest. Even though every hit from an axe would deal tremendous damage, it didn't matter much if you couldn't land even one of them. So, if you knew how to wield an axe, you were a really dangerous fighter.

Lee Hyun picked up his bag and started walking towards the exit. He wasn't in a hurry so he decided to walk behind that gossiping group of guys. He wanted to hear the rest of their conversation.

One of the guys looked to be around 30 years old; the other two were a bit younger.

"Joong Hoon, I'm jealous. When we left school all we did was drinking..."

"Yeah, we were just fooling around, while you're a Dark Gamers Union member..."

Dark Gamer?

Dark Gamer was a name for players who were making money through games.

But Hyun was most surprised by the reaction of two other guys: they

knew who that man was and they were jealous.

Isn't he ashamed?

Lee Hyun thought that there's nothing to be proud about if you earn money by playing games. Because you're not making anything useful, not bringing anything new into the world, you just make money out of thin air. And were games to disappear, you'd be one of the most useless people in the world.

"Joong Hoon, what's your level?"

"My level? Let's see... what was it... 355."

"That's huge! I have a lot of friends in game, but none of them are of such a high level. And what's your rating?"

"I'm in the top 10000."

The number of players in the game went over 100 millions, so being in top 10000 meant a lot.

Already at 355th level. Lucky one.

Lee Hyun couldn't hide his envy and slowed down his pace. To get home he had to take a bus.

However Joong Hoon and two guys stopped on the parking lot near a foreign car.

"Get in, I'll show you what being a dark gamer is."

"Really? Thanks!"

They got in a car and Hyun didn't have a choice but to be on his way to bus stop, when Joong Hoon called out to Hyun:

"Hey! We have a spare seat, wanna join? If you live nearby I'll give you a lift."

Hyun started to consider if he should accept the invitation, but the man continued:

"It's fine. I see you play Royal Road as well. I noticed that you were listening to our conversation. We're headed to the regular meeting of dark

gamers at the moment. If you want, you can join us."

Dark gamers were gathering at an abandoned warehouse.

Inside a huge building there were a couple of capsules, a long table, and multiple chairs.

"Before we start our meeting, I'll tell you about our Union..."

He introduced himself as Choi Joong Hoon and continued with a smile:

"How many people in your opinion make money by selling items from Royal Road? Not just once or twice, but those who make a living that way?"

"A few tens of thousands?" - asked one of the guys after a bit of thought.

Choi Joong Hoon shook his head.

"Not less than a hundred thousand."

"So many?"

"And most of them are from India, China and some other countries of East Asia."

International borders meant nothing for Royal Road. Any person from any country was able to enjoy the game using capsule. Even the language barrier was removed, thanks to the automatic speech translation software, provided by Unicon Corporation.

"I heard there's a trading company in Korea that works only with Royal Road..."

"That's true. They sell items and in-game money obtained by their employees. I'm not going to criticize them, they made their own decision. But we made ours, and do not want publicity. A lot of our members are unsociable by nature and prefer to be alone... Players like that wouldn't be able to show their potential in a big company. That is why we created The Dark Gamers Union."

Choi Joong Hoon's words slightly confused recruits.

"Then what does being in the Union mean?"

"Good Question. The main reason for Union is information exchange. Our union accumulates information gathered by members. It allows you to learn about hunting grounds, good dungeons, profitable trading routes and rare monsters..."

"Wow, you share information? So it means that once I join the Union I get access to the information database?"

"Unfortunately, it's not so easy. You can't get all the information immediately. Member's access level is determined by his rank within the Union."

"Eh, why's that?"

"That's just security measure. It didn't happen before, but some member might leak our information outside, and Union is all about information."

"Guess that's true. Once there's enough people about anything can happen."

"Yeah. Also players of level 100 have no use for information about dungeons of level 200 and higher. Therefore we assign ranks to our members according to the value of information they provide. And that rank determines how much access they have to our data. That's how it all works. Of course every new member gets access to the basic information."

"So rank is directly dependent on the value of information you provide?"

"Not just that. If you actively participate in the Union's activities, your rank rises. Same thing if you sell items through our auction website often enough. But there's a certain limit to that kind of advance in rank."

"That looks good enough. So how do we sign up?"

Two guys, who came with Choi Joong Hoon, started to fill the papers. They stated their character names, levels and other related information.

Depending on this data the initial rank was assigned. As the guys had a level of 140, they got assigned the lowest rank 'D'.

"Aren't you going to sign up too?", asked Joong Hoon after approaching the calmly sitting Hyun.

Lee Hyun thought it over 2nd time and after counting all the pros and cons shook his head.

"I'm not going to join."

"So that's your answer?"

Joong Hoon didn't look disappointed in the least.

"Well, if you refuse to join, that means you do play Royal Road. And as you agreed to come here with us you must have a certain interest in our organization. But if that's your decision, there's not much I can do..."

Then Choi Joong Hoon leaned to Hyun's ear and whispered:

"Those two are just random people. They probably won't even use information available to them. But I can see that you are different. So if you would join our Union, you'll get access to some special information..."

"..."

"I suppose you just don't want to bother with sharing valuable information, if you don't need access to information for newbies. Isn't that so?"

Lee Hyun was quite surprised. It looked like Choi Joong Hoon saw a lot of players like Hyun and so was pretty accurate with his assumptions.

"Anyway, that's fine. Everyone has their own principles. And our Union respects that. However I'll give you an advice: If you're a serious Royal Road player you'd better off joining our Union."

Lee Hyun, who was silent up till this moment, quietly replied:

"I don't have time to raise my rank and I don't want to give away any information."

If Lee Hyun was to reveal his name - Weed - he'd most likely have some problems. He recalled how On Joo-wan threatened to interview him.

But even the 2nd rejection didn't upset Joong Hoon. On the contrary, it seemed he liked Hyun's response.

"Okay. At least people like you won't stab in the back. Do you know our

website? Then listen here. Login kj9008, password 165008. That's a special account for people who join our website for the first time. Once you login using it, you'll get a rank 'C', and it gives you access to a decent amount of valuable data, trust me. Also, you can change the password once you login if you're worried someone else might get access to your information."

"Why do I get such a special treatment?" - asked Hyun indifferently, and added - "Colleague?"

"That's simple. Dark gamers have three rules. First rule of dark gamers is 'Don't trust anyone'. That exactly describes our current relationships."

"..."

"There's also the 2nd rule: 'Give as much as you take'. You seem to be the kind of person to follow those two rules, and would you use some of our information, you'd provide something valuable in return. I see a real dark gamer in you."

"What about 3rd rule?"

"And here's the 3rd rule: 'Only trust in money'."

"..."

And so Lee Hyun decided to join the Dark Gamers Union.

*

On the 4th level of dungeon of Basra Weed, Hwaryeong and Zephyr were concentrating on hunting.

They risked their lives in every fight, and with every fight their skill and experience points were rising.

"Ok, health back to full... Weed, let's go look for the next fight."

"Yeah, that'd be nice."

Zephyr and Hwaryeong got on their feet.

Whatever the methods they tried to persuade Weed to slow down the pace of the hunt, it was all in vain. So they finally resigned themselves to

his will.

Meanwhile, Weed was thinking that dungeon of Basra almost expended its value as a hunting ground.

We'll stay here for another day or two at most. I'm sorry for the time I had to spend on exam.

Quite a lot of time passed since the siege of Odein.

Balkan Guild was greatly weakened and won't be able to launch another assault on the stronghold for time being. So the winners will have enough time to secure their position. Most probably all the hunting grounds around Odein will become private, so only players from Prosperity Guild or their allies will be allowed to hunt there.

It's a pity.

Dungeon of Basra - one of the most famous dungeons, renowned for plentiful experience and valuable loot.

In the past two days Weed gained 17 levels, reaching level 247. But he doubted they will be able to hunt here for much longer.

I've got to get at least 5 more levels in the remaining time. And it's best to begin from some strong monster; I won't be able to get experience fast enough from small ones...

Weed called his friends and headed to the place they hadn't yet visited once - to the den of the dungeon's boss, a place called 'Main Revolt Headquarters'.

When Weed first mentioned his idea, Hwaryeong and Zephyr answered with a strong resent:

"I can't believe it!"

"Weed, have you finally gone nuts?!"

Dungeon of Basra's boss had a level of 290, and he was accompanied by subordinate knights of level 275. No wonder Weed's partners had such a reaction.

"Weed, we used to think that you had better judgment. But this time there's absolutely no way we can beat the boss and his knights."

"Exactly!" - Zephyr backed Hwaryeong up -

"Basra's boss is a dark mage, and even said to be a necromancer. Necromancer's magic is very different from that of normal mages. And you also have to take into account his 290th level and an increase in health due to his 'boss' status."

"They say his attack power is enormous!"

"Yeah, you take a couple hits and you're dead."

Weed waved his hand to interrupt them:

"His attacks are really that strong?"

"Of course! And no kind of bandages will help that." - exclaimed Zephyr.

"And bandages can only be applied after the battle!" - added Hwaryeong.

Suddenly Zephyr and Hwaryeong exchanged glances and a complete unanimity could be read on their faces. They brightened up and smiled.

"Weed! We're coming!"

Once I die, I'll get to rest. - At that moment that was their only wish.

Those are some funny friends I've got myself here.

Weed wasn't getting bored with them around. He couldn't stop being surprised how simple they were. However Weed didn't realize that he was not much different; one just has to remember how agitated he becomes if even one coin is at stake.

"Hahaha! We haven't had any visitors for quite a while. What business do you have here?"

In the deepest part of the dungeon, sitting on a magnificent throne and dressed in gorgeous clothes, there was the dungeon's boss, accompanied by 2 knights and 12 thieves.

That's our end...

Thank god, it's going to end here.

Upon hearing the boss Hvaryung and Zephyr bid farewell to their lives. They weren't too nervous, at least their smiles indicated otherwise. But they did feel a little thrilled; after all they weren't encountering bosses all too often.

The main NPC of the dungeon was gathering forces to revenge British Confederacy, so it was possible to prevent the fight. Because if you are friendly enough, you would be able to get a quest from him, like to stop assassins sent for his head, or to provide thieves with the items they require.

Naturally, would you take one of those quests you'd become the enemy of British Confederacy. However not just anyone was able to take those quests but only players with high enough fame attribute.

So when Basra's boss started talking to Weed, Hwaryeong and Zephyr started to get nervous. Because if the fight won't start they won't get a chance to die.

But much to their relief Weed tightened his grip on the sword and answered:

"We came to kill you."

"Hohoho! So you're just another pack of British dogs! Well, if you came here to die I won't disappoint you. I'll hang your heads at the entrance as a warning for other puppets of Confederacy. Knights! Kill them!"

"Yes, your Royal Highness Archduke."

While the boss was babbling, Weed waved his sword and yelled:

"Holy blessing!"

The effect of Agatha's holy sword triggered and holy spirit infused Weed.

" High Priest's Blessing!"

The ring on Weed's hand faintly flared and covered Weed's body with soft glow.

Even though these items' effects had duration of only 20 minutes, they were blessed by the High Priest of church of Freya himself! In a single moment Weed became stronger by half.

"Van, hold off the thieves!"

"Understood, master."

Even death knight forgot his defiance in presence of such blessings. It wasn't wise to meddle with Weed when he was so strong.

"Zephyr, help Van to deal with thieves."

"But..."

If he was to fight, he'd prefer fighting knights, that'd be a faster way to die.

"Hwaryeong will stall the knights. I'll take on the Archduke."

"What if they come to their senses?" - exclaimed Hwaryeong in a worried voice.

"Then deal with it. If Van and Zephyr finish the knights by then, they'll help you. I'll be busy with the boss."

Zephyr and Hwaryeong didn't have any choice but to follow Weed's orders.

Two knights were slowly approaching Weed, skilfully swinging their swords.

"Don't sleep Hwaryeong, begin!"

Zephyr immediately headed towards the group of thieves, and Weed easily slipped past two knights and rushed ahead. Hwaryeong was left alone, facing two knights.

"Charming dance!"

To charm enemies, stronger than her, she'll have to spend a lot of mana and dance much longer than usually. And knights were quickly approaching!

"For the glory of Basra!" shouted NPCs and jumped towards Hwaryeong.

Dancing girl closed her eyes in despair.

That'll probably hurt a little...

The pain would bring death! It was a lot more welcome than all those strenuous everyday fights that were leaving her completely exhausted.

However a second passed, than another, but nothing was happening to her! Moreover, she heard that knights had stopped and started to argue.

"Kill her, Jason."

"I don't want. You go, Tobon."

"I can't! As knights we gave an oath to always protect the ladies. It is our duty! If I kill her, I'll no longer be a knight."

"Well, I think the same way! But the boss ordered..."

The last words dismissed their doubts. Hwaryeong heard one of the knights approach her and say apologetically:

"Forgive us, lady!"

Even while expecting to die any moment, Hwaryeong never stopped her dance, she was still elegantly moving her hands and bending her body.

It wasn't difficult at all for her to dance with eyes closed. Over the last few days she had to dance in front of thieves of Basra many times, sometimes while fighting with extreme sleepiness. So she eventually learned to dance with closed eyes.

Ding!

You successfully executed Charming Dance.

Knights of Basra are ensnared.

"Ah! After all she's too beautiful, I can't kill her. Sorry boss, we aren't..."

Hwaryeong managed to disable the knights.

"Aww! I can't believe I did that!"

She collapsed on the ground in frustration, when Zephyr and Van, who just finished off the thieves, approached her.

"Awesome!"

Zephyr was admiring Weed's fight against the boss of Basra, who was throwing multiple dark spells at him.

"Pierce my enemy, Dark Arrows!"

Numerous arrows made of pure darkness shot from behind Archduke aiming at Weed. The spell was cast almost instantly, but Weed still managed to dodge all the arrows.

He was able to do that because he had already accounted for a possibility that something like this would happen. So the moment boss began to cast his spell Weed had determined its type and area of effect and started to evade it. Zephyr was completely astonished by that feat.

"Sculpting Blade!"

Weed swung his sword to deflect a few arrows he couldn't dodge and dashed towards Basra's boss.

"Blink!"

Basra's Archduke instantly teleported a few steps back, however on his chest a bleeding long cut was clearly visible.

Weed's Sculpting Blade technique was completely ignoring any armor!

For necromancers, who didn't have any armor and had low health, strikes like that were especially dangerous! If only the boss was a leech, he'd have almost infinite vitality like Lord Tori. But there were few monsters like that in the game, and usually players were trying to avoid them.

"Fools!"

After gaining some distance from Weed, the boss got a few moments to observe the situation and came to a conclusion that it wasn't favorable for him.

"It's useless to fight me!" – he shouted in rage – "I made a contract with the god of death! Do you want to know why those British bastards weren't able to defeat me? I'll show you! The Immortal Power! Arise my soldiers!"

The ground under their feet started to tremble and skeletons started to appear from it! Multiple black, red and white skeletons!

Archduke of Basra, as a true necromancer, used his main trump card, and summoned mage, warrior and archer skeletons to his aid. His voice got filled with triumph:

"Most of the Basra's warriors were buried here! This place was a burial ground for many generations, and since I was a child I used to come here to practice necromancy. Now this will become your burial ground as well! Ahahahaha!"

"Sculpting Blade!"

Weed's movements were significantly slowed now that he had to fight through hordes of summoned skeletons. Those monsters weren't that dangerous by themselves, but they'll make avoiding boss's attacks much harder, and that was what worried Weed the most. Every magic attack of the Archduke could lower Weed's health by third, if not by half.

"Die, human!"

One of the skeletons hit Weed from behind with his rusty sword. The hit was accurate, but there was almost no damage because Weed had carefully polished his armor before the fight started.

But attacks continued.

About level 220...

Weed started to think.

Thanks to his vast experience of fighting monsters he was able to precisely determine the level of the enemy by one received hit.

Level 220 monsters won't be that dangerous...

But the problem was that the boss was able to summon skeletons indefinitely, and they were greatly hindering Weed's movements, while

blessings would hold for just 20 minutes.

And once their duration is over, the fight will become a whole lot harder. In other words, he didn't have any time to spare.

"I've got to get rid of the undead... Yeah, I know the way! Fight fire with fire!"

All this time Weed was wearing the helmet of the Death knight that he got in Lavias.

"Summon skeletons!"

The helmet allowed Weed to summon undead of level 50. The exact amount and degree of obedience depended on the Leadership attribute of the summoner.

Even more skeletons rose from the ground. More than 200 of them, and all of them kneeled, expecting their master's order.

"Fight! Against those who threaten me!"

Two skeleton crowds started to fight each other. In this fight it was hardly possible to distinguish friend from foe.

"Servants of the god of death, I order you with power, given to me: submit to my will!" - shouted the Archduke.

"You're not the one who summoned us." - came the answer from the direction of the battle.

"You, idiots..."

Skeletons, summoned by Weed were a lot weaker than those of the necromancer. They were dying quickly and did no damage to the enemy, but they still managed to divert enemies' attention to let Weed escape the skeletons' ranks.

"Triple strike! Backstab!"

Weed started to assault the boss sparing no mana. Archduke was able to use blinks to evade Weed's attacks, but his advantage was already lost. Hwaryeong, Zephyr and Van finished the knights who had finally woken

up and hurried to help Weed.

Now the entire party was chasing the fleeing boss, and a couple minutes later he succumbed to the furious onslaught of his opponents and died.

Ding!

-
- Endurance +1
 - Fighting Spirit +1
 - Level has risen.
-

Weed had already fought monsters of level over 290, so he only got one level for this victory. Of course this boss was stronger than the vampire lords, but he was still far weaker than Lord Tori...

"Wow! Great! We won!"

Zephyr and Hwaryeong celebrated their victory and walked towards Weed. But the focused expression on his face made them stop.

"Hmm, I have 3.5% of life left. I watched it closely..."

"..."

"Well, then let's continue the hunt."

"..."

Chapter 10: The Largest Tomb

Weed had almost reached level 259 when the decree of Mavaros gGld was announced. A day later than Weed anticipated.

The fee for hunting in the dungeon of Basra was raised 3 times. Third and fourth levels of the dungeon were reserved for members of Prosperity and Mavaros Guilds. All the rare and unique items acquired by players during the hunt were to be sold to Mavaros Guild at reasonable prices.

"What the heck?"

"Dirty bastards! Reasonable prices my ass! They're deciding what reasonable is by themselves."

Initially, the decree wasn't accepted very favorably; but as it always happens, in a couple days the unrest calmed down. On the continent of Versailles laws were set by whoever had the power.

There were no guilds around Fort Odein stronger than Prosperity Guild and their allies. And as the latter ones played a significant role in defense of Odein, Prosperity Guild was overlooking some of their whims. And if you didn't want to be pushed around, you had to join them.

Right after the announcement, Mavaros Guild started recruiting new members at the entrance to dungeon of Basra. They were able to drag a lot of players to their ranks.

"We should raise our levels more sometime later."

"See you around, Weed!"

After he parted with Hwaryeong and Zephyr, Weed left Basra and made his way to the mission of Order of Freya, located inside the fort.

"What brings you here?"

In response to Priest's question Weed showed his hand wearing the High Priest's ring.

"I have come to use the portal."

"Oh! The savior of our order! We hoped you would visit us one day."

Priest grabbed Weed's palm with both hands and started shaking it in a fit of joy. Paladins of the Order came out to see the hero as well. One priestess exclaimed: "Savior Weed! Our resident priestesses wanted to see you too. Would that be ok with you?"

Weed nodded and was instantly surrounded by lovely priestesses. Freya valued beauty, thus all the priestesses of her church were beauties with slim bodies, big bright eyes and white skin.

The lovely priestesses, humbled by the opportunity to meet and talk to Weed, sprinkled him with holy water and scattered with cheers.

You got Freya's Blessing

Defence +26%

Health regeneration speed increased by 26%

You are protected from dark magic, until holy water on your clothes dries.

Your stamina has increased. Increase in stamina may be utilised in various activities. For example, if you're an adult, you and your loved one can spend a wonderful time having... (TN: an afternoon cup of tea obviously)

Weed closed the message window.

The goddess' blessing was a step ahead from an ordinary blessing for donation. But it didn't please Weed too much as it would expire before he might need it.

"Show me the road to the portal."

"Fine. This way..."

The Priest slowly headed deep into the temple. There were few players permitted to use Freya's portals, so Weed didn't have to wait for his turn.

The portal's attendant asked:

"What's your destination?"

"Rosenheim Kingdom. Citadel of Serabourg."

"I'm opening the portal now."

Weed got bathed by the light from the portal.

"Buying items!"

"Who wants to go for a hunt? Looking for mages!"

"Master tracker here! Will find you any monster you want with my sense of smell. Choose whom you fight with yourself!"

Weed was yet again standing by the fountain at the Central Square of the Citadel. It took him almost a month to travel across Barkan Mountains to the British Confederacy, but he returned in a matter of seconds.

Rosenheim Kingdom!

"It's been a long time since the last time I was here." - muttered Weed after taking a look around the square.

People's clothing became more diverse and colourful; their weapons were all new and shiny. A lot of things had changed and Weed didn't feel like he returned home at all.

"Weed!"

Pale, Surka, Romune and Iren were running towards him with happy faces.

"It's been ages!" - exclaimed Surka and tightly embraced Weed.

Romune and Irene soon followed their friend and clung to Weed's sides.

Weed got deeply moved, though only until he heard the girl's next words: "Irene and Romune are terrible cooks. Weed, I wanted to see you again so much!"

"Surka!"

"Your Cooking skill! Did you raise it? Quick, make us something tasty... pretty please!"

"..."

It turned out that girls were stuck to him only because of his great cooking. Surka couldn't forget the taste of his dishes and was impatiently counting days awaiting their next meeting.

Having grasped the situation, Weed wasn't disappointed much. It was his first time seeing Pale and girls since they parted in Lavias.

'They're so pure... It's worth living in a world where people like them, who don't chase money and accept me as I am, still exist...'

Weed gave his friends a heart-warming smile and pulled out cooking utensils.

"So, today I'll make you pork fried in batter."

"Yay!"

Weed did his best to cook a serving for each of the four hungry friends. In just a minute their plates were empty again. Once satisfied, they switched their attention to Weed himself. Even though they've been exchanging 'whispers', it was their first time meeting in person after a long time, so they were dying to know all the details of Weed's adventures.

Weed made everyone some more food and started to leisurely retell the story of his travels.

"Eh! The most beautiful girl got turned into stone? I wish I could see all of that myself."

Irene was a priest, so she was very sorry she wasn't able to participate in the liberation of province of Morata.

"It's a shame my level was too low at that time, but now you can rely on me, Weed! With my level 220 I'll be handy for you Weed, as I'm sure you'll go hunting soon."

"Thanks, I'll keep that in mind." - said Weed.

"Oh!" - exclaimed Pale after remembering something. - "We often talk to Mapan. He's helping my parents a lot with advices and supplies for their shop. He told you were hunting in dungeon of Basra with Hwaryeong."

"Yeah. That's true."

"Then your current level..."

It was obvious that Pale's was worrying, he didn't even finish his sentence.

Weed looked straight at him and gave an honest answer:

"259."

"....."

"....."

"Che!" - furious Surka gave Weed a jealous glare and moved away from him.

At that moment royal guards appeared on the square and surrounded Weed, Pale and the two girls.

"What's going on?"

"Those people must be criminals." - started gossiping players around the square.

Things like that weren't common, so more and more players were becoming curious.

"What if..."

"Weed, did you kill someone?"

Confused, Pale, Romune and Irene were looking at not any less confused Weed.

"Hmm... I don't think I did something incriminating in Rosenheim..."

He racked his memory, but still couldn't remember anything that could have caused this. Surrounding soldiers stepped aside to let forward a man in knight's outfit, who asked in a loud voice: "Which one of you is the sculptor Weed?"

"That would be me, but..."

Weed warily got up.

"King wishes to see you. Please come with me..."

Knight's words were a complete surprise for Weed. He didn't expect to meet the King Theodarren himself.

"He's lucky! Hurry, we should take some pictures."

Clicks started to sound from all directions, indicating that players started to take photos of the event.

"Look, the King himself wants to meet that guy! Hey, call everyone else here!"

In a matter of seconds the square became crowded, everyone tried to get as close to the centre as possible. Some people wanted to see Weed, some wanted to listen to what the knight was saying.

Sometimes aristocrats did invite adventurers. But usually it was a Baron or an Earl at most. But this time King Theodarren had himself invited some unknown player!

Looks like there's nothing to worry about, - thought Weed with a relieved sigh.

If it was some crime he committed, soldiers wouldn't be talking to him, but just capturing and delivering to jail or judge.

"May I inquire what the reason is?" - Weed asked cautiously.

Gears in his head were spinning a dozen times faster than usual. Weed was assessing the situation and calculating possible profit.

"I believe King has a request for you. I don't know details; everything will be explained at the palace." - the knight replied.

Weed remained calm, but the crowd gathered on the square was in uproar! Surrounding players were excitedly passing knight's words to those who were too far to hear them.

"They say the knight brought a request from the King of Rosenheim himself!"

"So it's a quest?"

"Looks like it."

Many jealous, envious and even some threatening stares were directed at Weed. There aren't many people in the world who aren't jealous of others' success.

Weed agreed to meet with the king and looked around. The square was overflowing with people, but he still managed to discern a mission of Order of Freya looming in the distance.

"Before I meet with the King, I would like to visit Order of Freya first, if it's possible."

"Fine. We'll escort you."

Religion and government tried not to interfere with each other in Royal Road. That's why Weed was allowed to visit the Order before going to the palace.

"We welcome the hero, heading to the far Lands of Despair."

Highest officials of the church came in person to greet Weed. When he returned the holy relics back to the Order of Freya, it greatly increased their influence points, and now wherever players would go, Order of Freya was well-known.

Knights and soldiers who were escorting Weed, stayed at the gates to wait for his return as he was now on the land of the Church and fell under protection of paladins and monks.

Weed went straight to the topic:

"First, I would like to know more about Lands of Despair."

"I am truly sorry, but our knowledge about them is limited. Lands of Despair are inhabited by giant monsters and savage Orc tribes, which are constantly in war with each other. Few humans live there, and those who do are mostly exiles, as it's extremely hard to survive there. Also, there used to live dark elves, but we are not aware of their fate, they might be all dead by now."

"..."

"We weren't able to find out where in Lands of Despair necromancers,

worshipping Bareken are located. You will have to discover that yourself."

Just great! With a quest of 'B' difficulty I will also have to find out details myself!

Weed gave priests a discontent look. In the province of Morata, while doing another 'B' quest, he was constantly on the verge of death! But he had 300 paladins and 100 priests at his command at the time!

"Then how many troops will I get for the job?"

Scared by angry face of Weed, the priest replied in confusion:

"We prepared 50 priests."

"50 priests?!"

"Yes, all the paladins and the rest of priests are busy spreading our faith in remote parts of the country. So once you're ready, we'll open a portal for you without delay."

Not paladins, not monks, but priests!

For a moment Weed felt like he's drowning. But it was too early to give up! Previous quest in the province of Morata seemed impossible as well, but he succeeded.

After receiving all the information he needed, disappointed Weed returned to the waiting soldiers at the entrance.

"He's really going to the palace!"

"He'll meet the King!"

Most of spectators followed the escort all the way. However once they approached the palace the crowd got stopped by the guards.

One of the knights led Weed into the main building of the palace. Of course he didn't forget to get a good look at the interior of the palace on his way.

You saw mural by Beodart

Art +1

You enjoyed the set of sculptures 'The King's Knights'

Art +2

You discovered 3 weapon sets of Balanch Art +1

Looking at art was no different from creating it!

His art attribute was rising even if he was just enjoying creations of other masters. However it won't be possible to raise the art attribute this way indefinitely; as if you were looking at something of a lesser quality than what you have seen before, you wouldn't get any bonus.

In the palace Weed witnessed a lot of beautiful pieces of art, which boosted his art attribute by 30 points.

"Your Majesty, Righteous and Benevolent Ruler of Rosenheim, King Theodarren, we have brought adventurer Weed to you."

Their tour ended in a throne room.

The knight, who brought him there, kneeled before he spoke, and Weed tried to mirror him.

Nobles and other knights were standing in semi-circle beside the throne, occupied by King Theodarren. The King looked unwell; his face was covered by sickly blue and yellow spots.

"You are Weed?" - asked Theodarren in a loud and powerful voice.

"Yes, Your Highness."

"I summoned you to... Khhuwaagh..."

The King vomited blood. Knights and servants rushed to help him, but were stopped by his hand gesture.

"I know my illness well enough, so you don't have to worry. Is your profession Moonlight Sculptor?"

"Yes, Your Highness."

"Moonlight sculptor, hmm, familiar profession. My mother had a close friend by name Zahab."

"Your Highness!"

Nobles were distressed by the king's words, but he continued.

"You all know that, don't you?"

"..."

"There's nothing to hide. Anyway, Weed, you must have an idea about sculpturing and I want to make you an offer. I don't have much time left to live. My entire life I was trying to make my country peaceful and orderly. To gather armies big enough so that British Confederacy would be trembling at the sight of them. So that, at my will, all the mountains, rivers and trees would be shaking under their marching feet..."

King Theodarren loved to talk and to brag. He was talking about his affairs, deeds, even about things that had happened in his private quarters.

Weed was listening closely to him and tried not to miss anything important.

Where's the hint to fulfilling the quest?

However, no matter how hard he was focusing, all of the stories were useless. Be it how at an age of 5 King fell off the horse for the first time and broke his leg, or how beautiful were maids of the court - Theodarren was just spouting nonsense.

Having chattered in this manner for two hours, the King finally got to the point: "...With every passing day I feel worse and worse. It is time I passed the burden of a king to a successor and retired. To a place my weak body would find peace. Time is running out, so I need a crypt. Make me a great and majestic crypt that would be astounding everyone with its splendour for many years to come. I'll provide you with as much manpower as you need..."

Ding!

New Quest! King Theodarren's Tomb.

Sometimes in anticipation of their death rulers of Rosenheim Kingdom order a crypt made for them. Theodarren can already feel death's breath, so he hired a famous sculptor to build a crypt for them.

However if the crypt doesn't match the greatness of the king the quest will be failed and you'll suffer a penalty.

You can request additional help for this quest. To finish this quest you'll be funded 100 000 gold.

Difficulty: 'B'.

Reward: In case of success, your reputation within Rosenheim Kingdom will increase by over 2000. The exact increase depends on the quality of the job.

Restrictions: In case of failure you'll experience the King's wrath. Your fame will lower.

Weed's reputation with Order of Freya was over 4600.

When you're on good terms with religious order you get multiple advantages. You can get healed and use portals with no charge, hire a squad of paladins to help for cheap. On your journeys it'll be easier to pass customs and obtain quests of higher difficulty. Reputation worked similar to Fame.

However, good relationships with the royal court would bring even more advantages. You would be able to receive a title or spend your reputation points to get great items from the treasury.

Weed would definitely pick a weapon in one.

It was first time since Baran village when Weed got a quest directly related to his profession. At that time his mastery and fame were very low and he got a quest from common NPC, but this time he got a request from King himself!

Weed thought a little, but the decision had already formed inside his

head.

He would never retreat from approaching monsters or refuse a quest! Though, the unknown consequences of refusing the quest played not the last part in his decision.

"I will do my best to provide Your Majesty with the most magnificent place for your final rest."

You have accepted the quest.

Weed came out of the palace deep in thoughts.

Great and majestic crypt... Very ambiguous requirements.

Should I build something like a dolmen?

That'll be fast and easy!

However, I might end up experiencing wrath of the king. Or even persecution from the Rosenheim army.

But as a reward I'll most probably receive some rare or unique item!

What if I view it from that side...

When Weed was expecting profit he was looking for opportunities to start acting!

Even if prices in Royal Road were to decrease, a rare or unique item would still sell for great money.

Weed couldn't afford to decline extra money, so he decided to complete the quest at any cost. However he had no idea how to approach for building a crypt.

A huge or a normal one? Filled with stone soldiers? Statues? No, those are all pretty generic ideas...

He had to build a great, majestic, monumental crypt, which would fully meet the King's expectations.

Credits

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